COLLEGE WELLNESS COMMITTEE

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING FRAMEWORK

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Durham College is situated on the Traditional Territory of the Mississaugas and the territory covered by the Williams Treaties. We are thankful for the opportunity to teach and learn on the lands of the Peoples of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation.

A MESSAGE FROM THE COLLEGE WELLNESS COMMITTEE

At Durham College (DC), we understand that all members of the college community play an active and vital role in supporting the mental health and wellness of our students and employees.

The College Wellness Committee (CWC) was established to support all members of the campus community through the development and promotion of a strategic framework and best practices that can be used to ensure our campus is equipped with the services and resources needed to foster mental well-being.

The following strategic framework, developed in collaboration with the National Standard of Canada and the college's team of multi-disciplinary health and wellness professionals, outlines the guiding principles under which DC should operate in order to protect and promote health and wellness within the campus community.

Comprised of members from a number of departments and specialties, the CWC is committed to engaging the DC community in meaningful mental health and wellness dialogue, promoting wellness initiatives for students and employees, and reviewing Committee goals and strategic framework on an annual basis to ensure they align with current mental health and wellness national standards.

This philosophy provides a strong foundation upon which to expand Durham College's efforts and commitment to the goal of an inclusive, robust and flexible framework and set of services that meets the needs of all members of the DC community.

Sincerely,

Tara Koski
Dean, Students
Executive sponsor, CWC

Jennifer Cosway
Associate vice president, Human Resources and Equity
Executive sponsor, CWC

ABOUT THE COLLEGE WELLNESS COMMITTEE

Established in 2020, the College Wellness Committee (CWC) supports the mental health and wellness of all members of Durham College's campus community and is committed to promoting best practices to foster resilience.

With the guiding hand of the First Peoples Indigenous Centre (FPIC), we are actively working to foster a standard of practice with the help of the Anishinaabe Medicine Wheel that has been used by the Indigenous peoples across North America for time immemorial.

MANDATE

The principle objectives of the CWC include:

» Engaging the Durham College community in mental health and wellness dialogue.

» Developing and promoting a mental health and wellness strategic framework for students and employees at Durham College based on current best practices.

» Annually reviewing the committee goals and strategic framework to ensure they align with current mental health and wellness national standards.

» Ensuring that the strategic framework is utilized to inform decision-making and initiatives on campus.

» Providing oversight and coordination of activities regarding mental health and wellness at Durham College.

» Collaborating, and where appropriate, jointly promoting wellness initiatives for the campus community.

