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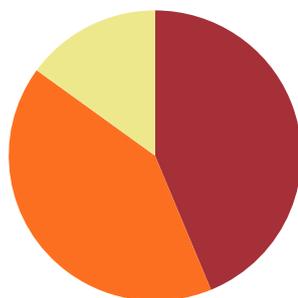
Talking Changes Lives

Student Mental Health Matters Conference Report

The Student Mental Health Matters Conference took place on the 24th and 25th of November 2012 in Wadham College, Oxford. Over 100 delegates registered to attend this conference. The event programme and speakers are listed below.

Attendees

Information about the conference was circulated through university mailing lists and social media.



- Student Volunteer
- Student
- University / Student Union Staff

Funded places for volunteers were advertised on the SRSH website and on Facebook. Information was sent to Nightline Coordinators and Rosie Tresler at Mental Wealth to circulate around their volunteers.

Delegates to the conference came from the following universities:

Birmingham, St Andrews, Cardiff, Southampton, Reading, Leicester, Sheffield, Oxford, Hull, Portsmouth, Oxford Brookes, UCL, Bristol, Warwick, Nottingham, SOAS, Bedfordshire, Manchester, Newcastle, Goldsmiths and Winchester.

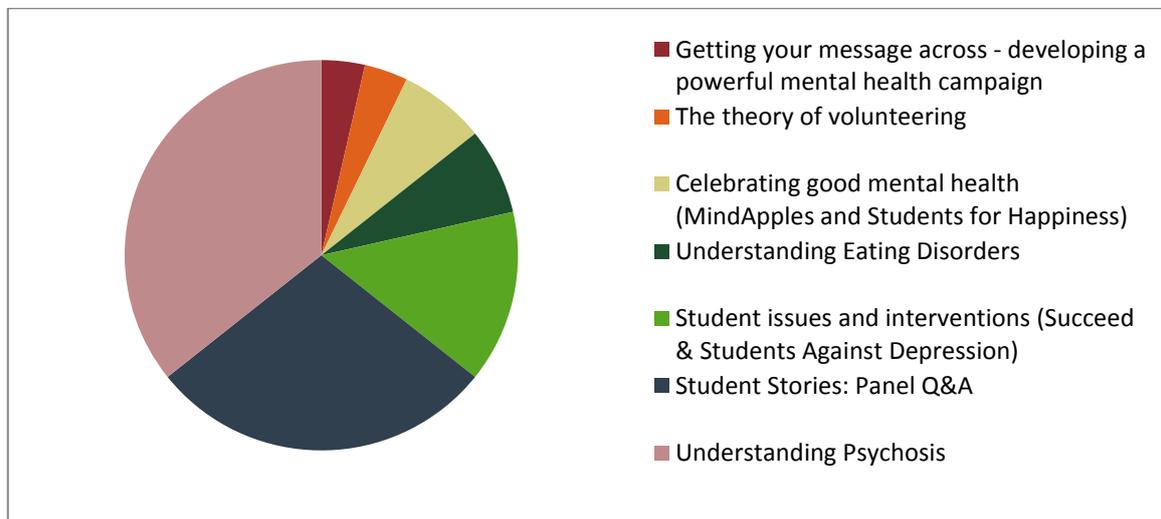
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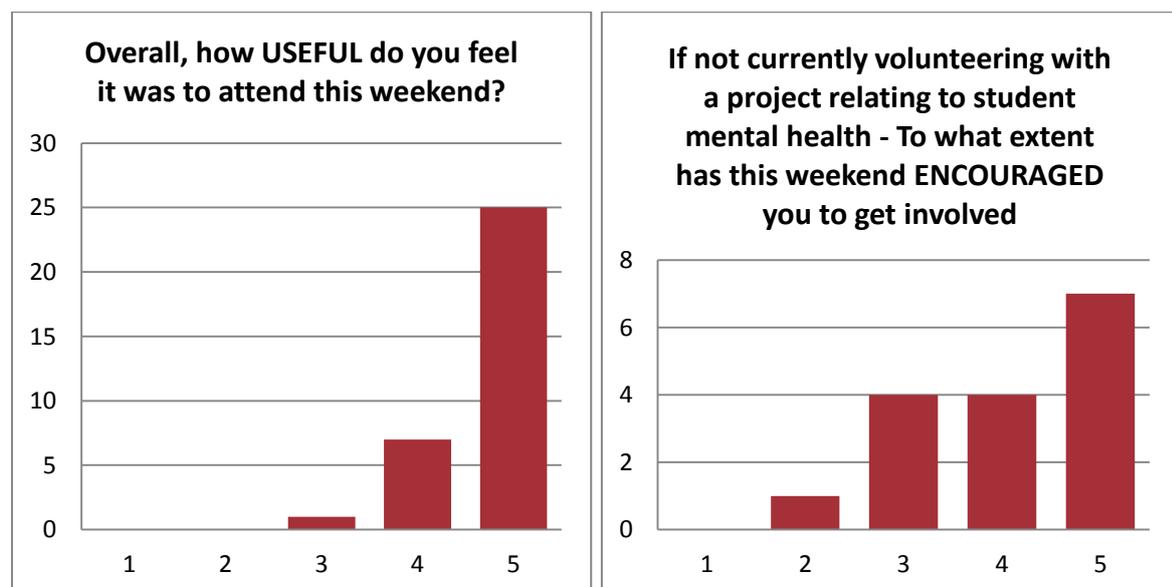
We are kindly supported by Comic Relief, The Welton Foundation, UnLtd and Student Hubs
SRSH is a charitable company registered with Companies house, no. 7493445 and the Charities Commission, no. 1142783

