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SPECIAL EDITION FE & 6th Form Colleges

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Angela Balding

Support for Healthy Colleges

SHEU continues to support the promotion of healthy lifestyles and healthy settings in Further Education and 6th Form Colleges.

In the late 1990s, SHEU successfully piloted an FE student survey instrument with colleges and student groups. The purpose of the survey was to promote debate and change in the colleges who received reports about the health-related behaviour of their students. The data also informed and to some extent provided feedback on local health campaigns.¹

Online developments

The desire to make the survey instruments more accessible to colleges came with the development of SHEU's online survey services in 2001.

As the Kirklees Healthy College network² developed, SHEU worked closely with colleges to improve its surveys services.

By 2006 a unique databank of student healthy lifestyle data had developed. In January the first Healthy Student News monthly email³ appeared and in September SHEU sponsored an online questionnaire for use in colleges.⁴

Use of results

As part of the sponsorship offer, colleges were asked how they planned to use the information resulting from the survey. The following points summarise the responses from many colleges:

- Help to move our Healthy College project forward
- The data would help to formulate our action plan and help develop and implement our Every Child Matters (ECM) strategy
- Use the findings of the survey for further evidence

for the ECM section of the SAR and to further support our contribution to the Joint Area Review

- Use the data to take into account the students as key stakeholders in the college's ECM framework and action plan
- Beneficial to be able to benchmark with other organisations and the potential to share good practice

The first National Health Colleges Conference took place in early 2007⁵ and SHEU presented the findings from its sponsored survey that involved 34 institutions and nearly 5,500 students.⁶

Since then SHEU has continued to work with colleges by providing baseline data for programme planning. Colleges involved in the 2006 sponsored survey are planning to carry out repeat surveys.

Experience gained, since first developing lifestyle surveys in 1977, has shown how powerful data can be. Survey results can empower staff and students to change lifestyle practices and encourage the development of healthy settings.

The sponsorship of this special FE issue of Education and Health confirms SHEU's commitment to provide services that promote objective debate about the best ways to serve and educate young people about health and social issues.

SHEU would like to thank those who contributed to this publication and may their work continue to inspire others working for healthy colleges.

References

1-6 articles are available as pdf files from:
www.sheu.org.uk/whoweworkwith/healthystudents.htm

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Peter Chell

Extending the Healthy Schools principles into Further Education

Being a young person in today's society can be difficult at times, with greater pressures and demands than previous generations. A proportion of the young people in our current Further Education (FE*) system have a range of social and emotional difficulties that can lead them into poor choices regarding their health and education.

The National Healthy Schools Programme is inviting dialogue to gain an understanding of how government could help young people in FE settings adopt healthier behaviours. Some young people tend to have a lifestyle where risky behaviours are commonplace. Government public health campaigns seek to address issues like binge drinking, smoking, obesity, sexual health and drug misuse. We have an opportunity to explore whether the Healthy College approach, with its inherent understanding of the links between health, education and achievement, can support young people to fulfil their full potential.

Over the last 3 years, a lot has been learned through developing and implementing the infrastructure and organisational change model of the National Healthy Schools Programme (NHSP). The programme now clearly meets the needs of schools and young people and provides a model of working that is tried and tested, with tangible and measurable outcomes for schools and young people.

The NHSP operates an audit based self - evaluative process, is supported and quality assured at a local authority level and has become a key tool in improving the health and well-being of staff and children and is established as part of the local authority toolkit supporting the school improvement process.

The promotion of a Healthy College approach within FE is clearly supportive of ECM and impacts upon 14 - 19 reform agenda by seeking to create a safe and healthy learning environment. Extending the Healthy Schools

experience into the FE sector will ensure a continuity of process in terms of creating a sustainable, whole organisation approach to young people's health and well-being.

The Government's 2004 *Choosing Health* White Paper gave Healthy Schools a high profile for development and also specified an intention to promote the concept into colleges

The National Healthy Schools Programme (NHSP) is currently enjoying a high level of success with schools, with participation levels at 91% and the milestone of 55% of all schools achieving National Healthy School Status by December 2007 is well on target. The programme is bringing about a range of improvements and beneficial outcomes for schools and students across the four themes of PSHE, Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Emotional Health & Well-Being.

We now need to focus on the next step of supporting the development of a quality based, Healthy Colleges programme to ensure those in FE receive the benefits now being experienced in schools. Nationally and locally there is a great deal of experience and good practice to share to build a similar healthy culture within FE that promotes positive mental health and well-being and creates a learning environment that young people wish to be actively engaged with.

Further Education is already supporting many aspects of the Government health agenda, helping to support vulnerable groups and tackling particular health issues.

Much of this is fuelled by the hard work being carried out across the established Healthy Colleges Network and by the growing number of Healthy Schools working with the FE sector, covering a wide range of themes and approaches all driven by local needs.

Working in partnership with colleagues in: Department of Health, Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), other key organisations and young people, we need to build a consistent and robust model of practice, which will service the needs of all young people and particularly those deemed as vulnerable.

* In this article the term FE, will include FE Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges and other Tertiary settings.

Glynis Collins, Choices Centre Sexual Health Nurse, has recently received the fpa 2007 Pamela Sheridan Award on behalf of Huddersfield Technical College. For communication please email: GCollins@huddcoll.ac.uk This article is reprinted, with permission, from fpa.

Huddersfield Technical College: Excellence in sex and relationships education

In July, fpa announced that the winner of the 2007 Pamela Sheridan Award for excellence in sex and relationships education (SRE) was the Choices Centre Project at Huddersfield Technical College.

The Choices Centre provides SRE to Huddersfield Technical College students including a sexual health service and a support and advice service. The project will receive £1,000 and five years membership with fpa.

