Developing our Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategies

Students and staff are at the heart of our university. We are committed to supporting the wellbeing of our community and have been listening to your feedback in relation to mental health and wellbeing. In response we and have drafted new mental health and wellbeing strategies, one for students and one for staff. These strategies provide the framework for our current activity and explicitly set out our commitment to:

- prioritise the wellbeing of our students and staff, whether that is through tackling structural barriers or supporting individuals,
- foster an inclusive and diverse community where our students and staff can succeed, and
- engage with all parts of our institution and community in the effort to support staff and student wellbeing.

We understand many of the challenges facing students and staff, but there are still areas where we can improve awareness and support throughout the whole university. We must make sure that wellbeing support is as good as the academic excellence our students and staff have come to expect. It should be coherent and provide a consistent student experience, and so these draft strategies outline:

- the drivers for our strategic approach and improvement to our support for staff and students,
- key areas of work already underway, and
- the principles that should underpin both the strategies the actions we are taking and our behaviours in relation to support and wellbeing.

This is where you come in. Using the Universities UK #StepChange framework, we have worked with our advisory groups, partners, and staff and student representatives to draft these strategies. Now we need to hear from you. We would like your feedback, ideas and suggestions for these strategies and the action plans needed to support them.

These documents are open for your feedback between 10 October 2018 to 7 November 2018. As well as this online consultation, there will be other opportunities to have input; these will be advertised jointly by the Student Union and the University during the next month.

We recognise that mental health and wellbeing can be a difficult or upsetting topic for some people, or that you may not know where you can find help. More information about what support is available for yourself, your friends or colleagues is available:

For Staff:  [www.bristol.ac.uk/hr/wellbeing/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/hr/wellbeing/)

For Students:  [www.bristol.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/)
Your feedback will help shape this strategy, our suicide prevention framework and our mental health and wellbeing action plan. The action plan will be regularly reviewed, and we will continue to seek input from our community and report transparently.

Thank you for taking the time to share your views.
Mental Health and Wellbeing: Our Student Strategy

Introduction from the Vice-Chancellor and President

Being at university is an exciting, rewarding and transformational time – a chance to learn new skills, challenge yourself academically and make new friends for life. However, we recognise that for some students there can be times when they struggle with the demands of studying or life in general.

Nationally, and indeed globally, there is increasing concern about mental health, and the growing pressures young people face living, studying and working in today’s world. We also know that staff in higher education are reporting higher levels of stress and anxiety than in previous generations. It is our absolute priority at Bristol to work with our students and staff to promote good mental health, and to support students and staff who need help. In short, in our University, mental health is everybody’s business.

Alongside setting out this new Strategy I have established a Vice-Chancellor’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce to coordinate these efforts, and I have also put in place an Expert Advisory Group of national and international experts to ensure our approach is informed by sector best practice in higher education, health and social care. I will also be boosting our research capacity in this area, via the establishment of a Mental Health Research Network, and we will draw on the expertise of our academic researchers to ensure we make evidence-based decisions and critically assess our plans for mental health support in the future.

Our approach is a proactive and inclusive one, integrated across all areas of support to help provide the best possible experience for all our students. We recognise that this support needs to be tailored to reflect the diversity of our student body and aligned to our commitment to be an inclusive and welcoming community for students and staff of all social and cultural backgrounds.

We aim to support students’ wellbeing during their transition into Bristol and throughout their time with us. Our new ‘opt-in’ emergency contact procedure means that new and returning students are encouraged to provide consent for the University to use their chosen emergency contact details if there are significant concerns about their mental or physical health.

Once in the academic environment we continue this proactive approach by offering Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students the support of Personal Tutors led by a Senior Tutor in each school, and for Postgraduate Research students the support of their supervisor. We have also introduced our new suite of Bristol Futures courses, supported by world-leading lecturers and professors. The themes of these courses include elements specifically designed to help our students improve their personal resilience and adaptability, and to develop skills to deal with the increasing complexity of our world. We encourage greater student engagement in sport, clubs and societies to foster community-building, support teamwork and to strengthen resilience.
Our new Residential Life Service and Student Wellbeing Service put dedicated full-time staff, with a core remit of support and community building, in to halls of residence, academic schools and faculties. This is a significant new investment and ensures we have staff teams who are well placed to assist students at an early stage before any issues start to escalate. These initiatives complement our established range of support services including on-campus GP services, student counselling and services for students who have additional support needs.