» Recording goals on the CWC mental health and wellness scorecard and report annually (at end of the fiscal year) to identify any gaps and ensure goals are being met.
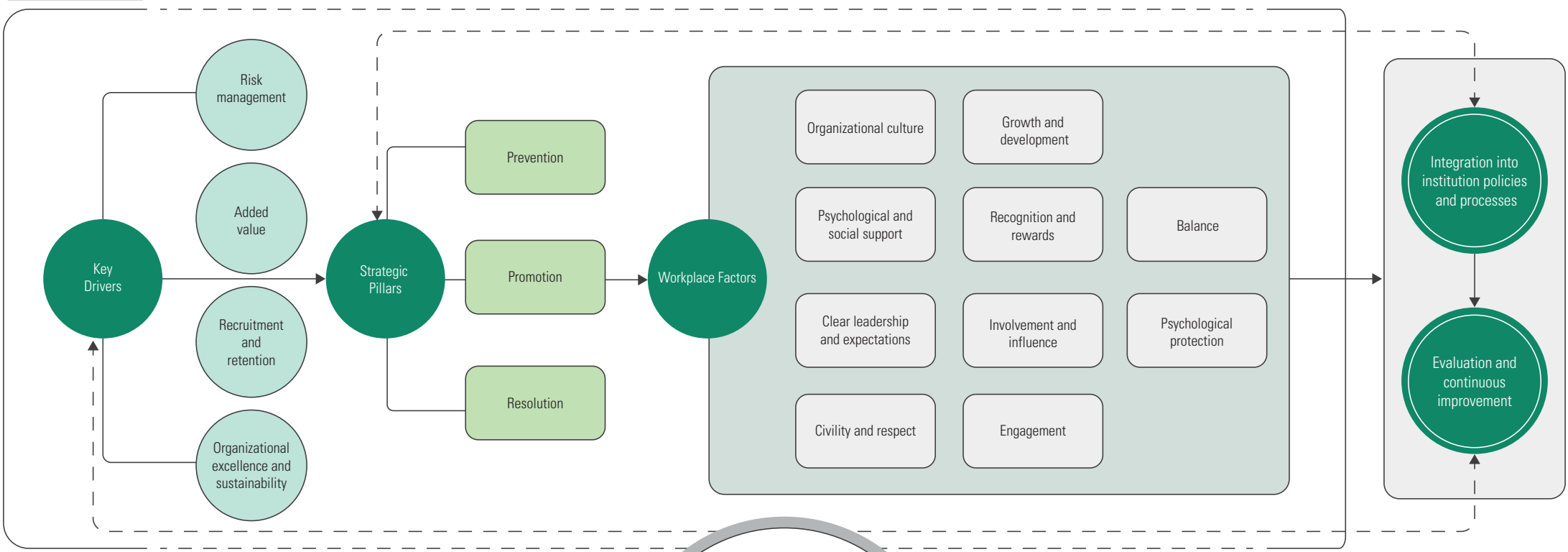
MEMBERS

Core Members of the CWC:

» Dean, Students (executive sponsor)

» Associate vice president, Human Resources and Equity (executive sponsor)

» Director, Campus Health and Wellness Centre (co-chair, student focus)

» Manager, Employee Wellness and Development (co-chair, employee focus)

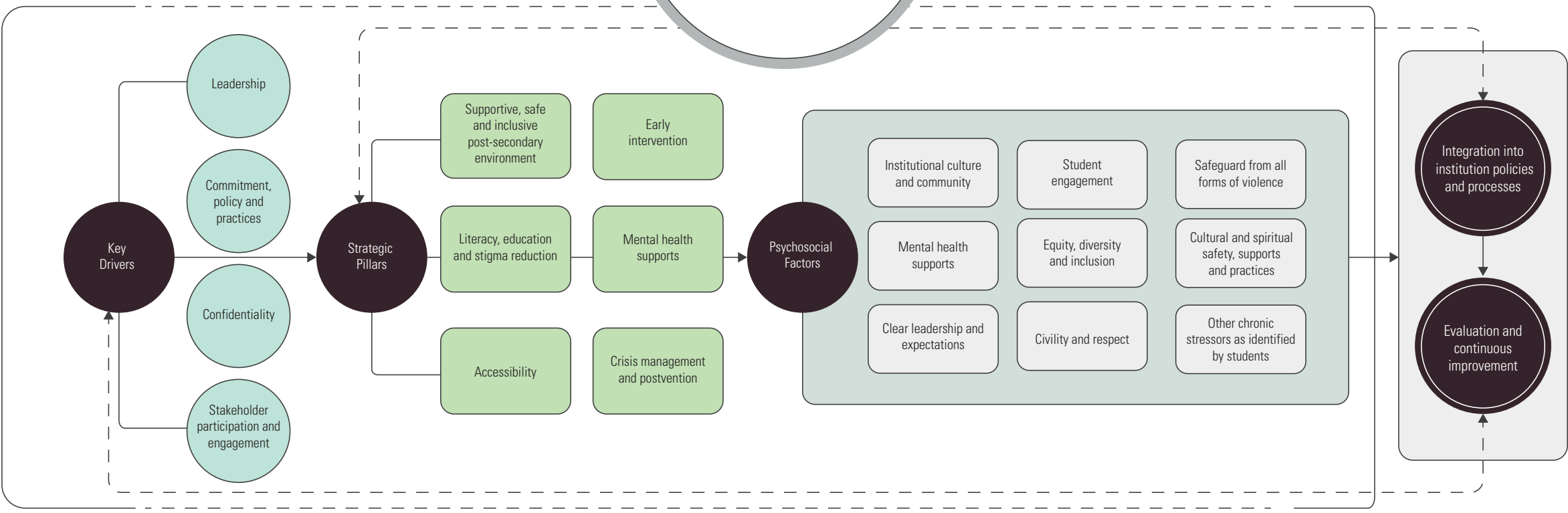» Health promotion co-ordinator, Campus Health and Wellness Centre