Since it started in January 2005 the Choices Centre Project has worked closely with the college to integrate specially tailored RASHE (Relationships and Sexual Health Education) sessions into tutorials. These sessions have made students feel more comfortable seeking advice at the on-site clinic.

The Choices Centre works with students from a range of backgrounds and ethnicities. It has achieved particular success with young Asian men who were concerned about their lack of sexual health awareness. The Choices Centre worked closely with this group which has led not only to an improvement in their knowledge and skills, but some now want to work with fellow students and educate them in sexual health.

Main aim

One of the project's main aims is to stop students leaving education because of an unplanned pregnancy. As a direct result of the work of the Choices Centre the number of female students leaving the college due to pregnancy has been dramatically reduced.

The Choices Centre has also developed a number of excellent working relationships with other agencies. It has built strong links with specialist sexual health providers in the

area as well as the Drugs Action Team, specialist mental health services and HIV services.

Its success looks set to continue with more innovative ideas planned for the future. For example, extra drop-in sessions for students doing engineering, construction and motor vehicle courses who attend college one day a week are in the pipeline.

Terri Ryland, Director of Practice Development, fpa said: "The Choices Centre Project identified gaps in the SRE programme and worked with Huddersfield Technical College to fill them. What started out as a simple condom distribution scheme has developed through hard work and constant innovation into an excellent sexual health service. They have targeted particular groups of students and communities to great effect, improved access to services and built good partnerships with other service providers in the area."

Vision and passion

Glynis Collins, Choices Centre Sexual Health Nurse, commented: "When I came to the college just over two years ago, myself and Meg Kierek-Bell, the Occupational Health Advisor, shared a vision and a passion to make this service work and become a reality. We have succeeded after a lot of hard work and determination and the service is still evolving and improving. The college and the local PCT recognise how important this work is by continuing to fund it. It is brilliant to be recognised nationally and I hope other colleges will be encouraged to adopt a similar approach to providing college-based sexual health services for their students."

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Belinda Ghai

Walsall College: Promoting healthy lifestyles with young people

In January 2007, I started planning a project, based on the Government's Every Child Matters initiative, to promote healthy lifestyles amongst young people in education.

Initial discussions with several groups of 16-19 year old males, about promoting healthy lifestyles, revealed the project may encounter some resistance from the participants.

I received a clear message that they knew what was best for them – their lifestyles symbolised what they wanted out of life. It was important to have fun, exercise the power to spend money on their priorities and live for today. Taking care of one's well-being is something that has no relevance in their current lifestyle.

Project pilot

I piloted the project within the School of Engineering and worked with 44 students. My primary aim was to encourage learners to reflect on their current lifestyle and consider alternative choices to promote their well-being. I wanted to empower and motivate them to challenge existing lifestyle patterns sustained by media and peer pressure.

Topics were explored by the learners using a series of workshops and supportive strategies were developed for small lifestyles changes. Topics included nutrition, physical activity, drug abuse and stress management.

Activities were organised to provide opportunities for new experiences, including making and tasting smoothies, using pedometers while power walking, debating impact of local drug cultures and

undertaking relaxation exercises.

At the end of each session, learners devised an action plan to support one positive change to their lifestyle. The following session, action plans were reviewed and evaluated.

During a lively group discussion on nutritional self-assessment, one participant believing poultry to be a healthy option, acknowledged he ate fried chicken every day. The following week, whilst reviewing action plans, he admitted he had decided to go 'cold turkey'! and was amazed how easy it was to say 'no'.

Feedback

Feedback received from participants through evaluation forms and group discussions was very positive. Workshop resources and activities were developed for a wide range of learning styles and focused on being interactive, informative and challenging.

The project has now been extended across the college. Teaching resources are available for staff on the college's intranet site and additional training available. Future workshops to be developed will include sexual and mental health.

Overall I was surprised how quickly some participants' negative attitudes were replaced with a willingness to explore and consider alternative healthy options.

One of the more influential factors was using immediate health benefits. These benefits, which enhanced the student's body image, were used as goals rather than assurances of a long and healthy life and appeared to be great motivators.

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Pat Ahern

Stockport Healthy College Standard: An audit tool for Every Child Matters

Stockport College, Aquinas College and Sheadle & Marple Sixth Form College are all working towards the Stockport Healthy College Standard (SHCS) which has been developed with the aid of funding from Stockport Drugs Action Team, the PHSE/Citizenship Service of the Stockport CYPD and Stockport PCT, using Kirklees Healthy College Standard as a framework.

With the advent of Youth Matters, Every Child Matters (ECM) and the subsequent OFSTED Inspection Framework, it was felt that the standard should be developed further in order to become an audit tool for the ECM outcomes and also Youth Matters.

The SHCS has been developed with this purpose in mind and contains a set of proformas for each of the seven criteria. Youth Matters outcomes have been mapped generically against each criterion. However, each criterion has a set of performance indicators and it is against these that ECM

outcomes have been mapped.

By studying the pro-formas for SHCS, it becomes apparent that the outcomes and aims identified in Every Child Matters can be addressed by the Stockport Healthy College Standard and will, for the most part, be achieved, by meeting the criteria. For Youth Matters SHCS provides a useful starting point and a skeleton on which to build.

An example of this is given below: Criterion 4: Student Health and Well Being. There are actually sixteen performance indicators for this criterion, but the following diagram uses the first 2 performance indicators to demonstrate how many of the ECM outcomes can be mapped. Evidence is then logged against the performance indicators and, in doing so, ECM outcomes are also audited. This helps to avoid duplication of audits throughout college.