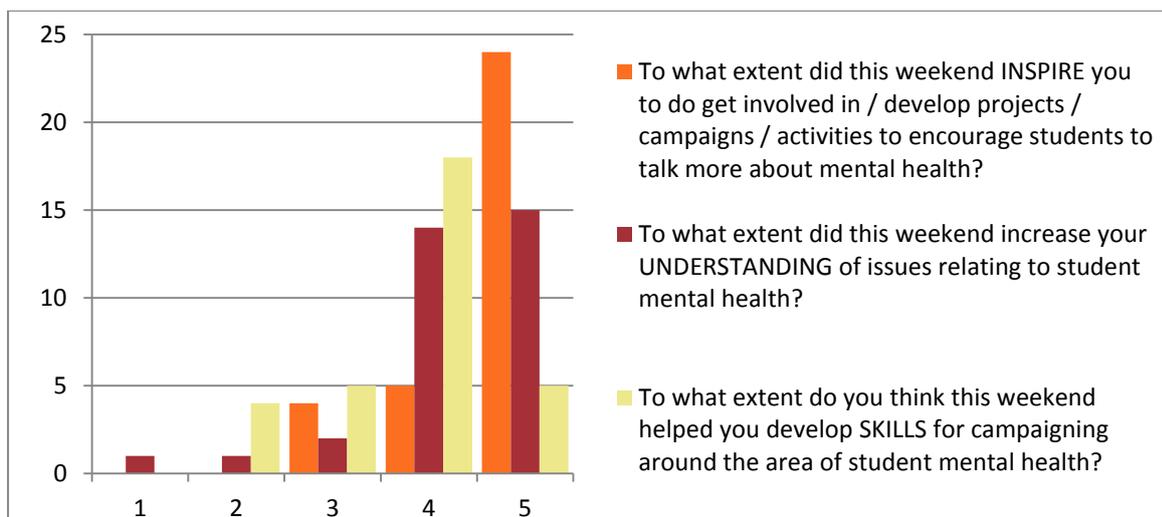
Feedback

The most popular talks seem to be sessions where students / former students were talking about their own experiences. Attendee's favourite sessions are shown below, though many attendees have commented that they found it very hard to pick a "favourite session."



Overall, most attendees providing feedback found this weekend useful. The conference increased attendee's understanding of issues relating to student mental health and inspired people to do more around student mental health. Most attendees felt that the conference helped them develop skills for campaigning around the area of student mental health. Many of those who attended that were not already involved in student mental health projects, reported that the conference encouraged them to get involved in student mental health project.





Everyone that provided feedback, said that they would be interested in attending this conference again next year. Individuals giving feedback had a few suggestions for changes we could implement for our next conference:

- * Make the conference fully catered.
 - o We can definitely look into this, though it will depend on sourcing funding and finding a venue happy to provide catering.
- * Attendees would have liked hand-outs of the power-points.
 - o This will always depend on the speakers, as many speakers put slides together on the way to the conference or are would prefer not to share their slides, which is completely understandable.
- * For the conference to start later in the day.
 - o This may not be possible – as it is the conference started at 10.30am, starting much later would be more like running a half day event.
- * More opportunity to hear from students about their own experiences.
 - o This is definitely something we can work on.
- * One attendee felt that some of the workshop sessions had very similar content, specifically; three of these sessions involved an exercise to plan a campaign.
 - o This was partly intentional on our part as organisers. We wanted to offer individuals the chance to plan future campaigns. We anticipated that attendees would move between the two sessions, only attending one or two workshops over the weekend. Each workshop looked at event / campaign planning and delivery from a different perspective. In future we could outline the content of the workshop in more detail in the programme to allow people to opt not to attend workshops with a similar focus.

