

PROBLEM DEFINITION

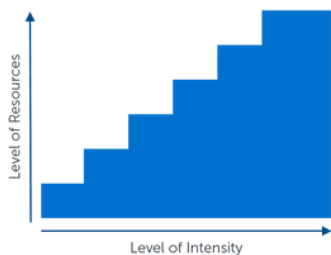
UT has various peer support resources available, but there is a gap between the programs offered & students' awareness & usage of them. Our research aims to integrate best practices for peer recovery support into mental health and wellbeing programs to promote a stronger culture of community care.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the gaps between best practices for peer support service and what UT is currently offering?



Building Options for Students
A Conceptual Model of Stepped Care



Key Principles of Stepped Care

- ✓ Care is stepped up or down as needed, based on students' changing concerns
- ✓ Prioritizes the least intensive and most effective treatment option
- ✓ Saves the most limited and intensive clinical resources for students who need them most
- ✓ Depends on a wide range of service including self-help resources, peer support, online tools, and on- and off-campus therapy



SPECIAL THANKS

Professor David Springer
Patty Micks with the FIG program
Adrian Lancaster with Longhorn
Share Project
Tammy Heinz with the Hogg
Foundation
Jessi Davis with the Texas Institute for
Excellence in Mental Health

AUSTIN RESOURCES



COME TOGETHER: ENHANCING PEER SUPPORT AT UT



LITERATURE REVIEW

EVIDENCE-BASED FRAMEWORK OF POLICY SUPPORT

- Inspire hope & resiliency
- Dispel myths about mental health and substance use
- Walk with people on their journey
- Experience-sharing offers hope and sense of mutuality
- Help Mentees create roadmap for goals

OUTCOMES OF PEER SUPPORT

- Rise in self-esteem and confidence
- Engagement in self-care and wellness
- Decreased costs to mental health systems
- Reduction of in patient services
- Lower rates of depression
- Reduction in hospital admission rates



OTHER UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS

- University of Albany-peer mental coaching program , coaches use social work and counseling techniques
- MIT- encrypted peer to peer texting line
- Rhodes College- after hours counseling ran by and for students
- Brown University- program ran by and for students who are neurodivergent
- Vanderbilt- group of mentors for learners with disabilities

RECOMMENDATIONS

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMMING

First-Year Interest Group Expansion

- Increase amount of FIGs by alternating between virtual and in-person meetings to avoid space limitations

1-to-1 Peer Pilot Program

- Pilot program the pairs students with one another
- Symbiotic 'hear and be heard' relationship
- Challenge: preparing students with the appropriate training/education to support one another
- Offer different mediums: In-person, virtual, or via text

RECOMMENDATIONS

INCREASE LONGHORN SHARE PROJECT SUPPORT

Share Support Specialists

- Increase outreach efforts to involve more students
- Remove barriers to students becoming Share Support Specialists

Hire Additional LSP Staff

- LSP serves as an important component to UT's mental wellness infrastructure
- Provide additional LSP programming
- Increase mental health early prevention services

DATA AND RESOURCES

Track Peer Programs and Counseling Use

- Does the use of peer programs impact the use of higher level counseling services?
- Data could inform future policy

Austin Resource Database

- Include resources from greater Austin area
- Provides a link to the community that last beyond graduation
- Alleviates the stress on UT's resources
- Community resources offer a way for students to seek help away from their university community
 - privacy and anonymity