We have significantly increased funding for our Counselling Service in recent years and we believe that it compares extremely well with services elsewhere. We will continue to review the size of the service and ensure that it continues to grow at least in line with any increases in student numbers. The enhanced support for student wellbeing provided by the new Residential Life and Student Wellbeing Services will enable the Student Counselling Service to focus its efforts on providing short term, individual and small group therapeutic support in relation to those issues directly impacting on a student’s ability to study. This should also help improve access to the service in a timely manner, although we recognise a reduction in the stigma associated with disclosing mental health and wellbeing issues combined with an increase in awareness of the support available may result in more students seeking therapeutic support.

Graduating from university and moving on to the next phase of life has been identified as another key transition for students, and a source of stress to some. We support this transition by offering careers guidance that focuses on having a meaningful life as well as on specific employment pathways.

The challenges of mental health cannot be addressed by our University alone. Students with underlying mental health conditions will continue to access their healthcare through the NHS often via our Student Health Service which offers same-day mental health appointments. We already work closely with Bristol City Council, the University of the West of England, Public Health England and the local NHS, the Samaritans and other third-sector groups. We have also signed the national Time to Change pledge aimed at reducing the stigma associated with mental health.

We understand the important role that we must play as a university in supporting our students’ mental health and wellbeing. However, the NHS is the primary provider of mental health services in the UK, and it will be important to define our respective roles and responsibilities to ensure complementary support – and to ensure that the extent of our responsibilities and our expertise is appropriately understood. We are also clear that whilst we will proactively support our students’ wellbeing, we are a community of adults, and the University cannot act in loco parentis.

The steps we are taking are part of a journey that will evolve over time. New activities and initiatives will emerge as we learn from our work here at Bristol, and as all parts of our society understand more about these complex challenges. Working together with staff and students I believe we can build an environment where everyone can thrive and where all aspects of wellbeing are reflected in every facet of the University of Bristol experience.

Professor Hugh Brady DATE
University of Bristol

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Vision

At Bristol we are placing wellbeing at the heart of our university. We are taking an institution-wide approach to mental health and wellbeing and believe that an integrated approach across all areas of the University is vital to provide the best possible experience for all our students and staff.

Our approach will reflect and foster the diversity of the student and staff community at the University of Bristol. We acknowledge that mental health interconnects with all aspects of student life and that every student will experience mental health differently. Working together, we can build an environment in our University where our students and staff can thrive, and where all aspects of mental health and wellbeing are supported in every facet of the University of Bristol experience.

Background Context

Young people’s mental health is one of the most challenging public health issues of our time. About one in four people in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year and around three-quarters of adults with mental illness first experience symptoms before the age of 25.

Today’s generation of young adults are more likely to report mental illness than previous generations. The mental health of young people is not just a university problem: it affects the whole age-group. A 2017 Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) report notes that in England 19% of 16-24 year olds (28% of women and 10% of men) experience a mental health condition, up from 15% in 2003. Data presented to the National Suicide Prevention Advisory Group shows a rise in suicides in 15-19 year olds in England. Nor is it a UK-specific problem: research shows that there is a long-term trend of increasing mental health problems amongst adolescents in many Western countries.

Nonetheless, students can be at particular risk of experiencing poorer mental health and wellbeing due to factors relating to academic, financial and social pressures. This is evident in the high levels of mental distress reported by students, and the extent to which UK universities have experienced significant increases in the number of students seeking counselling support, and in the proportion of students who disclose a mental health condition to their institution. Universities UK’s recent analysis (UUK 2018) highlighted a six-fold increase in the number of UK students who disclose a mental health condition to their university since 2007. This is even more concerning when considered against a 2017 IPPR report which noted that just under half of students who reported a mental health difficulty chose not to disclose it to their university. The same IPPR report noted that, over the last 5 years, 94% of universities had experienced an increase in demand for counselling with 61% reporting an increase of over 25%.
Our own 2018 annual student Mental Health and Wellbeing Survey, which was completed by 20% of the student population, shows that 44% of students rated their mental health as good or excellent, 34% as fair and 22% poor. Just under half (45%) of students reported some depressive symptoms. 41% of students who reported poor mental health said that they had not disclosed this to the university. Levels of mental wellbeing were lower and depression higher in females and those who did not categorise themselves as male or female (non-binary), students from minority ethnic backgrounds, overseas students and those with physical disabilities.

Concerns about student mental health have been acknowledged at a national level. A Universities UK (UUK) working group has been set up to look at what more can be done to tackle the problem. UUK launched their #StepChange framework \(^1\) during the 2017-18 academic year, and we are using its principles to inform our work at Bristol.