Criterion 4: Student Wellbeing - AUDIT SHEET				
Performance Indicators				
The college must have an ethos which values the health & wellbeing of all students.				
Youth Matters: Outcome 1: Engaging in constructive activities; Outcome 2: Making a positive contribution; Outcome 3: Information, Advice and guidance; Outcome 4: All Young People achieving			CURRENT POSITION	
Every Child Matters Outcome	Performance indicator	Evidence	Action needed Yes No	
Make a Positive Contribution C & YP engage in decisionmaking/participate in college councils	1. College has consulted the student population on issues relating to this criterion			
Be Healthy - C & YP have access to appropriate range of support including mental & emotional - Healthy lifestyles are promoted for C & YP - C & YP have healthy lifestyles - C & YP are sexually healthy - C & YP choose not to take illegal drugs - Action is taken to promote C & YP's mental health	2 (a) A pastoral care system and practice, including the opportunity for all students and staff to talk about problems and access to guidance and advice. Details of in the staff handbook and student pack			
Enjoy & Achieve - Achieve stretching standards - Achieve personal & social development	2 (b) Students know what support is available in college i.e. where to go to discuss sensitive/problematic issues			
Achieve Economic Well-Being - C & YP engage in further education, employment or training on leaving college - C & YP ready for employment	2 (c) A structured tutorial system which includes the opportunity for students to identify and explore physical and mental health issues			
Stay safe - C & YP have security, stability & are cared for				

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Mary-Joy Albutt

Healthy College Initiatives: Are you thinking outside the boxes or just ticking them?

Students studying A2 in Health and Social Care are expected to complete a health promotion unit. In this demanding unit they not only have to learn about health promotion theory, but they have to plan and implement their own health promotion campaign and evaluate its effectiveness.

Students can choose any target group as the focus of their campaign. In previous years our students have always focussed on their own peer group and carried out their health promotion within the college due to the many safety and organisational implications of undertaking such an activity externally.

During the evaluation of this unit in the last academic year, the vast majority of students felt that it would have been far more meaningful to them if they could have gone into local schools to implement their campaigns.

Peer Education qualification

I made some initial enquiries with the Dudley Schools' Teenage Pregnancy advisor to test out the feasibility of our students going into local schools. Within 48 hours of my initial enquiry, the Dudley Teenage Pregnancy Team (TPT) had secured funding for a number of our students to undertake a peer education qualification in sexual health. They would be taken on a residential weekend and given all the training to achieve the qualification at no cost to the college or the student. All we had to do was provide the students and agree to them becoming peer educators in local schools and our own college!

We initially had 44 students express an interest in undertaking this qualification when the TPT could only offer 12 places. This led me to approach other professionals to see if similar peer education courses could be arranged. A freelance drugs awareness advisor who has worked with the college for a number of years agreed to adapt one of his drugs awareness courses to include a peer education element and agreed to deliver a one day course to our students free of charge. His only condition was that we carefully evaluated it and supported him in trying to get this course accredited and in securing funding to run it again in the future. Other outside professionals involved in health promotion have also enthusiastically agreed to run workshops and support our students in planning their health promotion initiatives.

During the summer months I met with the managers of Dudley Health Promoting Schools who immediately embraced the idea of our students going into local schools as peer educators. We were under no illusions as to the careful planning that will be required but everyone agreed that as this was such an exciting initiative, it was worth putting the time and effort into.

If successful, this initiative will "tick numerous boxes" in terms of Every Child Matters, Youth Matters, enrichment, peer education / mentoring, embedding healthy college activities into the curriculum and working in partnership with outside agencies. But far more important than this is that it will, hopefully, greatly enhance the students' learning experience.

"This kind of initiative would be impossible to implement if we had not already established very strong partnerships with Dudley Health Promoting Schools, Dudley Teenage Pregnancy Team and other professionals working within the Dudley Borough. Stourbridge College is extremely grateful for their enthusiasm and willingness to work with us in improving the outcomes for our students."

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Karen Storey

New College Swindon: The Confide Clinic

I started work at New College, Swindon in September 2005 and previously worked as a Health Visitor and a Sexual Health Outreach Worker. As a Sexual Health Nurse I have worked in a number of settings including Confide clinics. I am also aware that young people are the group least likely to access health advice and treatment in traditional clinical settings.

At New College, large numbers of 16 - 19 year olds attend on a daily basis from all over Swindon. It was apparent that attention was given to many aspects of the young person's health but not to their sexual health.

It was also apparent that Sex and Relationships Education teaching stops when students leave secondary school. This is at a time when they would like to be able to access information at a convenient time and place. Therefore, in response to community trends and pressures, sexual health advice lessons were planned and delivered to a range of students from Pre-16 to Level 3 students. The lessons were linked to the Confide clinic and sexual health outreach nurses were accessed to enable us to work on a joint initiative. We have also been involved in delivering 'in house' training sessions to tutors, giving them the skills to address sexual health and education with their tutees.

Peer Mentors

It was also suggested that peer mentors be included as well. The decision to use peer mentors was an idea in collaboration with the Youth Services and the Colleges own Student Services. There was also a need, for the students following GCE

Applied Health and Social Care, to become aware of working within multidisciplinary teams in a care setting.

College Confide Clinic

After much discussion and preparation the College Confide clinic started in September 2006. Some of the aims include reducing teenage pregnancies in a nearby Swindon 'Hot spot' and reducing the prevalence of teenage STIs in the Swindon area.

The clinic is based within the Health and Social Care section and has the use of a large room for meeting and greeting and a smaller more confidential room for seeing clients. Every day at lunchtime the clinic is managed by a health professional. A peer mentor has been appointed for each day covers the 'Drop in' on a voluntary basis. It has become evident that the peer mentors are vital in the management of the lunch hour - as they are a constant- whereas health professionals have on occasion been called away.