The Committee includes the following roles or their delegates:

» Equity, diversity & inclusion advisor, Human Resources and Equity

» Associate dean, Teaching, Learning and Program Quality, Centre for Teaching and Learning

» Fitness co-ordinator, Campus Athletic Centre

» Outreach worker, Residence

» International student advisor, International Education Office

» Outreach services manager, Outreach Services DCSA

» Indigenous coach, First Peoples Indigenous Centre

» Case manager, Access and Support Centre

» Student development manager, Student Development

Risk management

Added value

Recruitment and retention

Organizational excellence and sustainability

Key Drivers

Strategic Pillars

Prevention

Promotion

Resolution

Workplace Factors

Organizational culture

Growth and development

Psychological and social support

Recognition and rewards

Balance

Clear leadership and expectations

Involvement and influence

Psychological protection

Civility and respect

Engagement

Integration into institution policies and processes

Evaluation and continuous improvement

VISION

Durham College supports the mental health and wellness of all members of the campus community and is committed to promoting best practices to foster resilience.

Leadership

Commitment, policy and practices

Confidentiality

Stakeholder participation and engagement

Key Drivers

Strategic Pillars

Supportive, safe and inclusive post-secondary environment

Early intervention

Literacy, education and stigma reduction

Mental health supports

Accessibility

Crisis management and postvention

Psychosocial Factors

Institutional culture and community

Student engagement

Safeguard from all forms of violence

Mental health supports

Equity, diversity and inclusion

Cultural and spiritual safety, supports and practices

Clear leadership and expectations

Civility and respect

Other chronic stressors as identified by students

Integration into institution policies and processes

Evaluation and continuous improvement

EMPLOYEES

WORKPLACE FACTORS AFFECTING PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH & SAFETY

These workplace factors have been taken from Psychological health and safety in the workplace – prevention, promotion, and guidance to staged implementation; National Standard of Canada, 2018.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Organizational culture is a mix of norms, values, beliefs, meanings and expectations that group members hold in common and that they use as behavioural and problem-solving cues.

Organizational culture could enhance the psychological safety and health of the workplace and the workforce when it is characterized by trust, honesty, respect, civility, and fairness or when it values, for example, psychological and social support, recognition and reward.

An organization with good organizational culture would be able to state that:

» All people in the workplace are held accountable for their actions;

» People at work show sincere respect for others' ideas, values and beliefs;

» Difficult situations at work are addressed effectively;

» Workers feel that they are part of a community at work; and

» Workers and management trust one another.

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

Psychological and social support comprises all supportive social interactions available at work, either with co-workers or supervisors. It refers to the degree of social and emotional integration and trust among co-workers and supervisors. It refers also to the level of help and assistance provided by others when one is performing tasks. Equally important are the workers' perceptions and awareness of organizational support. When workers perceive organizational support, it means they believe their organization values their contributions, is committed to ensuring their psychological well-being, and provides meaningful support if this well-being is compromised.

An organization with good psychological and social support would be able to state that:

» The organization offers services or benefits that address worker psychological and mental health;

» Workers feel part of a community and that the people they are working with are helpful in fulfilling the job requirements;

» The organization has a process in place to intervene if an employee looks distressed while at work;

» Workers feel supported by the organization when they are dealing with personal or family issues;

» The organization supports workers who are returning to work after time off due to a mental health condition; and

» People in the organization have a good understanding of the importance of worker mental health.