\(^1\) www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/stepchange
Our Strategy

This strategy has been developed in partnership between the University and Bristol SU to provide a framework enabling the whole institution to support mental health and wellbeing. It is complementary to and sits alongside the Staff Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy. The actions taken to realise both strategies will be iterative and updated in response to progress against the objectives.

This Strategy references the eight strategic themes proposed by UUK in their #StepChange framework relating to mental health in higher education.

We will measure the impact of our interventions through a range of data sources. We will use this data and feedback from students and staff to produce an annual mental health and wellbeing report and to inform our annual University planning.
Cornerstones of our strategy

Making mental health everybody’s business:

Everyone in the whole university community will support student and staff mental health and wellbeing. Mental health and wellbeing will be a strategic priority supported by the Vice-Chancellor’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce and through the appointment of a new Pro Vice-Chancellor for Student Experience to lead on student wellbeing. We will galvanise support amongst staff and students through the Student Wellbeing Service and additional wellbeing support for staff. We will hold ourselves to account by setting transparent performance indicators.

Supporting the improved mental health and wellbeing of our students at key points of transition into and out of university:

We have launched a new ‘opt-in’ emergency contact procedure, asking students to give consent for the University to use their chosen emergency contact details where there are serious concerns about a student’s wellbeing. We will do more to encourage students to share any pre-existing mental health issues prior to arrival so that the University can proactively offer them support.

Integrating healthy behaviour and promoting positive mental health within the curriculum and in co-curricular activities:

We will actively promote the Bristol Futures ‘Sustainable Futures’ course that addresses questions of positive mental health and happiness, and we will introduce a new taught course on the ‘Science of Happiness’. We will encourage participation in sport and physical activity and promote the B:Active and Healthy Minds programs. We will support students to maintain a healthy lifestyle through education and campaigning around exercise, sexual health, drug and alcohol mis-use and eating a balanced diet.

Taking early interventions and campaigning against stigma:

We will encourage early disclosure via open discussion and support Bristol SU’s campaigning initiatives like ‘Mind Your Head’. We will review our Acceptable Behaviour Policy to make it more accessible to students and to help reduce the incidents of bullying and harassment.
**Delivering effective student support services which are easy to access and meet a wide range of student needs:**

We have introduced the new Residential Life Service that aligns with the new Student Wellbeing Service in schools and faculties and have created structures for peer support via the senior and chief residents in student accommodation, and via peer mentoring and peer assisted study in academic schools. We will offer dedicated support for students from a range of backgrounds, such as mature students, international students, black and minority ethnic (BME) students, disabled students, LGBT+ students, and students from our widening participation initiatives.

**Connecting our work with staff and students, for mutual benefit:**

We will provide enhanced staff counselling, training and online resources to support staff wellbeing, and better equip staff to support students. We will include training relating to student mental health in the suite of required training for staff to help align student and staff mental health.

**Fostering strong partnerships with external organisations to support mental health and wellbeing:**

We will work with UUK, UWE and local Public Health colleagues to embed our *Suicide Prevention and Response Plan*, which has been informed by international best practice and aligns with the UUK *Suicide-Safer Universities* framework. We will develop our partnership working with the Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust and with the local NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, and we will partner in the city-wide wellbeing initiative *Thrive Bristol*. We also acknowledge the pressures on NHS and voluntary services; thus we are committed to working with colleagues in these sectors to ensure that we signpost students responsibly and effectively. We will continue to lobby for appropriate governmental support for services in our community.

**Using data and research to support mental health and wellbeing:**

We take an evidence-based approach to interventions, undertaking an annual student Mental Health and Wellbeing Survey to inform future initiatives. We will work in partnership with Bristol SU to ensure participation in surveys and to inform our community of the outcomes. We will establish a Mental Health Research Network, with a funded PhD studentship in the Elizabeth Blackwell Institute to provide a better understanding of the underpinning issues. Finally, we will seek funds to support a Vice Chancellor’s Fellowship in student mental health.

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2 [www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/guidance-for-universities-on-preventing-student-suicides.aspx](http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/guidance-for-universities-on-preventing-student-suicides.aspx)
Leadership & Communication

Aim: We will encourage everyone in the whole university community to support student and staff mental health and wellbeing, aiming for a sector-leading approach. We want student and staff mental health and wellbeing to be a strategic priority for leaders across the University. In short, in our University, mental health is everybody’s business.