Students attending this service have agreed that it has been nicer to see a health professional in a familiar setting. One student commented that, *'it's nice not having to go and sit in a waiting room with people who are older than you and look at you as if you have done something wrong!'* Other students have said that it is easily accessible and, *'you don't have to worry about how or when you are going to get to the other clinics in town'*. Many students have agreed it's a good service to have in College, *'because when you are already worried about exams and course work and then have to worry about seeking advice at a clinic, where you don't know anyone or where it is - it just adds to the stress - knowing I can just come to College takes a lot of that stress away'*.

Dawn Vincent is the Catering and Retail Manager at Stoke on Trent College. The following article is taken from the Stoke on Trent College Press Release 31/07/07. For correspondence please email: dawn.vincent@stokecoll.ac.uk

Stoke on Trent College awarded the Kirklees Healthy College Standard

The staff and students are really proud to be only the second college in the country to gain the "Kirklees Healthy College Standard". The scheme was first set up as a pilot initiated from Huddersfield New College in 2001. It is now available to colleges across the country and is similar to the healthy schools standard, but with an emphasis on college issues. The status of Healthy College will benefit the College community as well as the community as a whole. Stoke on Trent has been classed as an area of deprivation with significant health inequalities; with one of the highest teenage pregnancies in Europe, a tradition of poor diet, high obesity levels and lack of physical activity, leading to high rates of coronary heart disease.

However, there have been significant improvements in people's health in the city over the past ten years with increased life expectancy and death rates, for some of the major diseases, falling. Stoke on Trent College is in a prime position to influence young people's health and that of their families and friends.

Healthy College criteria

With the accolade of Kirklees Healthy College Standard, the college recognises the importance of investing in the health and welfare of its staff and students as well as providing a physical and social environment that is favorable to both teaching and learning. In order to gain the Healthy College status nine criteria areas had to be fulfilled, these are:

- Whole college awareness
- Active citizens
- Smoke free environment
- Healthy eating
- Environment
- Community involvement
- Student wellbeing
- Physical activity
- Staff health and wellbeing

Each area looks at improving the standard of young people's health and well

being for the present as well as for the future and also encourages staff to become healthier.

Whole College Awareness

In the area of "Whole College Awareness", the introduction of health awareness days saw an increase in students and staff getting involved in health issues with an increase in the number of staff into physical activities and improved healthy eating in the restaurants.

In the "Active Citizens" the College has cross college opportunities including the Student Council, "Speak up Squad" and student representation on numerous committees. Another area is "Community Involvement", where the college encourages the active involvement of students, staff, governors, parents and members of the local community in the life of the College.

In the area of "Student Wellbeing" the college offers a pastoral care system with students and staff having access to free guidance and advice with mentor support and access to counsellors.

The Healthy College status has encouraged students to participate and contribute to college life with enrichment activities and training and information on drug and sexual health being readily available to both students and staff.

Caroline Highland, Director Student & External Relations said: "We are delighted to have achieved the Kirklees Healthy College Standard. A great deal of work has gone into ensuring that we meet all the requirements of the 9 criteria. It is an investment for now and the future in an area which makes a positive difference for our students and staff. Being only the second college in the country to achieve shows a real commitment and is a special achievement for us. A big thanks to everyone who has been involved."

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Andrew Beardall

South Thames College - Health Promotion

Being Healthy is one of the five 'Every Child Matters' strands designed to raise awareness of health related issues amongst students.

Championing this work at South Thames College has been the Enrichment team, who work closely with other teams including the Counselling and Advice Service and curriculum staff to offer a varied programme of activities that raise awareness. The focus on health has led to a very good relationship with the Public Health department of Wandsworth Primary Care Trust (WPCT). With a mixture of projects and regular on-going campaigning we have promoted health and well being amongst our diverse population of learners.

Projects

Over the last two years a number of projects have been undertaken by our learners alongside WPCT. Two of these have been through our Art and Design department. Our learners were given the opportunity to produce some campaign materials aimed at their peers. One of these designs was launched on World AIDS Day by WPCT and formed the basis for their campaign. Recently it has been displayed at bus stops in Wandsworth as part of an advertising campaign. The other project that involved learners from the design courses was a re-branding exercise for the sexual health clinics.

A third project involved a group of performing arts learners, who developed a production with WPCT on alcohol and sexual health. The production was recorded and offered to schools, youth clubs and colleges as a way of engaging the audience (young people) in the topic (sexual health

and alcohol) with experienced facilitators on hand to guide young people through the debate.

Events

We take many opportunities to work with external agencies like WPCT to engage our learners in health issues. We hold annual Health Weeks which have included a promotion on de-stress (organised by our Student Counselling and Advice Service), healthy eating, safe sex, stop smoking and drug awareness. During the last event there was an opportunity for learners to have a body 'MOT' with checks on baseline and clinical measurements, a health questionnaire, physical activity, smoking, alcohol intake and mental wellbeing. There was also an exit interview with recommendations for a follow-up course of action. Other events have included World AIDS Day where we had use of a double-decker bus in which various activities were offered.

We recently piloted a drop-in sexual health service, delivered by a nurse from WPCT. After the project was evaluated the Trust agreed to fund it for 2007. Our Youth Workers will distribute condoms and have also been trained to deliver advice on how to give up smoking. We have similarly offered training to curriculum staff on drug awareness (with WPCT) and hope to develop further opportunities for tutors to gain knowledge in this area.

A group from South Thames College meets regularly with WPCT and we have developed an action plan for the current year. We hope to work together to promote health and well being to our learners, and plan to build on our success to date.