CLEAR LEADERSHIP AND EXPECTATIONS

Clear leadership and expectations is present in an environment in which leadership is effective and provides sufficient support that helps workers know what they need to do, explains how their work contributes to the organization, and discusses the nature and expected outcomes of impending changes. There are many types of leadership, each of which impacts psychological safety and health in different ways. The most widely accepted categorizations of leadership are instrumental, transactional and transformational. Of these, transformational leadership is considered the most powerful. Instrumental leadership focuses primarily on producing outcomes, with little attention paid to the "big picture," the psychosocial dynamics within the organization, and unfortunately, the individual workers. Transformational leaders are seen as change agents who motivate their followers to do more than what is expected. They are concerned with long-term objectives and transmit a sense of mission, vision and purpose. They have charisma, give individual consideration to their workers, stimulate intellectual capabilities in others and inspire workers.

An organization with clear leadership and explicit expectations would be able to state that:

» In their jobs, workers know what they are expected to do;

» Leadership in the workplace is effective;

» Workers are informed about important changes at work in a timely manner;

» Supervisors provide helpful feedback to workers on their expected and actual performance; and

» The organization provides clear, effective communication.

CIVILITY AND RESPECT

Civility and respect is present in a work environment where workers are respectful and considerate in their interactions with one another, as well as with customers, clients and the public. Civility and respect are based on showing esteem, care and consideration for others, and acknowledging their dignity.

An organization with good civility and respect would be able to state that:

» People treat each other with respect and consideration in the workplace;

» The organization effectively handles conflict between stakeholders (workers, customers, clients, public, suppliers, etc.);

» Workers from all backgrounds are treated fairly in our workplace; and

» The organization has effective ways of addressing inappropriate behaviour by customers or clients.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Growth and development is present in a work environment where workers receive encouragement and support in the development of their interpersonal, emotional and job skills. Such workplaces provide a range of internal and external opportunities for workers to build their repertoire of competencies, which will not only help with their current jobs, but will also prepare them for possible future positions.

An organization with good growth and development would be able to state that:

» Workers receive feedback at work that helps them grow and develop;

» Supervisors are open to worker ideas for taking on new opportunities and challenges;

» Workers have opportunities to advance within their organization;

» The organization values workers' ongoing growth and development; and

» Workers have the opportunity to develop their "people skills" at work.

RECOGNITION AND REWARD

Recognition and reward is present in a work environment where there is appropriate acknowledgement and appreciation of workers' efforts in a fair and timely manner. This includes appropriate and regular acknowledgements such as worker or team celebrations, recognition of good performance and years served and milestones reached.

An organization with a good recognition and reward program would be able to state that:

» Immediate supervision demonstrates appreciation of workers' contributions;

» Workers are paid fairly for the work they do;

» The organization appreciates efforts made by workers;

» The organization celebrates shared accomplishments; and

» The organization values workers' commitment and passion for their work.

INVOLVEMENT AND INFLUENCE

Involvement and influence is present in a work environment where workers are included in discussions about how their work is done and how important decisions are made. Opportunities for involvement can relate to a worker's specific job, the activities of a team or department, or issues involving the organization as a whole.

An organization with good involvement and influence would be able to state that:

» Workers are able to talk to their immediate supervisors about how their work is done;

» Workers have some control over how they organize their work;

» Worker opinions and suggestions are considered with respect to work;

» Workers are informed of important changes that can impact how their work is done; and

» The organization encourages input from all workers on important decisions related to their work.

