

## COVID-19: Navigating Post-Secondary Education & Youth Mental Health

### OUR PANELISTS



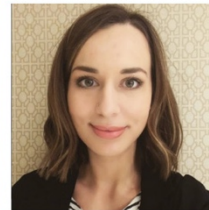
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## Webinar Engagement and Resources

### Q&A Session

**Q1: From a university student services point of view, what was the biggest challenge for you in adapting your services when the pandemic hit?**

**Kevin:** I feel that the greatest challenge for our services (at the U of A) was tied to quickly and safely transitioning services to alternative delivery formats. This came with the typical concerns re: access to technology. However, it also involved finding innovative ways to offer confidential support when many service providers were also suddenly supporting young children and dependents!

**Q2: What are some of the more interesting/unique adaptations that you have seen in response to covid (beyond using zoom/video technology) are there any other adaptations that stand out?**

**Emily:** One thing I've found interesting is my school has still tried to continue with certain rituals/events. They have held some of the awards banquets for clubs and teams online, and even held the class of 2020 graduation toast online. They've also even moved some of the fitness classes offered through the athletics apartment online to encourage maintaining physical fitness through this stressful time!

**Kevin:** An online round dance for some of our First peoples! This was organized by some of our Elders and provided some unique opportunities for connection.

**Q3: How do we support students as they re-enter post-secondary environments in the next school year, and especially students who live in different regions or countries and might have had vastly differing experiences of the pandemic?**

*Answered Live.*

**Q4: Emily, what do you think will be the best way for universities to respond to mental health issues as a result of COVID-19 when classes go back to normal?**

**Emily:** I think it's really important to continue to cut students some slack, and acknowledge that even as life continues to move back towards what is normal, we all went through an extremely significant event, possibly the most extreme to be seen in our lifetimes. I think that mental health supports need to be amplified as many students will inevitably be struggling after all of this. I also think that teachers should try to avoid incorporating COVID-19 into their lectures- I know I find it extremely stressful to think about in terms of the detrimental impact it has had, so I think professors and universities really need to consider that talking about such extreme events may be triggering for students.

**Q5: Allison mentioned peers taking action, and a Facebook viewer along with Gina also mentioned peer-support and so I'm wondering what role you think universities/institutions can have in supporting students in initiating this, particularly with that clinical support that Allison mentioned?** *Answered Live.*

**Q6: How do we ensure that PSIs are not relying on Peer Support services in replacement of professional service shortages?** *Answered Live.*

## Participant Chat

*From Melissa Fernandes To All Panelists:* Many universities and colleges have advisories for their student health services already

*From ACCESS Open Minds To Melissa Fernandes and All Panelists:* Great point, from your point of view have these advisories been helpful or are there other ways that you think students can be involved in shaping student health services?

*From Melissa Fernandes To All Panelist :* Yes I think they have been. I think that they need to intentionally have students from equity seeking and underserved groups. An there needs to be an accountability structure built into these models as well.

*From Melissa Fernandes To All Panelists:* At U of T mental health services are being offered virtually--Health and Wellness has gone to virtual appointments, there is access to 24/7 counselling in 146 languages through two different service that the university has partnered with as well

*From Emily:* That is incredible Melissa! I'm so glad that services are being offered immediately, as well as being targeted to such a diverse student population!

*From Melissa Fernandes:* How do we ensure that PSIs are not relying on Peer Support services in replacement of professional service shortages. (\*\*Answered live)

*From Jessie Brar:* I think another really good resource is Good2Talk for students across Ontario. They offer both text and phone support 24/7

*From Kevin To All Panelists:* As well as 211-Kids Help Phone in Alberta. 24/7 support for PSI students through text, phone and online.

## Resources

- [Good2Talk](#) provides confidential support services for post-secondary students in Ontario and Nova Scotia.
- [Kids Help Phone](#) : 24/7 Support
- [ACCESS Open Minds Mental Health Resource List](#): An open document listing Canadian resources for different audiences (e.g., youth, family, clinicians, researchers, etc.)