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Kate Birch

Mental Health in Colleges

I am the Healthy College Co ordinator for the Kirklees Healthy College Standard (KHCS) and has received funding for the past 2 years from local Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). I have been working on the KHCS locally and nationally and as part of my remit have carried out research into the mental health needs of students in 4 colleges in Kirklees. This has resulted in the setting up of the Kirklees Colleges Mental Health task group whose current work is 'Care pathways for students experiencing mental health difficulties in colleges'. The aim is to forge links and partnership working with mental health services and will also include preventative work through promoting emotional health and wellbeing.

My research involved interviews and focus groups with learners, health professionals and Student Service Managers. Three different perspectives emerged on the mental health and emotional wellbeing of learners and staff in

colleges.

Mental Health Services

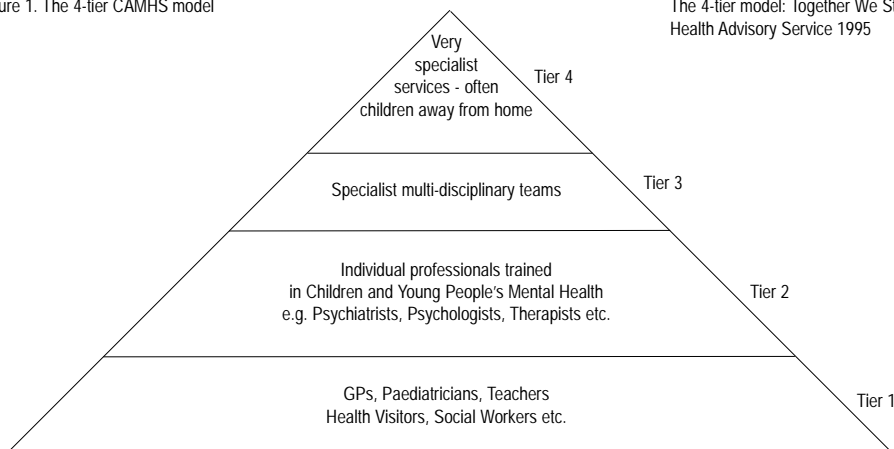
Mental Health Service provision for young people is complicated by the fact in some parts of the country services up to the 18th birthday are provided by the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and after this by the Adult Mental Health Service. An alternative 16-25 model is also in operation in some areas.

The 4-tier CAMHS model is shown in Figure 1. The model puts the largest number of clients at the bottom with less severe problems and fewer at the top (Tier 4) requiring specialist care as with anorexia.

The CAMHS model is an interesting one for colleges because although teachers are included in Tier 1 many will not be aware that they are considered to be part of the mental health services!

A positive move has been the creation of teams of Primary Mental Health Workers (PMHW) who are developing links with Tier 1 and 2 to improve access to services.

Figure 1. The 4-tier CAMHS model



Some colleges may well have already established good working relationships with PMHWs.

The perspective from mental health service professionals is that changes in society and a target driven education system has resulted in an increase in mental health problems in young people. Particular difficulties which were highlighted were the increasing workload, some of which was related to inappropriate referrals. Waiting lists of several months being the norm. They also considered that there was an underestimate of the number of young people with problems in Tier 1. Transition from CAMHS to adult services was seen as difficult and was not considered to be as well managed as it might be.

Early intervention in psychosis which increases from age 17 upwards has been demonstrated to be highly effective, however recognition and support may not always be available.

'I'm too young to feel this stressed'

comment from student

Learners in colleges expressed a range of views about areas they found difficult. Poor communication between students and staff was seen as a source of problems. Colleges were not always seen to manage problem situations in the best way and learners at times felt excluded and without a voice in connection with what happened on their course. Transition to college and college life itself were both cited as causes of stress. However a number also saw a stigma in getting help with difficulties. Mature students had further burdens as they tried to balance family life and demands of college courses. The support from a personal tutor was seen as extremely helpful in many instances.

Other areas which were raised were the need to feel safe in the college environment and fostering of mutual respect between learners. Learners felt that health information & services should be accessible to all within colleges.

The point was made that young people often have many pressures outside college and some just don't want to be there!

'We're working blind!'

comment from Student Service Manager

Colleges saw themselves as working hard to support learners, paying for and delivering support but without effective partnerships with health. College services are often 'keeping students going' till they access mainstream services but real concerns were raised about what happened to them after college or during the holidays. It was felt there was a lack of information about mental health generally and what services are available out of college and how to signpost or refer students to them. Concerns were also expressed about the lack of information about some learners and the inappropriateness of some of the courses they were enrolled on.

Poor attendance was seen as an important indicator of problems of some kind and it was felt that a successful outcome does not always mean staying at college. The nature of some courses generate particular challenges for staff wellbeing and morale.

Unfortunately some parents may not support colleges and this adds to their burden. Some staff do not see counselling positively which impacts on the likelihood of learners getting help. Ultimately it was felt that successful support must be 'young person friendly' and what they wanted, rather than what was inflicted on them.

Possible Solutions

- Collaborative working health-education
- Information campaign-challenge stigma, OK to get help
- Training for college staff
- Direct referral by colleges to CAMHS/AMHS/GP
- 16-25 services established
- Mental health helpline for colleges to contact
- College mental health liaison worker
- Health College approach using preventative work on emotional health & wellbeing
- Colleges included in local/national health strategies

Lucy Emmerson is Senior Development Officer at the Sex Education Forum. The Sex Education Forum is a unique collaboration of 48 member organisations working together to make young people's entitlement to good quality SRE a reality. [Email lemmerson@ncb.org.uk](mailto:lemmerson@ncb.org.uk)

Lucy Emmerson

Sex and Relationships Education: supporting transition to adulthood

School, as a site of learning, has been at the centre of debates about Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) for years. Media controversy has revolved around what, how, when and if SRE should be taught to under-16 year-olds in schools.