ENGAGEMENT

Engagement is present in a work environment where workers enjoy and feel connected to their work and where they feel motivated to do their job well. Worker engagement can be physical, emotional and/or cognitive. Physical engagement is based on the amount of exertion a worker puts into his or her job. Physically engaged workers view work as a source of energy. Emotionally engaged workers have a positive job outlook and are passionate about their work. Cognitively engaged workers devote more attention to their work and are absorbed in their job. Whatever the source, engaged workers feel connected to their work because they can relate to, and are committed to, the overall success and mission of their company.

Engagement should be seen as a result of policies, practices and procedures for the protection of worker psychological health and safety.

Engagement is similar to, but is not to be mistaken for, job satisfaction, job involvement, organizational commitment, psychological empowerment and intrinsic motivation.

An organization with good engagement would be able to state that:

» Workers enjoy their work;

» Workers are willing to give extra effort at work if needed;

» Workers describe work as an important part of who they are;

» Workers are committed to the success of the organization; and

» Workers are proud of the work they do.

BALANCE

Balance is present in a work environment where there is acceptance of the need for a sense of harmony between the demands of personal life, family and work. This factor reflects the fact that everyone has multiple roles: as workers, parents, partners, etc. This complexity of roles is enriching and allows fulfillment of individual strengths and responsibilities, but conflicting responsibilities can lead to role conflict or overload.

An organization with good balance would be able to state that:

» The organization encourages workers to take their entitled breaks (e.g., lunchtime, sick time, vacation time, earned days off, parental leave);

» Workers are able to reasonably meet the demands of personal life and work;

» The organization promotes life-work harmony;

» Workers can talk to their supervisors when they are having trouble maintaining harmony between their life and work; and

» Workers have energy left at the end of most workdays for their personal life.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROTECTION

Psychological protection is present in a work environment where workers' psychological safety is ensured. Workplace psychological safety is demonstrated when workers feel able to put themselves on the line, ask questions, seek feedback, report mistakes and problems, or propose a new idea without fearing negative consequences to themselves, their job or their career. A psychologically safe and healthy organization actively promotes emotional well-being among workers while taking all reasonable steps to minimize threats to workers' mental health.

An organization with good psychological protection would be able to state that:

» The organization is committed to minimizing unnecessary stress at work;

» Immediate supervisors care about workers' emotional well-being;

» The organization makes efforts to prevent harm to workers from harassment, bullying, discrimination, violence, or stigma; workers would describe the workplace as being psychologically healthy; and

» The organization deals effectively with situations that can threaten or harm workers through a trauma-informed lens (e.g., harassment, bullying, discrimination, violence, stigma, etc.).

STUDENTS

INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Institutional culture and community involve of a mix of norms, values, beliefs, meanings and expectations that campus members hold in common and that are used as behavioural and problem-solving cues. The college will act proactively and intentionally to create an empowered, connected and resilient student body that fosters an ethic of care, compassion, collaboration and action. We are dedicated to encouraging a transformational learning environment that enables and inspires members of the student community to become, and continue to be, healthy, well and engaged. Students are expected to show respect for others' ideas, values and beliefs, trust one another and feel that they are part of a community.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

Durham College mental health and wellness supports are student-centred; establishing a relationship with the student community to facilitate and sustain equitable access to either the provision of, or connections to financially accessible, culturally inclusive and safe, trauma-informed mental health and wellness supports and affirmative care. Supports are timely, co-ordinated and accessible, and may include institutional services, external providers and/or community-based services, including but not limited to: Access and Support Centre (ASC), Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), First Peoples Indigenous Centre (FPIC), Durham College Student Association (DCSA), and Financial Aid (FA). All supports are developed, maintained and designed in consultation with students.

