

Motion: NUS Conference Welfare Zone

Prioritise Student Mental Health. Now! (322 words)

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NUS Believes

1. NUS surveyed 1,093 students in further and higher education in November and December 2015
2. Eight out of 10 students (78%) say they experienced mental health issues in the last year.
3. A third (33%) also said they had had suicidal thoughts.
4. Among those who did not identify as heterosexual, the figure was higher at 55%.
5. More than half (54%) of respondents who reported having experienced mental health problems said they did not seek support.
6. A third said they would not know where to get mental health support from at their college or university if they needed it, while 40% reported being nervous about the support they would receive from their institution.

NUS Further Believes

1. That over the past year NUS has barely mentioned the single biggest Welfare issue facing UK students today.
2. That whilst most Colleges and Universities have well-meaning, overstretched services, almost none have coherent, comprehensive strategies in relation to mental health and wellbeing. This is unacceptable.
3. That too many focus on cure instead of prevention
4. That mental health and wellbeing services in every FEI and HEI should be adequately resourced and the operation and capacity of services should be regularly assessed in relation to demand and effectiveness.
5. That robust arrangements should be put in place for any student with mental health difficulties who are required to undertake a period of time studying off campus, including those studying or working abroad.

NUS Resolves

1. To prioritise mental health in the Welfare Zone in the year ahead.
2. To lobby BIS, AoC and UUK to form a national student mental health task force, with student representation
3. To campaign for a specific student wellbeing duty to be placed on Colleges and Universities as a condition of funding.
4. To ensure that Universities and Colleges consult and collaborate with SUs and student groups when formulating and implementing student mental health-related policies