From school to further education

School-based SRE has also been the rallying point for young people and professionals advocating for an entitlement to good quality SRE for all. But with more than two-thirds of young people becoming sexually active aged 16 and above (Wellings et al, 2001), SRE has a particular relevance and urgency in further education settings.

The Sex Education Forum believes that "learning about sex and relationships should be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing throughout adult life" (SEF, 2005). This is because our questions grow and change as we do!

Transition

Moving from school to further education is a big change for young people. This transition is a time when significant relationships may be made, broken and challenged. It is crucial that young people are supported with easy access to support and information on issues including mental health, substance misuse and sexual health.

Sexual health knowledge

Young people's knowledge about sexual health on entering further education is often

very poor, as this student explains:

"There was a big gap [in knowledge] - I'm in college and I'm hearing about STDs. Even from primary school, secondary school I wasn't aware they didn't even spoke to me about sex nothing not even a condom."

Many further education providers have recognised that they need to provide SRE to their students. In some cases the motivation has been practical as colleges have seen high drop-out rates due to unplanned pregnancies. The fact that 80% of teenage conceptions are to 16 and 17 year old young women is a compelling reason to ensure that this age group can access clear information about sexual health. Nearly half of conceptions to 16 and 17 year olds end in abortion, suggesting that they were not intended.

Diverse approaches to SRE in Further Education

With no further education equivalent to the government 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' for schools (DfEE, 2000), providers have taken a diverse range of approaches. York College of Further Education employ a sexual health promotion specialist to tour tutor groups, delivering a one-hour session on sexual health to every group in the college over the course of the year. Young people are also told about the sexual health drop-in service that they can access in college. Work-based learning provider 'Biscom' have also ensured that all their learners have the chance to discuss sex and relationships by

building it into the induction programme.

The Sexual Health Education Team (SHET) in Camden and Islington link with local further education colleges and run educational group visits to the local sexual health clinic. These visits have been particularly beneficial for groups of ESOL students and young people with learning difficulties who face additional barriers in accessing local services.

By embedding sexual health in the curriculum, students at South Thames College have been able to take part in intensive sexual health themed projects:

"At school there was a teacher just talking, talking, talking, but never really said nothing. With this project we actually got to do our own research. We got to find out the consequences of each and every STI and what they mean... I think it was good that we learnt and I think that everyone should learn some".

Regrettably, many young people have negative experiences of school SRE. In a recent UK Youth Parliament survey of over 20,000 young people 40% said that their school SRE was either poor or very poor (UKYP, 2007).

Young people value the opportunity not just to learn facts, but to have space to think critically about the range of messages they receive from school, home, peers and the media:

"There is a lot of hype surrounding sex and I've heard it's not what it's cracked up to be. Education needs to come first, the hype can come later".

Linking sexual health services and SRE

Government guidance published earlier this year, (DfES, 2007), encourages further education providers to assess their current provision and ensure that they are signposting young people to local sexual health services and also developing services

on-site.

Creating a link between sexual health services and SRE is vital. Young people say that SRE sometimes fails to provide adequate information about services:

"At school I learnt how to put a condom on a banana, but no one told me where I could get them from".

Without clear, open and thorough SRE young people cannot judge if they need to use a sexual health service or not. For example, if a young person has never heard of Chlamydia or learnt that it is usually asymptomatic how can they judge if and when they need to for a test?

Website and email network

The Sex Education Forum have launched a mini-site dedicated to supporting professionals who are developing on-site sexual health services and linked programmes of SRE in schools and colleges. Visit www.ncb.org.uk/sexualhealthservices to read case-studies, frequently asked questions and listen to interactive sound-bites.

Professionals are also invited to join the free 'further education and sexual health services network' for regular e-mail bulletins and the chance to network with colleagues across the country.

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Rhiannon Lloyd-Jones

Regent College - Healthy College Standards

Regent College is a small, inner city sixth form college with a diverse student population and a curriculum from entry to advanced level.

When 'Every Child Matters' was launched we did as most colleges - we looked at our provision across courses, tutorial, enrichment, mentoring, etc. and how we met the aims and outcomes and where we needed to improve. We are taking a similar approach to the Healthy College Standards (HCS).

Healthy College Standards

As a college who already offers a good pastoral and welfare programme, the challenge is to follow the standards and integrate them into college life, not impose them. We will be using the standards as guides to good practice, helping us to identify what we do well and what we need to develop.

Our college has always been focused on the development of the whole person - an intrinsic part of the HCS. We are a Global Citizens' College and our students contribute and are actively involved in the community; we have a strong volunteering programme locally and internationally; we have an extended studies programme that enables students to explore important political and social issues and we have a wide variety of enrichment opportunities including a growing number of sporting activities.

We have made a number of new appointments recently which will be central to our promoting of the Healthy College. Our Youth Participation Worker is developing learner involvement and

representation, leadership and enrichment and our Youth Development Worker will be involved in the tutorial programme and with individual students on areas such as substance misuse, sexual and mental health.

We were also successful in a bid to sports bodies for a Physical Activity Co-ordinator; a three year post that will encourage physical activity in young people, coaching and volunteering and a healthy lifestyle.

Plans

Our plan this year is to have a member of staff (support or teaching) and a student responsible for each of the HCS. They will work with staff and students to pull together the existing practice and develop ideas and events. We are asking for staff volunteers to lead on these and the responsible students will come from the student council although this may be opened up to our tutor representatives.

Our work over the coming months will be to expand on the exciting work already taking place at Regent and to try to meet the HCS without imposing it as an onerous task or another set of criteria that should be met.

