

Student Mental Health Policy

Annual Report 2025

Institution Name: St. Lawrence College

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Contents

Student Mental Health Annual Report 2025	1
Introduction	2
Programs, Services, and Supports	2
Utilization and Impact Metrics	4
Policy Implementation and Effectiveness	5
Challenges and Opportunities	6
Future Plans	7

Introduction

The College strives to provide a holistic approach to community wellness, with key priority to student mental health and well-being. The purpose of this policy is to support and uphold the College's commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning and living environments for all students.

This policy details:

- Information about the College's commitment to alignment with key external standards and principles, as well as internal services and strategic groups;
- The nature of, and approach taken as it relates to, mental health programs and services available to students through the College;
- The location of information regarding College mental health resources and initiatives;
- Privacy and confidentiality guidelines and obligations as it relates to personal health information and data collection;
- Methods of feedback and input gathering from students as related to mental health services and needs.

This policy encourages the active participation of all College members in the promotion and engagement in health and well-being initiatives. The policy is part of the College's broader policy framework and may be found on our website as CR309: Student Mental Health:

<https://www.stlawrencecollege.ca/about/reports-and-policies>

Programs, Services, and Supports

Category	Description	Delivery Method	Target Population	Accessibility Notes
Clinical Supports	Individual counselling services Primary Care through Campus Health Centres (Locum) Psychiatry Services, including Adult Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) assessments.	In person and virtual	All students	Individual counselling services: Provided by registered psychotherapists and social workers employed by the college within Student Wellness & Accessibility department. Indigenous counselling

	<p>Individualized counselling services also available through student insurance (WeConnect for domestic students, and GuardMe Student Support Program for international students).</p>			<p>services provided as well. This team also supports referrals to community organizations for long-term and/or intensive care and treatment.</p> <p>Primary Care: mental health assessment, treatment, medication management, and referrals.</p>
Peer Support Programs	<p>THRIVE Community, peer-to-peer programming; “Huddle” groups facilitated by Spiritual Care Facilitator and/or peer leader.</p> <p>Togetherall (external contract), an anonymous, clinically monitored and moderated, peer-to-peer mental health support community available online, 24/7.</p>	<p>In person and virtual</p>	<p>All students</p>	<p>Huddle Groups aligned with expressed student need and interest, including mature students, International students, students on the Autism Spectrum, students with ADHD, 2SLGBTQIA+ students, religious backgrounds/beliefs, etc.</p>
Wellness Workshops	<p>Variety of workshops that provide educational and practical tools for strengthening resilience, managing stress, and increasing mental health literacy, led by staff within</p>	<p>In person and virtual</p>	<p>All students</p>	<p>Topics include: Striving in Stress, Connections and Community, Self-Compassion, Crucial Conversations, and</p>

	Student Wellness & Accessibility department.			Spiritual Resilience.
Self-Guided Resources	Partnerships with external providers: Therapy Assistance Online (TAO); Togetherall (self-help resources and courses); WeConnect (through Domestic Student insurance); GuardMe Student Support Program (through International Student insurance).	Virtual	All students	

Utilization and Impact Metrics

Metric	Value	Notes
Number of students accessing mental health services	Student Wellness (& Accessibility: 1147 unique students Campus Health Centres: 156 unique patients seeking Mental Health supports through clinic	Total number of appointments booked through Student Wellness & Accessibility: 5077
Average wait time for clinical appointments	Student Wellness & Accessibility: 5 business days Campus Health Centres: 10 business days	Wait times vary depending on presenting issue. Triage mechanisms in place to prioritize high-risk cases through “Same Day/Next Day” counselling appointments.
Engagement in self-guided resources	Togetherall: 64 unique users TAO: 247 unique users	Togetherall: 1,856 activities completed TAO: 312 sessions completed

Workshop attendance	233 unique students	13 workshops provided
Peer support engagement	220 unique students	172 sessions provided, 642 participants total

Policy Implementation and Effectiveness

Implementation Highlights

This policy allowed the College to formalize its commitment to providing relevant, up to date, easily accessible, student-centred mental health information, resources and processes. Policy development was very closely aligned with the work of the College's larger Integrated Mental Health Strategy. The policy came into effect on January 31, 2025 and was formally and broadly announced to the College community shortly after. The policy was made available through the internal policy centre and public Reports and Policies webpage. Information about the policy and supports was also provided through a direct email to every student in September.

Key aspects of the policy are embedded within the strategic and operational planning of the Student Wellness & Accessibility department. As with the policy and relevant standards, mental health and well-being principles are also embedded in various areas of the College's operations, including student service and academic areas.

Effectiveness Assessment

At this time, limited formal assessment has been done relating to the effectiveness of this policy. The policy offers a strong foundation and point of reference for the college's ongoing work. For example, the college implemented a new Academic Assessment Policy in September 2025, which includes processes that support student mental health and well-being (i.e., based on principles of transparency, inclusion and accessibility to best support learner diversity and maximize academic success). There is strong evidence that this new assessment policy has had a positive impact on student well-being. The college undertook the Canadian Campus Wellbeing Strategy and we are currently analyzing the results to identify any linkages. Further assessment of the mental health policy's effectiveness is ongoing, and more information will be available in future reports.

Equity Considerations

The policy outlines the variety of services and supports that the College is committed to offering. This ranges from proactive, health promotion and prevention activities, to reducing stigma, to individualized interventions, treatments, and referrals. The varied offerings also ensure that services are available to meet students where they are and in their preferred manner. This is achieved through upstream, mid-stream, and downstream approaches, ranging from self-directed modules, peer-to-peer programming, to individualized counselling, and same day crisis intervention.

While our core team engages in various activities to support culturally appropriate mental health care, additional culturally relevant and linguistically diverse counselling services are available to students, specifically international students, through our external partnerships.

Our Indigenous Counsellor also supports individual and group programming and initiatives within the department, across the college, and in the community.

Challenges and Opportunities

Barriers Identified

The Federal Government IRCC policy changes for international students had an impact on our college operations. As a result of funding changes and impact, staffing reductions were made throughout the College including within Student Wellness & Accessibility. There remains a gap between domestic and international students who use our mental health services with less than 10% of our users being international students. Literature and feedback from students indicate this relates to stigma as well as service norms in other countries.

Opportunities for Improvement

With our commitment to student mental health, we continue to explore impactful, evidence-based, and cost-effective approaches and supports.

- Community partnerships is an area of focus, with opportunities to increase the number of organizations to which we can refer students for intensive and long-term supports. This also allows us to better position our department to enhance proactive and solution-focused programs and services.
- Expansion of upstream, proactive, health promotion-focused initiatives, as well as peer-based initiatives that will focus on reducing stigma.
- Enhancements to the department's digital solutions will have positive impacts on access to and provision of services. This allows specialized staff to focus on student-facing support, reducing operational task load.

The college conducted the Canadian Campus Well-Being Survey in Winter 2025, and is in the data analysis and knowledge translation phase. This will provide crucial insight into areas of opportunity and development.

Future Plans

Planned Enhancements and Timeline

Ongoing review of the policy will be undertaken, which is important with the newness of the policy and provincial requirements, as well as the changing landscape of the sector. The formal policy review date is set for January 2030.

Other planned enhancements include:

- Continuation of development of a short-term, solution focused approach to individualized counselling services. This has been strengthened in the past year, and remains an area of planned enhancement - Implementation target, August 2026
- Review and streamline suite of digital solutions offered to students, informed by feedback, utilization rates, and survey results. - Implementation target, December 2026
- Acquisition of new software for registration and information/record management – implementation target, August 2026