What we are doing now:

• The Vice-Chancellor’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce is leading the university-wide approach to mental health and wellbeing, reporting to the University Management Team.
• The Taskforce is advised by an External Advisory Group of regional, national and international experts.
• The taskforce is leading on the development of university-wide Student and Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategies, co-produced with our students and staff.

What we will do next:

• An additional new Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience role will be introduced with a remit dedicated to leadership of the Bristol student experience, and with responsibility for leading on this Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and its implementation.
• The University Management Team will provide formal governance oversight of the Strategy with assurance oversight from the Board of Trustees, supported by a new annual strategic mental health report for the University.
• The Student Services leadership team will continue to support the implementation of this Strategy and embed the new Residential Life and Student Wellbeing Services. Additional leadership capacity has been established in Student Services focused on service development and integration, including two new senior roles with responsibilities focused on residential life and student wellbeing, and health and inclusion respectively.
• We will continue to work with Bristol SU, including its full time elected Officers, relevant networks and interested students to ensure student feedback and voices are heard consistently throughout the development of our approach and implementation of this strategy.
• We will continue to consult with our community regarding these issues, and actively work to ensure our community know where to seek and receive support.
Transitions

Aim: We will support improved mental health and wellbeing of our students at key points of transition into and out of the university, including during our recruitment and admissions activities, within new student induction and in our support of rewarding student career choices.

What we are doing now:

- We support students’ transition to university by providing information and guidance relating to student wellbeing within our recruitment and admissions activities. We encourage students to declare any pre-existing mental health issues prior to arrival.
- We continue to review and improve Welcome Week from a student perspective to support student transition and build an inclusive community.
- We support students in their schools via Student Wellbeing Advisers, (academic) Personal Tutors, Senior Tutors, School Administration Managers and Graduate Administration Managers.
- Personal Tutor Guidelines have been redrafted and enhanced.
- A new University Education Director for Personal Tutoring has been appointed to provide increasing institutional leadership for transitions and academic support.
- A new ‘opt-in’ emergency contact procedure has been introduced in which students are asked each year to give consent for the University to use their chosen emergency contact details where there are serious concerns about a student’s wellbeing.

What we will do next:

- We will increase our engagement with students through the admissions process, post-offer, and once they arrive at University to ensure that there are multiple opportunities for them to declare any pre-existing mental health issues. We will explain that we will treat this information confidentially and will only use it to help us to provide appropriate support.
- Student wellbeing messages and activities will be incorporated as a specific strand in Welcome Week, including in residences. Additional specific transitional support will be provided for our international students, disabled students, mature students and Bristol Scholars. Mental Health Advisers will contact students who have disclosed severe and enduring mental health difficulties to help coordinate their access to support and healthcare.
- Personal Development Planning will be embedded in the Personal Tutoring system, supporting wellbeing through focusing on achievable goals.
- We will provide new resources to support Study Skills to aid students’ transition into our learning community and help them to become independent learners.
- We will review our interactions with parents and carers, noting our legal obligations under the Data Protection Act and commitment to fostering the independence and resilience of our students as adult learners.
Prevention

Aim: We will seek to reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues and integrate healthy behaviour and promote positive mental health within the university’s educational mission and curriculum, in our co-curricular activities, in our communications and in our use of the spaces on campus.

What we are doing now:
- The Bristol Futures curriculum has been introduced to enhance support for students to develop their academic skills and personal attributes: the ‘Sustainable Futures’ online course directly addresses questions of positive mental health and happiness.
- We encourage participation in sport and physical activity via promotion of B:Active and Healthy Minds.
- We engage on city-wide issues relating to substance abuse and have developed a University substance misuse education programme in partnership with local agencies.
- We have launched a new confidential tool, Report and Support, for reporting instances of bullying or harassment in any form. We believe that bullying, harassment, assault and discrimination are never acceptable, and we are committed to ensuring both students and staff receive appropriate support.