Virtual and in-person supports include, but are not limited to:

- » Interactive workshops
- » Dialectical behaviour therapy and cognitive behavioural therapy
- » Peer-to-peer support groups
- » Mental health triage
- » Mental health nurses
- » Psychotherapy
- » Psychiatry
- » Addictions counseling
- » Individual and group coaching (mental health, financial, legal and academic)
- » Interprofessional health care practice with community support services
- » Residence outreach worker
- » Resilience and mental health educational programming
- » Stepped Care Model to provide a co-ordinated service delivery system that best meets the mental health and wellness needs of students
- » Access to Indigenous Elders, Traditional Knowledge Keepers, Indigenous Coaches, sacred medicines and Smudging.
- » EDI services that explore avenues to support racially diverse communities and equity seeking populations.
- » Access to academic accommodations and accessibility coaches.
- » Access to emergency financial aid (housing, food and transportation).

CLEAR LEADERSHIP AND EXPECTATIONS

The College Wellness Committee will provide effective leadership and the necessary support to help students know what they need to do, explain how engagement contributes to the community, and discuss the nature and expected outcomes of impending changes to the Mental Health and Well-being Framework. The executive sponsors and co-chairs will cultivate ongoing and sustained leadership and instill accountability for student mental health and wellness. All decision-making should be through a mental health and wellness lens; leadership will incorporate mental health and wellness into daily campus life, policy, procedure, and Durham College's strategic plan and approve appropriate mechanisms that demonstrate commitment to student mental health and wellness and develop and implement a systemic and holistic approach that supports student mental health and wellness. Leadership will recognize and communicate that mental health and wellness are a campus priority and that each of us are responsible.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Equity is the fair and respectful treatment of all people. An Equity Lens is a practical tool that helps to ensure policies, services and practices provide access to resources and opportunities for all persons to achieve successful outcomes.

Diversity is the demographic mix of the community, with a focus on the representation of equity-deserving groups, Inclusion is the creation of an environment where everyone feels welcome, is treated with respect, and is able to fully participate.

The campus will work to ensure that students feel welcomed and supported on campus by providing a variety of diverse and comprehensive programs designed to foster academic, professional and social growth. We promote respect, and maintain and advocate for an inclusive campus for all students regardless of race, gender, age, religion, gender identity or expressions, marital or family status, ethnic background, socio-economic class, ability or sexual orientation.

CIVILITY AND RESPECT

The community promotes a learning environment where students are respectful and considerate in their interactions with one another, as well as with faculty, staff and the public. Every person has a right to be respected and safe at Durham College. Disrespectful behaviour in our classrooms, remote environments or on our campus is unacceptable. Students will be treated fairly and the organization effectively addresses inappropriate behaviour.

SAFEGUARD FROM ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE

All necessary measures are taken to protect, prevent and eliminate all forms of violence including physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, spiritual, cultural, racial, verbal, as well as financial violence and neglect to improve student well-being. Leadership employs evidence-based, comprehensive approaches that address the multiple factors that impact violence, including factors that increase the risk of violence and factors that buffer against risk and promote positive student development and well-being. Practices that recognize the connections between violence and negative mental health and wellness outcomes and behaviours, and protects and emphasizes the importance of physical, psychological and emotional safety for all. We acknowledge the role violence plays in the lives of those at risk.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SAFETY, SUPPORTS AND PRACTICES

The CWC encourages the utilization of a holistic approach to support students through cultural and spiritual practices that foster an environment which is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for people; a space where there is no assault, challenge or denial of identity, of who one is and what one needs. In this environment, there is clear, value free, open and respectful communication with a goal of developing trust, recognizing and avoiding stereotypical barriers. The CWC is prepared to engage with others in a two-way dialogue where knowledge is shared and actively support First Nations Métis and Inuit, 2SLGBTQ+, International students, and other vulnerable student populations in their cultural and spiritual practices in order to promote identity, safety and well-being.

OTHER CHRONIC STRESSORS AS IDENTIFIED BY STUDENTS

Through the collection and consideration of students' needs, we can provide relevant and meaningful programming to address the gaps in services and drive the engagement of external partnerships to improve student support. Chronic stressors are any other event, or gap which students identify as a chronic cause of strain or tension, or challenge that impedes the students' wellness experience.