With so many standards, quality marks, measurements and new initiatives in further education staff and students are often overwhelmed and confused.

Our challenge as a college will be to embed the HCS, or rather the excellent principles of which they consist, in a way that makes obvious the benefits to the college and the individuals, and entuses all to get involved. It is not to say "this is what we must do" but "look at what great things we are doing and let's explore what more we can do".

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Jane Marshall

Bradford College - A Healthy College

Bradford College was awarded the Kirklees Healthy College Standard (KHCS) in August 2007. The standard provides a framework to implement a holistic approach to health for all staff and students.

Positive lifestyle changes can be daunting for the individual and social support can be extremely beneficial. 'At Least Five a Week' reports the benefits of regular physical activity, yet only one third of the adult population meets the recommended guidelines. 'Workplace health' is not just about providing health-enhancing interventions, planners already understand many of the issues people face when attempting lifestyle change. Importantly, when we are unhappy at work or at home, this can inhibit healthy - and even cause unhealthy - behaviour.

One of the foundations, for implementing the KHCS in Bradford, is the availability of social support that help facilitate a change to a healthier lifestyle. This support is provided for our new smoking cessation groups, walking clubs and a buddy system in the gym. For individuals preparing to make lifestyle changes, social support builds confidence and changes the way we look at work. Initiatives to date include:

Free gym membership to all staff

Not only is the gym free but, in response to the staff survey, it is open for longer hours. A buddy system is in place to create a more social environment and a personal training session has been offered to all members of staff.

Free breakfasts - porridge

This has highlighted the need to eat breakfast and once the positive effects are

felt such as improved concentration and less snacking, a new positive behavior can be formed.

Chlamydia screening

Screening students for Chlamydia is now timetabled throughout the year. Sexual health is also offered as part of the tutorial system.

Ride2Work

The Ride2Work programme aims to encourage the use of green transport and increase exercise. It is a way of purchasing a bicycle and accessories to enable staff to commute to work and, at the same time, take advantage of some unique tax and National Insurance incentives offering savings of up to 50% off the cost of a new bike.

Stop Smoking classes

The results of the Bradford College Staff Health Survey suggested that out of the 145 smokers who responded 68% stated that they would like to give up in the next year and 37% stated that they had tried to quit last year.

Staff suggested that one of the services that would help them to quit would be formal health care provision for smoking cessation. This is run as a 6 week course, repeated throughout the year.

Free Fruit days

In line with the Government's '5-a-day' campaign, this initiative was introduced to increase awareness of the importance of the regular eating of fruit and vegetables.

Further initiatives planned to create a healthy social network within the college are: a historical lunchtime walking club, a chess club and even a knitting club to help staff relax.

Debra Chalmers is the Chlamydia Screening Project Manager and Ruth Robson is the Senior Sexual Health Advisor for the project hosted by the County Durham Primary Care Trust. For correspondence please email: debra.chalmers@cdpct.nhs.uk

Debra Chalmers and Ruth Robson

The 'Have I got It?' Pee in a Pot Experiences

The Chlamydia Screening Programme, covering Co. Durham, Darlington, Teesside and part of North Yorkshire, was established in 2004 as part of the Phase Two of the Department of Health's National roll out of the National Chlamydia Screening Programme.

Have I Got It?

The 'Have I Got It?' team consists of health advisers who are specially trained nurses and one of the first areas to target was the local university. With a residential population of 16,000 students the team anticipated great activity and indeed within one day managed to screen 500 students. Some informed the team, via a simple evaluation process, they may not have otherwise accessed a screen for chlamydia in a healthcare setting such as GUM (Genito-Urinary Medicine) clinic or G.P practice. Some students liked the idea that they could access the simple urine test within a setting where they felt comfortable in familiar surroundings.

Since 2004 'Have I Got It?' have offered twice yearly screening events within all colleges, universities and 6th forms within their catchment area. Average screens range from 100-200 tests, depending on population size of the establishment. The team have found the commonest barriers, that stop young people accessing a screen within colleges, are issues around stigma and concerns for what their peers may think. To help with problems the team engage with small groups of young people at the screening events to dispel some of the common myths around chlamydia. These include; how chlamydia is transmitted; 1 in 10 young people may have it - although most will not experience symptoms; the long term

ill health associations of chlamydia - e.g. it may leave someone unable to have children without ever knowing they have had it.

Tutor groups

The health advisers have tried a new way of working by liaising closely with tutors to promote screening prior to the event. Within one 6th form establishment, which had about 600 students, each tutor group were offered chlamydia teaching/awareness raising session. The health adviser was able to eliminate fears students may have had around confidentiality and explain the process for people diagnosed with a positive chlamydia result. Following this session just over half of the students had the test. As a consequence an education session was offered to all tutor groups prior to screening which appears to have increased uptake.

The 'Have I Got It?' team are keen to promote good partnership working and now invite local sexual health workers along to screening events. Colleagues include Teenage Pregnancy teams, GUM representative, drug and alcohol workers, and condom distribution workers. Their involvement will help young people to perceive chlamydia screening as 'normal' as registering with a condom distribution scheme or as normal as discussing, with a contraceptive trained nurse, contraceptive options.

The team often say to young people,

"If you had a chest infection you would seek medical help, seeking screening for chlamydia is no different. If you are having a love life and having sex, then look after yourself and ensure you are practicing safe sex and accessing screening for sexually transmitted infections including chlamydia."

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Andy Perlejewski

Yeovil College - Our Commitment to a Better College

Over the last two years the students and staff at Yeovil College have taken a number of important steps to develop a more healthy college. The Student Council have worked with the Senior Management Team in creating, 'our Commitment to a Better College' campaign with a focus on creating a clean, healthy, safe and respectful College.