What we will do next:
- The next phase of Bristol Futures will include an assessment change programme to address over-assessment, assessment bunching, and single assessments that place too much pressure on students – we will move in the direction of programme level assessment, with student and staff wellbeing in mind.
- Leading academics in our School of Psychological Sciences will pilot the provision of a new Science of Happiness academic unit that will cover themes of positive mental wellbeing, based on international best practice. This will be piloted on a non-credit-bearing basis in 2018-19 and then as a credit-bearing optional unit from 2019-20.
- Additional study skills resources will be made available in Blackboard to support improved health and wellbeing, for example an online module on wellbeing in the context of assessment.
- We will enhance our physical environment to encourage spaces that support wellbeing and community development. This will include wellbeing spaces in libraries; enhanced sports and physical activity spaces; new study, social and catering spaces; and green spaces.
- The new Residential Life and Student Wellbeing Service will focus on creating supportive communities of learners and on delivering a programme of activities that support wellbeing. Inclusive activities in academic schools and halls of residence will support and educate students about healthy lifestyles and encourage the development of positive communities.
• We will continue to consult with students regarding communications and signposting to services, and work with Bristol SU to ensure all our community know where to seek and receive support.
Early Intervention

**Aim:** We will work proactively in partnership with academic schools, professional services divisions, staff and students’ unions to promote improved mental health and wellbeing and to campaign against stigma.

What we are doing now:
- We have signed the ‘Time to Change’ pledge and monitor our progress in relation to the actions being undertaken as part this pledge.
- All staff are required to take mandatory mental health training as part of their staff development (the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust online module on supporting students), with more intense face-to-face training for those in key student support roles.
- We have introduced additional Mental Health First Aid training.
- The University provides support for Bristol SU campaigning in initiatives like ‘Mind Your Head’.

What we will do next:
- The University will plan collaboratively with Bristol SU to ensure maximum impact from our campaigning, educational and development work with students.
- The new Residential Life and Student Wellbeing Service teams will work in partnership with the Bristol SU and Sport, Exercise and Health to deliver a comprehensive programme of proactive outreach in the student community, incorporating a focus on mental health and wellbeing.
- A Wellbeing Communications Group will coordinate a programme of information, messages and campaigning for students during the academic year, delivered through the University’s website, Blackboard, and through social media.
- The University will commit to programmes of activity that can help relieve stress during major examination periods.
- We will continue to develop and deliver appropriate mental health and wellbeing training for staff across the University.
- We will review the information-sharing arrangements between residences, Student Wellbeing Advisors and academic schools to ensure students showing poor engagement are picked up early.
- We will review relevant policies and communications, such as the Fitness to Study policy, to ensure they reflect our commitment to wellbeing and support.
- We will investigate systems for the early identification of students withdrawing via engagement activities.
- We will review our Acceptable Behaviour Policy to make it more accessible to students and help reduce incidents of bullying and harassment.
Support

Aim: We will deliver effective student support services which are easy to access, meet the needs of our diverse student body, and foster mutually-supportive initiatives among students.

What we are doing now:

- Support for students is available through a range of overlapping services to help students access support that is right for them. This includes:
  - Extended same-day GP mental health appointments.
  - Our Student Counselling Service, which offers high quality, short term, individual and small group counselling in relation to those issues directly impacting on a student’s ability to study. All referrals (including self-referrals) to this Service are reviewed by professionals within one working day, referred to appropriate internal and external services, as well as prioritised for access to counselling support accordingly.
  - A Mental Health Advisory Service team providing care-planning for students with severe and enduring mental health difficulties. Our Disability Services provides support to students via mental health mentoring.
  - Big White Wall, a free, anonymous online platform where students can access advice and forums 24/7.
  - Dedicated Residential Life teams, who operate 24/7 within Residences.
- We provide enhanced guidance to support the Personal Tutoring system and facilitate the Senior Tutors in each school in their work to support students.
- Bristol SU provides a range of high-quality student support services, including Just Ask and Nightline, which operates 8pm-8am during term time.
- We provide dedicated support for students from under-represented backgrounds, including our Bristol Scholars. This support is be tailored to meet needs, informed by University-funded research.
- Our Student Funding Office provides financial information relating to withdrawal, suspension and transfer of studies as well as emergency short-term loans and access to bursaries and scholarships.
- We have created a new student hub in Senate House, incorporating a front-line student information service and dedicated space for postgraduate research students.
- We offer significant scholarships and bursaries, including support for accommodation costs and financial hardship packages and support for students who find themselves in financial difficulty.

What we will do next:

- We will continue to invest in our ambitious new Residential Life and Student Wellbeing Service, to enhance support for inclusive community building and student wellbeing.
• We are committed to ensuring that the Student Counselling Service grows in line with planned student growth, and to explore ways to reduce wait times for individual counselling.

• We are committed to ensuring that our support and wellbeing staff are representative of our community, including BME, LGBTQ+ and multi-lingual professionals.

• We will continually review the case for new services to target gaps in existing provision and will review access routes to services.

• We will provide structures for peer support via the senior and chief residents in student accommodation, and via peer mentoring and peer assisted study in academic schools, adopting a co-creation approach with Bristol SU.

