

# Breaking Down Barriers to Early Intervention

**A campus community learns how to support students with mental health problems together**

# **Humber facts: 2011/12**

**Enrollment = over 26,000 full time**

**Students registered with Psychiatric Disabilities = 972  
(includes ADD/ADHD and ASD)**

**Visits to Counselling Services = ~1700 unique students**

**We're like everyone else, Mental Health is a big issue**

# The opportunity

**Extensive review of Code of Student Conduct in 2009/10 revealed a ‘gap’ in addressing behaviour that may be related to someone’s health**

**Led to creation of an advisory committee, struck by the college executive, to write the “Student Support and Intervention: Non-Academic Voluntary/Involuntary Withdrawal” policy**

<http://www.humber.ca/policies-and-procedures>

**Used Hicks-Morley document to create a multi-disciplinary team (SSIT) to consult on student cases. Focus is on early intervention and continued academic participation.**

# Policy is not enough

**Our belief is that there are 3 areas requiring attention in the implementation of a mental health framework on campus:**

- 1) Clear policy – which includes the institution taking action when someone is not well enough to be in school for a period of time**
- 2) Skill development – if your policy advocates early intervention, you must equip people with the skills to feel confident enough to have those conversations**
- 3) Awareness and stigma reduction activities – which requires engagement with students and seeks to put mental health on the minds of our communities**

# Skill development: Our approach

**Mental Health First Aid – [www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca](http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca)**

**12 hour certificate course, facilitated through the Mental Health Commission of Canada**

**Dr. David Goldbloom at the “Focus on Mental Health” conference “If there’s one thing I’d like to see spread like wildfire across Canadian campuses, it would be Mental Health First Aid”**

# **Getting buy-in: Yes, it's a 12 hour course**

**Tremendous support from the senior executive**

**April 2012 – hosted a 5 day “train the trainer” put on by MHCC and trained 12 Humber employees to be able to deliver the 2 day course on-going - sustainability**

**VP, Academic indicated that all Deans and Associate Deans should be trained and helped to schedule a time for it to happen in May 2012 – brought external facilitator for those sessions and added other senior administrators to the group**

**All SSE staff trained over the summer of 2012 as annual divisionally sponsored professional development days**

## **To date**

**By the end of summer 2012, over 210 employees had been trained**

**Scheduled 6 additional courses for offer during fall 2012 semester – registration slow to begin with**

**Requests have come in for specific groups to be trained together – program coordinators, HR, etc**

**On track to have an additional 100+ trained this semester, with demand increasing**

# Lessons

**Being able to say all the senior folks gave two days of their time to this really helps – changed the discourse from ‘when do I have to’ to ‘when do I get to’**

**People want to help, but don’t know how (or don’t think they have the skills necessary)**

**MHFA is good at reassuring you don’t have to be a counsellor to make a difference**

**Early intervention is a must and has to be seen as everyone’s responsibility**

**People are hungry for this information (can a little bit of information can be a dangerous thing?)**

# Feedback from participants (anonymous evaluations)

**1 AVP, 5 Deans, 3 Directors, 15 Associate Deans, 5 Managers**

- **Although bad timing in terms of our schedules, it was very refreshing and enlightening; enjoyed it immensely**
- **All Humber employees (admin and faculty) should have to do this course**
- **Excellent. Needs to be mandatory training for all.**
- **Fabulous course. Couldn't possibly expect more in two days.**
- **Very effective – understood the key elements of the course – specifically – how to respond/recognize potential mental health issues.**

## **“Open” Session feedback (mostly support staff)**

- Material is extremely relevant to my job**
- All staff must attend these sessions**
- Very good course...I hope that this becomes a mandatory course for everyone at Humber!**
- I'm really happy that Humber is committed through this type of workshop to create awareness and educate it's people**
- I think this course was excellent and think it's very exciting that Humber offers this training to it's employees. It should definitely be mandatory.**