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Interdisciplinary care delivery for transitional youth in the university campus setting

Statement of the Problem: In the university campus clinic where 14,000 students have been seen in the past year, family physicians provide the majority of longitudinal mental health care and support to students with psychiatric diagnoses. Historically, they have lacked prompt access to psychiatric consultation and have had to support students' mental health needs alone, necessitating urgent care and emergency room visits. In the clinic situated on campus, psychiatric consultation was provided in a separate manner, where family physicians were not involved in the care plan for a student, and psychiatric care was not collaborative, shared or responsive. The University of Toronto (U of T) is the largest university in Canada, with 60,000 post-secondary students attending its central St. George campus.

Methodology: This study describes the development of a coordinated, collaborative model of service delivery where family physicians would have greater access to consultation and collaboration in the care of young transitional youth on the university campus. Interdisciplinary care is delivered in the family practice setting. Service utilization, the efficacy of the model and the perspectives of students and care providers are evaluated.

Findings: Collaborative care has facilitated more stream-lined and student-centered access to psychiatric care in a large campus health setting. The integrated medical and psychiatric needs of this young transitional youth cohort on campus are met through case conferencing, indirect care and a "shared care" delivery of service model.

Conclusion & Significance: Collaborative care provides a pathway and model of care that creates scope for indirect psychiatric consultation, quicker access to psychiatric opinion and consultation, and interdisciplinary learning for different healthcare providers.

Biography

Andrea J Levinson is the Psychiatrist-in-Chief, Health & Wellness, at the University of Toronto. She is responsible for the provision and management of psychiatric services to U of T students, primarily from the St. George campus. She supervises all of the psychiatric activity, and acts as a resource for the university community on mental health issues across the campus. She is also a graduate of the Clinician Scientist Program and received a Master's of Science degree for her research in that program. She has extensive youth psychiatry, having founded an early intervention clinic for young people with new onset bipolar disorders. Currently, she is the Clinical Lead in Bipolar Disorders at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).

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