• We will make improvements to relevant procedures and regulations, including student Fitness to Study and Fitness to Practice. We will review our engagement and attendance activities and approach to ensure it supports this Strategy.

• We will provide an increase in targeted information and advice relating to the withdrawal, suspension and transfer of studies, including support for staff engaged in these issues.
Staff

Aim: We will provide effective training and support for staff relating to mental health and wellbeing, connecting our work with staff and students, for mutual benefit. A parallel Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy will complement this student strategy.

What we are doing now:
- Staff support arrangements include the staff counselling service and an employee assistance programme which is available 24 hours.
- Online staff training relating to student mental health and how staff can best provide support to students forms part of the suite of mandatory training within our staff review and development processes.

What we will do next:
- Further training and resources will be made available in a range of workshops and on-line material, including training for managers.
- We will take a strategic approach to the planning and delivery of staff training relating to mental health and wellbeing, identifying priorities across our whole staff community, including developing the role of Personal Tutors and meeting the needs of postgraduate research supervisors.
- We will regularly seek feedback from staff (e.g. surveys on wellbeing issues) to inform our approach.
- We will revise our online resources supporting staff wellbeing, developing an integrated set of materials with ease of use in mind.
Partnerships

Aim: We will foster effective collaborative working within the University and strong partnerships with external organisations to support mental health and wellbeing. We will learn from national and international best practice, aspiring to a sector-leading approach.

What we are doing now:

- The Vice-Chancellor has established an Expert Advisory Group to inform our work on student support and wellbeing, and an external consultant has reviewed our student mental health support arrangements.
- We work closely with Bristol SU on mental health and wellbeing. The Bristol SU Chief Executive is a member of the Vice-Chancellor’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce.
- The Student Health Service has strong established links with the Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust and with the local NHS Clinical Commissioning Group aimed at improving pathways into NHS specialist mental health provision. We invest in our NHS-funded primary-care practice, but our responsibilities do not include providing healthcare more properly provided by NHS secondary care or the emergency services.
- The University fosters a strong collaborative connection with public health authorities at Bristol City Council and with third sector groups, including with the Samaritans, Papyrus and SARI. The University is a key partner in the city-wide wellbeing initiative known as Thrive Bristol.
- We have worked within the UUK Suicide-Safer Universities framework and with public health colleagues and the University of the West of England to develop a Suicide Prevention and Response Plan informed by international best practice. This will continue to inform our wider mental health strategies and approach.

What we will do next:

- We will continue to work with external partners to create a stepped pathway between educational settings and local mental health services and to help students and staff to navigate this pathway.
- We will continue to advocate for further governmental investment in services in our community.
- We will continue to partner with Universities UK in their national work to develop a place-based, collaborative model of mental health support and treatment for students.
- We will draw learning from national and international best practice as we continue to enhance our services supporting student wellbeing.
Data & Research

Aim: Drawing on the skills of our expert researchers, we will use data and research effectively to support mental health and wellbeing, helping us to monitor trends and plan improvements.

What we are doing now:

- We now invite all undergraduate and postgraduate students to participate in an annual wellbeing survey designed by an expert team of academic staff and students at the University to provide baseline data and opportunities to identify trends and priority areas where interventions are specifically required.
- Our staff survey gathers feedback on questions relating to health and wellbeing; we will review the content of this survey to include mental health questions as with the student mental health survey.
- Student support services employ a range of monitoring and evaluation methods, including service usage and satisfaction ratings.
- Bristol SU participates in relevant national research, such as the recent Alterline Union Futures report.

What we will do next:

- We will introduce a student wellbeing assessment as part of the new student registration process from 2018-19 onwards and will use the resulting data to discuss with staff and students where help might be appropriate. We will use these results as well as other student survey results, to provide baseline data and opportunities to identify trends and priority areas where interventions are specifically required.
- We are committed to collaborating with Bristol SU on implementing assessments and surveys of this nature to reach the widest possible audience.
- We will establish a Mental Health Research Network as part of the Elizabeth Blackwell Institute to deliver excellent research in student and staff mental health. The Network will include academics from across the University and strong Bristol SU representation. We will also fund a PhD student to analyse wellbeing data and evaluate the impact of our wellbeing initiatives.
- We will develop a monitoring approach to track progress in implementing this Mental Health Strategy and identify areas of good practice and areas for further investment.
- For the first time in 2019, the University will present a strategic mental health report, drawing information from a range of data sources.