



**A collaboration between UCalgary's COMMUNITY MENTAL
HEALTH AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY and MATHISON CENTRE FOR
MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH AND EDUCATION**

Post-Secondary Mental Health and Well-being Research and Knowledge Hub

**Advancing health and well-being in post-secondary and
beyond**

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By Jennifer Thannhauser, Andrew Szeto, Paul Arnold, Gina Dimitropoulos,
Sasha Lavoie, Josephine Adda, Julia Hews-Girard, Emma Cullen

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Innovation for a Thriving Future

Post-secondary institutions are knowledge creators, economic engines, and pillars of communities. They support the development of the next generation of researchers, educators and leaders who positively impact the city, province, country, and world. When these institutions and the people within them thrive, they contribute to economic growth, social mobility, and the overall well-being of individuals, families, and diverse communities. However, the mental health of post-secondary students continues to be a pressing global issue, and there is growing concern for mental health and well-being more broadly within academia, including faculty, staff, students and administration. The social and economic risks of poorly functioning post-secondary institutions are significant and multifaceted (e.g., reduced economic mobility, skill gaps, increased inequality, loss of community engagement and citizenship). To promote a more inclusive, accessible and equitable society, we are developing a [Post-Secondary Mental Health and Well-Being Research and Knowledge Hub](#) (The Hub) through a partnership between UCalgary's Community Mental Health and Well-being Strategy (CMHWS; renewed Campus Mental Health Strategy) and the Mathison Centre for Mental Health Research & Education.

Vision for a healthy and thriving future through innovation

The vision for The Hub is to create thriving and inclusive post-secondary communities through a uniquely integrated, whole-institution approach to mental health and well-being research, collaborative knowledge mobilization, identification of best practices, and community engagement.

Our mission is to

- 1) **Advance research**, leading to tangible impact on mental health and well-being for individuals and post-secondary communities;
- 2) Adopt a **holistic, whole-institution approach** with a focus on upstream, health promoting approaches and early responses/interventions by addressing social determinants;
- 3) Cultivate partnerships between people with lived experience, service providers, administrators, policy makers, and researchers to **bridge the research and practice gap**; and
- 4) Facilitate and support **transdisciplinary and cross-sectoral research collaborations** that go beyond UCalgary to impact the broader **community**.

Collaborations for change

At the core of our approach is a commitment to **collaborative relationships**. The Hub is a space that brings people together to enhance the health and well-being of individuals and communities. We will enable **participant-centered research** and **co-creation** between collaborators with lived experience, service providers and knowledge users, and researchers, leading to tangible impact on the mental health and well-being of our communities. **Equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility** are critical priorities that will be woven into all aspects of The Hub. We commit to actively cultivating partnerships with the broader **community** to improve the human experience, acknowledging the interconnectedness between post-secondary and broader society.

The Hub will play an important role in **building capacity** for mental health and well-being research leading to tangible impact for post-secondaries and the communities within which they exist. Through a dedicated training program, The Hub will inspire emerging researchers, service providers and leaders to embrace a spirit of innovation that can transform the well-being of communities. Opportunities will be created for undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate trainees to undertake or participate in research on transdisciplinary teams. Students will have experiential learning opportunities that foster personal growth, deepen community connections, and drive social change. We will also offer mentorship to build capacity within smaller PSIs that enables impact focused and evidence-driven initiatives. The Hub will support research and community partners in applying for funding to advance research priorities, contributing to sustainability of new and existing collaborations.

The right approach at the right time

Our innovative approach to The Hub is distinct from existing post-secondary mental health research initiatives because of our shared commitment to:

- 1) building **strong relationships** and **community collaboration** as the necessary foundation for our work;
- 2) a **whole institution approach** to mental health and well-being, inclusive of students, post-doctoral scholars, staff, faculty, and alumni;
- 3) **co-creation** of knowledge alongside people with lived experience, knowledge users, and policy makers;
- 4) knowledge-creation and mobilization that moves beyond the walls of post-secondary institutions to benefit the **communities** within which they exist.

"The hub is poised to make a meaningful impact on campus and beyond. Post-secondary institutions are home to current and future educators, researchers, thinkers, and leaders. We need better ways to bolster our community, reduce the barriers we face in accessing mental health supports, and support our collective thriving. I am excited that at the University of Calgary, we can develop world-leading research and practice and create a hub that fosters connection, collaborative learning, and knowledge exchange." - Dr. Paul Arnold, Director of the Mathison Centre for Mental Health Research and Education

Powering positive change

Anticipated outcomes of the research and knowledge hub will include:

- developing ongoing collaborative relationships between students, staff, faculty, administrators, other post-secondary institutions (PSIs), and external community partners that will advance research and drive sustainable change in mental health and well-being;
- becoming a leading source of current research and best practices that informs policy, procedures, programs and services for post-secondary institutions and the broader community;
- inspiring the next generation of researchers, services providers, and leaders;
- developing practical solutions for real-world challenges through community-engaged scholarship, building trust-based relationships that lead to lasting impact.