Other comments

“It was such an inspiring and well out together conference, I thoroughly enjoyed it.”

“It was a brilliant weekend, thank you!”

“What a fantastic weekend, I learned so much! You evidently put in so much effort, and it really pulled off so congratulations on your success.”

“The whole weekend was fantastic! Thank you very much for the opportunity”

“It was an excellent conference and provided much food for thought.”

“Many thanks to all who were involved in its organisation & delivery.”

“A fantastic weekend, brilliantly organised and smoothly run, it felt very professional. The content of the talks as well as the format was incredibly inspiring. I think the best part of the conference was the amazing atmosphere created by people who want to make a difference to mental health coming together and sharing ideas, experience and enthusiasm. I learnt a lot from this weekend as well as leaving feeling motivated and inspired to do more as a student volunteer.”

“I enjoyed it very much and found it all very interesting - thank you. Very well organised.”

“I found the timing which was allowed for each session extremely helpful, long enough, I never felt too stressed.”

“Really enjoyed the conference and found it very interesting. It was a great mix of hearing objective information and subjective experience - so useful to both learn more about the theory and find out what it's actually like to be living with mental health problems. Thank you so much for putting this on, and thanks especially to all the students who shared their stories!”

“The conference was very interesting and covered a wide range of relevant issues. It really inspired and encouraged me to get more involved with running events and campaigns at my uni.”

“Seriously, it was excellently run as it was last year - i felt very well looked after on the day and in the run up to the event with regular communications etc. and there was a good range of stuff on offer.”

“Seriously, it was excellently run as it was last year - i felt very well looked after on the day and in the run up to the event with regular communications etc. and there was a good range of stuff on offer.”

“Thank you so much! This conference was absolutely amazing! There has been an incredible amount of development since two years ago and you have done brilliantly! I'm so glad to have gone! :)”

Programme

Saturday 24th November

Fighting Stigma - Dr Sara Evans-Lacko – the Okinaga Room

<i>Student Issues & Interventions; Standing together against depression & Fighting Body Image Concerns</i> Dr Phillipa Diedrichs, the Centre for Appearance Research; Dr Denise Meyer, Students Against Depression	<i>Celebrating Good Mental Health; the importance and values of working with attitudes to mental health before things go wrong!</i> Andy Gibson, Mindapples; Georgie Gilmore, Students for Happiness
<i>Understanding Psychosis</i> Professor Daniel Freeman, University of Oxford; Tatiana Cutts, the Oxford Mind Your Head Campaign	<i>The Theory of Peer Support</i> Kate Trotman, Peer Support Coordinator at Oxfordshire Mind
<i>Preventing Student Suicide</i> Alexis Elliot, Papyrus	<i>Getting your message across: developing a powerful mental health campaign</i> Melanie Dupin, Rethink Mental Illness

Sunday 25th November

<i>Understanding Depression and Interventions</i> Chris Cullen, University of Oxford; Dr Jennifer Lau, University of Oxford	<i>Pulling it Off; plan, design and deliver effective student mental health events.</i> Rachel Egan & Bethany Wellerd, SRSH
<i>Understanding Eating Disorders; looking at recovery from both perspectives.</i> Dr Rebecca Park, University of Oxford; Nicola Byrom, SRSH	<i>The power of the personal story; working with people with mental health problems to build a strong campaign.</i> Seb Baird, the Oxford Mind Your Head Campaign & former OUSU Welfare Officer; Harriet Rankin, former LULU Welfare Officer
<i>Student Stories: Surviving Mental Health Problems</i> A panel Q & A sessions with students who have first-hand experience of mental health problems.	<i>The theory of volunteering; bridging the gap between you and them.</i> Sara Fernandez & Amy Anderson, Student Hubs.

