

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING E-UPDATE



April 2019

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back. I trust you all had a relaxing Easter break.

Speaking out about mental health

The call is out for students to use their voices on Tuesday 7 May, University Mental Health Day (UMHD). This year, for the first time, staff are also invited to participate in and benefit from this initiative.

UMHD is a concept borne out of the UK and picked up by Universities in Australia and New Zealand in 2013.

UMHD's 2019 theme 'use your voice' is designed to empower students to speak out about the mental health struggles they face while at University, and to encourage them to tell tertiary providers what they need to help shape the future of student mental health.

The University of Auckland is getting behind students by offering a platform for them to share thoughts, ideas and strategies around managing mental health while they study.

Why have a University Mental Health Day?

University students are particularly susceptible to mental health disorders, partly because of the age bracket they tend to fall into, but also because of other stressors like leaving home, academic pressure and financial strain.

According to ABS* research, 1 in 5 adults will suffer a mental health disorder, and it is likely to happen between the ages of 16-34 (26% prevalence in 16-24 year-olds, 25% prevalence in 25-34 year-olds). The World Health Organisation identifies mental illness as the greatest cause of disability for young people worldwide.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING E-UPDATE

In 2017, 65% of the University of Auckland's demographic fell into that high risk age bracket. The New Zealand 'Ke Te Pai' report gives a snapshot of tertiary life for young people. 1762 students took part in a survey that asked questions around stress and mental wellbeing while studying.

When asked what factors would lead a student to consider dropping out of university, the leading answer was 'feeling overwhelmed', followed closely by mental illness.

Academic stress was the main trigger for feelings of depression and anxiety in participants. Nearly one third of participants said feeling lonely triggered depression, as well as eating habits and transitioning into university life.

Here at the University of Auckland, the Health and Counselling service recorded 3942 new counselling registrations for 2018, which was a 9.43% increase from 2017. They also maintained a positive average wait time of five days for a routine counselling appointment.

*Australian Bureau of Statistics <https://bit.ly/2fk1dAM>

What about staff?

UMHD also offers an opportunity to explore workplace stress and how staff at University manage their personal wellbeing.

According to Beyond Blue (<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>), organisations who actively create healthy workplaces provide employees with places where they feel supported, optimistic and good about going to work.

Staff are welcome to participate in the events detailed below. However, even if you can't make it along, you may wish to consider participating in your own way, e.g. by having a shared morning tea or holding a walking meeting in the park.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING E-UPDATE



What's happening on Tuesday 7 May?

The quad on City Campus will become the central hub for UMHD 2019. An MC will keep things running on the day, encouraging crowd participation and introducing live performances, and esteemed guest speaker Debra Lampshire.

Debra has an extensive background as a mental health educator and is currently a professional teaching fellow here at University. Debra has transferred her 30 years of the lived experience of recovery and voice hearing into a wealth of knowledge that is accessible, engaging and inspiring.

Following Debra's talk, there will be a poetry slam, a live band and a hooping workshop on the lawn. Down at Sport and Rec, the gym will be open to everyone for the day, meaning anyone can come along to use the equipment or take a class.

Up in the Māori space, students and staff can enjoy an informal panel of speakers and free nibbles at the University Mental Health Day Hui. Everyone's welcome to come and join this conversation.

See the event listing for more details: [University Mental Health day.](#)

Need a bit of help?

Staff are encouraged to access the University's Employee Assistance Provider by calling 0800 327 669, emailing auckland@eapservices.co.nz or going online at eapservices.

HSW E-updates are now available on staff intranet

The previous issues and this issue of HSW E-updates are now available on the staff intranet for wider access. Please feel free to forward this e-update or the below link as widely as possible amongst your colleagues. [HSW E-updates](#)

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING E-UPDATE

Updated version of “Accident, Incident & Hazard reporting form”

The updated version of the **Accident, Incident & Hazard reporting form** can be found [here](#). Staff and students are encouraged to report hazards they notice around the campuses, or any acts or conditions that might appear unsafe. All reports will be treated in confidence and receive the same attention as reported accidents.

If you have any query on anything related to health, safety or wellbeing, please do not hesitate to contact us on hsw@auckland.ac.nz.



Angus Clark

Associate Director – HSW