Using the National Healthy School Standards as a template, there have been a number of developments. The tutorial programme has included presentations on drugs awareness, the effects of alcohol and smoking, safe driving and stress to name but a few. The Student Council organised a very successful Freshers' Fair which had exhibitors from a diverse range of health and care organisations.

The College has won a number of awards over the past few years for the success its extensive support network. The use of learning support assistants, counsellors, a faith advisor, a mental health co-ordinator, the College nurse and a behavioural support worker has contributed greatly to the emotional health and well being of the student body.

There can be a dilemma in any organisation when attempts are made to reconcile the desire to introduce healthy eating with those of maintaining a profitable student canteen. This was overcome by allowing the Student Council to work with the 'Megabyte' manager in coming up with menu items that would meet the healthy eating criteria while still proving popular with students. The introduction of special menus for events such as Fair-trade fortnight, Eating Disorders Awareness week, World Vegan Day, Burn's night and Diwali have

helped to raise cultural and dietary awareness.

Enrichment programme

The college has an outstanding reputation for sporting success, twelve students having gained international recognition in 2006-07 and 300 students competing regularly in an extensive enrichment programme. However, there is an equal emphasis in encouraging students to become more active. The Fitness Centre offers membership to students at hugely discounted rates. Like all other local authorities, the South Somerset District Council (SSDC) has been tasked with increasing the participation rates of the 16-21 age group. In partnership with the College, SSDC have supported the enrichment programme by providing free staff and facilities, offering such activities as hip hop dance and jazz dance. College staff can also join the Fitness Centre at reduced membership rates and there have been programmes of lunchtime fitness and pilates sessions. During every staff development day there are a number of popular health related options. A healthy college can help contribute to the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda so the tutorial programme is being mapped against the ECM criteria. The plan is to support all staff so their schemes of work can be cross referenced in the same way.

The move to a healthy college cannot be achieved without the commitment of everyone. There is a lot of work to do in developing a better awareness of healthy issues among staff and students, but there is a real enthusiasm at the moment which has resulted in developments which can only go to benefit those who are involved.

Extract from an article in Education and Health 2007. 25:1:3-5.

Kim McGarry et al.

Derwentside College Health Promotion Strategy

Derwentside College, in partnership with County Durham Primary Care Trust, is planning to launch (early in 2007) the Derwentside College Health Promotion Strategy 2007-2010.

The Specialist Health Promotion Service has been working with the College for a number of years, assisting with campaigns, health events and training for staff. With the growing interest in the healthy college concept and the need to reduce health inequalities in Derwentside a more strategic approach to promoting health within the college has been realised.

Health-related data

There have been several recent initiatives, which have provided information on health and health related behaviour and attitudes of the students in the College, which have helped to inform the priorities and initial action plans. These have included a lifestyle survey, a sexual health questionnaire, a food and catering audit and chlamydia screening events. These reveal that there are high numbers of students who continue to make unhealthy lifestyle decisions.

Priorities have been identified and informed via the health related data, the Kirklees Pilot Healthy College Standard criteria, and also through a number of national and local policy drivers. A multi-agency Healthy College Task Group will be established that will need to ensure meaningful student participation is at the core of the work.

The complete article is available from:

www.sheu.org.uk/howeworkwith/healthystudents.htm

Extract from an article in Education and Health 2007. 25:3:77-78.

Rachel Wiles et al.

City of Sunderland College positive practice

City of Sunderland College (CoSC) has 4 main centres with approximately 4000 full time 16 -19 students. There is extensive and wide ranging support provision available to our young people both internally and in collaboration with our many partners in the locality and wider region.

The Every Child Matters framework has assisted forward thinking colleges to improve support provision *per se*. At CoSC, tutorial provision and cross college welfare services have been proactively looking at enhancing support to learners in order that we can better meet the challenge of improving ECM outcomes and in the context of Health particularly the 'being healthy' outcome.

Healthy Lifestyle Survey

During the Academic Year 2006-2007 over 1000 students from the CoSC, supported by Sunderland TPCT, took part in the SHEU Healthy Lifestyle survey. The majority of the questionnaires were completed via a web based pilot that was extremely easy to implement, complete and monitor. The results received back from SHEU following the survey were comprehensive and enabled us to identify key areas to focus upon in relation to Health matters. These included the SHOWT Card condom scheme, Chlamydia testing, healthy eating, smoking, anti-bullying, development of the College Nurse role and activities linked to the Every Child Matters framework.

The complete article is available from:

www.sheu.org.uk/howeworkwith/healthystudents.htm

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HEALTHY COLLEGE ONLINE SURVEY

Colleges tell us how they use their results:

- Help to move our Healthy College project forward -
- Help to formulate our action plan and help develop and implement our Every Child Matters strategy -
- For further evidence for the ECM section of the SAR and to further support our contribution to the JAR -
- To take into account the students as key stakeholders in the college's ECM framework and action plan -
- *Beneficial to be able to benchmark with other organisations and the potential to share good practice -*

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anonymous data from students in other colleges

WOULD YOU LIKE MORE DETAILS?

Please contact Dan Hawkins

- Tel: 01392 667272 -

Email: dan.hawkins@sheu.org.uk

www.sheu.org.uk/surveys/fe16plusurvey.htm

In 2006, SHEU offered to survey, at no cost, 6th Form and FE Colleges that are working towards developing their healthy settings for students.

The sponsorship offered use of SHEU's online questionnaire and support for running the exercise.

Each organisation had immediate access to their results and were able to compare their results to a wider dataset.

The data are presented in summary form on the website (above) with a pdf file report of the results from 34 institutions and over 5000 students.