

Between April and November 2019, Keeling & Associates, LLC (K&A) worked with Carleton College to support and facilitate the development of a forward-looking strategy for student health and wellness services. This document provides a summary of K&A's findings and recommendations.

Overview

The greatest strength of Carleton's strategies for student health and wellness begin with Student Health and Counseling's (SHAC) integrated, holistic, and developmental approach to delivering high-quality student health and mental health services. Carleton should retain this existing structure (on campus, under College management) while exploring opportunities to further improve and better sustain coordination of care. Importantly, identifying new space should remain a top priority.

More broadly, the campus culture at Carleton does not consistently or effectively promote a balance between an academically rigorous experience and students' resiliency, self care, and personal development; the College, as a whole, should seek to reimagine the student experience in ways that better prioritize health and well-being alongside a challenging educational experience.

Findings

► Strengths:

- *Programs and services*: embraces best practices in college health (integrated and co-located primary care and counseling, highly developmental and holistic services), competent staff, diversified services to manage increasing demand for mental health care (group therapy, technology, etc.), high student satisfaction rates
- *Campus partners*: Office of Health Promotion (success with alcohol and suicide prevention initiatives, Student Wellness Advocates), Physical Education and Recreation, faculty advocates on the Student Life Advisory Committee

- ▶ Challenges:
 - *Staffing and infrastructure*: rising demand for counseling (increase of 29% in the past five years) without significant changes in full-time staffing or scope of care, challenges with staff morale and provider diversity, inadequate space and facilities
 - *Programs and services*: absence of case management function for intake/referrals, insufficient nutritional counseling, limited community resources for longer-term care
 - Students request more (and more diverse) counselors, appointments and hours—though perceptions about access are also influenced by aspects of the campus culture, which lead students to prioritize academic demands over their well-being

Recommendations

- ▶ Retain on-campus health and counseling services under College management
- ▶ Develop a strategy for relocating and improving space for SHAC
- ▶ Clarify and communicate scope of mental health care, including options and limitations
- ▶ Add one additional full-time professional staff position in counseling to reduce dependence on part-time providers and improve coordination of care
- ▶ Embed a case management intake/referral model for counseling
- ▶ Sustain long-term commitment to improving provider diversity (a challenge nationally); in the short-term; continue to prioritize intercultural competency and inclusive care
- ▶ Allocate more resources toward nutritional counseling and support
- ▶ Take full advantage of any new, expanded, or potential local and regional partnerships (while retaining on-campus management of integrated health and counseling services)
- ▶ Explore short- and long-term feasibility of diversifying revenue for primary care and psychiatric services through third-party billing
- ▶ Develop and implement a comprehensive student engagement plan: periodic student feedback forums (with follow-up), updates about programs and services, assessment
- ▶ Further strengthen collaboration between SHAC and OHP, and expand other partnerships to promote well-being across campus—including reviews of academic and other policies that may hinder student well-being, working with the Student Life Advisory Committee to better prepare faculty to assist students of concern