Speakers

Dr Sara E Evans-Lacko

Sara is a researcher and lecturer at the Institute of Psychiatry (IoP) and has a particular interest in the role of health services and social support in the prevention and treatment of mental illness. She has been involved in the evaluation of public health interventions such as the Time to Change anti-stigma campaign which aim to improve important changes at the population level. Prior to joining the IoP, Sara worked as a health care consultant for the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH, USA). Sara has an M.H.S. in psychiatric epidemiology and PhD in Health Policy and Management, with an emphasis in health services research, from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Dr Phillipa Diedrichs

Phillippa is a Senior Research Fellow at the [Centre for Appearance Research at the University of West England](#). Her work focuses on how people think and feel about the way they look, and strategies that can be adopted to prevent of eating disorders. Phillipa currently works with school and university students and teachers, politicians and policy makers, charities, and stakeholders from the media, fashion, and retail industries with the aim of changing the way we think about our bodies. Phillipa has also worked on the development of the [Succeed Body Image Programme](#).

Dr Denise Meyer

Denise is a counselling psychologist, BACP accredited counsellor, and former acting head of counselling at Royal Holloway University of London. Denise is responsible for the development and management of the website - [Students Against Depression](#).

Andy Gibson

Andy is the Head Gardner at Mind Apples, an initiative developed to encourage people look after their minds and learn how their minds work. Andy will be talking about the importance of celebrating good mental health and valuing and taking care of our minds!

Georgie Gilmore

Georgie is one of the coordinators of an exciting new project at UCL, encouraging students to explore what happiness means. Students for Happiness is a non-profit debating forum, which aims to put 'happiness' at the heart of intellectual discourse. The team looks to provide invigorating and thought-provoking intellectual discussion surrounding happiness.

Professor Daniel Freeman,

Daniel is MRC Senior Clinical Fellow and Professor of Clinical Psychology at the Warford Department of Psychiatry, University of Oxford. His work focuses on psychological understanding and treatment of delusions and hallucinations. Daniel has written several books about psychosis, including *Paranoia: The 21st Century Fear* and *Use Your Head: A Guided Tour of the Human Mind*.

Kate Trotman

Kate works for Oxfordshire Mind coordinating their peer support programme. Through this programme, Oxfordshire Mind facilitates 60 support groups across Oxfordshire every week. Kate has been responsible for the development of this programme and will be talking about the research she conducted into effective models of peer support.

Melanie Dupin

Melanie works with Rethink Mental Illness is a charity that believes a better life is possible for millions of people affected by mental illness.

Dr Jennifer Lau

Jennifer Lau is head of the REDD lab and also Director of the Calleva Research Centre for Evolution and Human Science at the University of Oxford. Her research focuses on the development of anxiety and depression in childhood and adolescence, using knowledge about underlying mechanisms to develop novel interventions for these conditions

Chris Cullen

Chris is a student counsellor and a Mindfulness practitioner. Chris is a co-founder of the Mindfulness in Schools Project, a non-profit organisation whose aim is to encourage, support and research the teaching of secular mindfulness in schools. Chris has trained as an Insight Meditation practitioner and is currently completing a Masters in Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy at Oxford University.

Rachel Egan

Rachel is the SRSH press officer. She is a recent university graduate working for Student Hubs. As a student she was the coordinator both of the SRSH project at Cardiff University and the Mental Wealth project at Cardiff University.

Bethany Wellerd

Bethany is the coordinator of the SRSH project in St Andrews. She developed the SRSH Love Your Body Campaign.

Dr Rebecca Park

Rebecca is a Clinical Senior Lecturer in Eating Disorders at the University of Oxford in the Department of Psychiatry, Head of the research group OxBREAD (Oxford Brain & Body Research in Eating Disorders) and Lead Consultant Psychiatrist to the Oxfordshire Community NHS Outpatient Eating Disorders Service.

Nicola Byrom

Nicola is the founding director of SRSH. She has recovered from anorexia and regularly talks about her own experiences in recovery with the aim of helping those supporting friends or family with eating disorder to understand the challenges that recovery poses.

Harriet Rankin

Last year Harriet was Welfare Officer at Leeds University Student Union. Harriet currently works for the Time to Change Campaign.

Seb Baird

Seb is a former Oxford University Student Union Welfare Officer and co-founder of the [Oxford Mind Your Head Campaign](#), a powerful project working to support and encourage students to tell their own stories about experiences of mental health.

Sara Fernandez

Sara is Chief Operating Officer at [Student Hubs](#), a social enterprise working across the UK to transform student involvement in social action. They act as a catalyst, empowering students to become active members of their community by promoting social action, social entrepreneurship and citizenship. Sara has been working in the field of student action for over four years now and is a passionate advocate for getting students more engaged in mental health issues.