



CENTRE FOR INNOVATION IN
CAMPUS MENTAL HEALTH

CAMPUS
COMMUNITY
PARTNER
PROJECT

Report on Partner
Feedback

The Centre for Innovation on Campus Mental Health (CICMH) is a partnership between Colleges Ontario, the Council of Ontario Universities, the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, the College Student Alliance and the Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario Division. Its mission is to help Ontario's colleges and universities enhance their capacity to support student mental health and well-being.

A strategic priority for CICMH is to strengthen partnerships in the campus community that address student mental wellness. The demand for post-secondary student mental health services and supports is increasing and campuses and community health organizations are struggling to meet this growing demand. CICMH recognizes that individual campuses and community agencies have unique skills, resources and/or approaches that would benefit other partners. However, the linkages between campus and community agencies are generally not well developed, or not developed province-wide. In fiscal 2018/2019, CICMH devoted resources to focus on strengthening both relationships and collaborations among community agencies and campuses across Ontario.

CICMH launched the Campus Community Partnership Program to provide resources that support the development and enhancement of effective partnerships, programs or services— all to enable campuses to leverage the support and expertise of community agencies to augment and/or complement campus programs, services and supports.

To support CICMH's evaluation and reporting requirements, as well as to help identify opportunities to strengthen their work moving forward, CICMH conducted an electronic survey with all its participating partners in February 2020, with follow-up interviews with select partners in March. The purpose of these activities was to gain insight into how the campus community partnership program supported their organizations to better meet the mental health and wellness needs of their student campus community. The study sought to better understand the impact on:

- Their capacity to support students
- Ways in which the projects were or will enhance mental health and wellness of students
- Relationships with partners and their organizations
- Value of CICMH's support

The interviews delved deeper into these topics above and gathered insights into:

- What they were most proud of
- Challenges they faces and how they were resolved
- Sustainability plans
- Capturing lessons learned and advice for others

The response rate was very positive: 77% response rate (n=27) and it represented a balance of campus and community agencies from across the province. Follow up telephone interviews were held with four campus partners. All results were collected prior to campus closures due to COVID-19. (Surveys and interview discussion guides are appended)

Overwhelming, partners saw tremendous value with the campus community partnership program. The program increased their capacity to meet the needs of students, developed and/or strengthened campus community partnerships and brought a broad range of new programs and services to students.

- 96% (agree 52%/strongly agree 44%) that **organizational capacity has increased** to support and serve the mental health and wellness needs of post-secondary students
- 96% (agree 37%/strongly agree 59%) that their **relationship has been strengthened** with their partner
- 85% were **developing a new program or service** (with existing 41% or new partners 44%)
- Nearly half (44%) were **new partnerships**

Partners saw that the program would enable campus/community partnerships to **reach more students** (56%) with **more service options** (56%) and **improved transitions** to students needing support (56%) and/or **improved referral** to community agencies (44%).

CICMH's support and assistance was critical to help **define mutual goals** (54%), **provide resources** to develop and strengthen partnerships (46%) and develop programs or services (42%). They were also instrumental in **identifying potential partners** (23%) and **facilitating communications and knowledge sharing** (19%) and **introductions** (19%). While many projects were under development, some had already seen **decreased waitlists** (19%)

“Funding is always tight. To be able to work together with the community partner and offer more services, rather than just wishing for it, is amazing. We can do more together and our jobs better.”

“This opportunity allowed us to expedite a new partnership with real deliverables in a short period of time. We were agile and relatively quickly figured out together what the deliverable would be, and the resources needed to make it happen.”

“Having community staff on campus, students see them as another member of our staff, it destigmatizes and removes barriers to accessing care.”

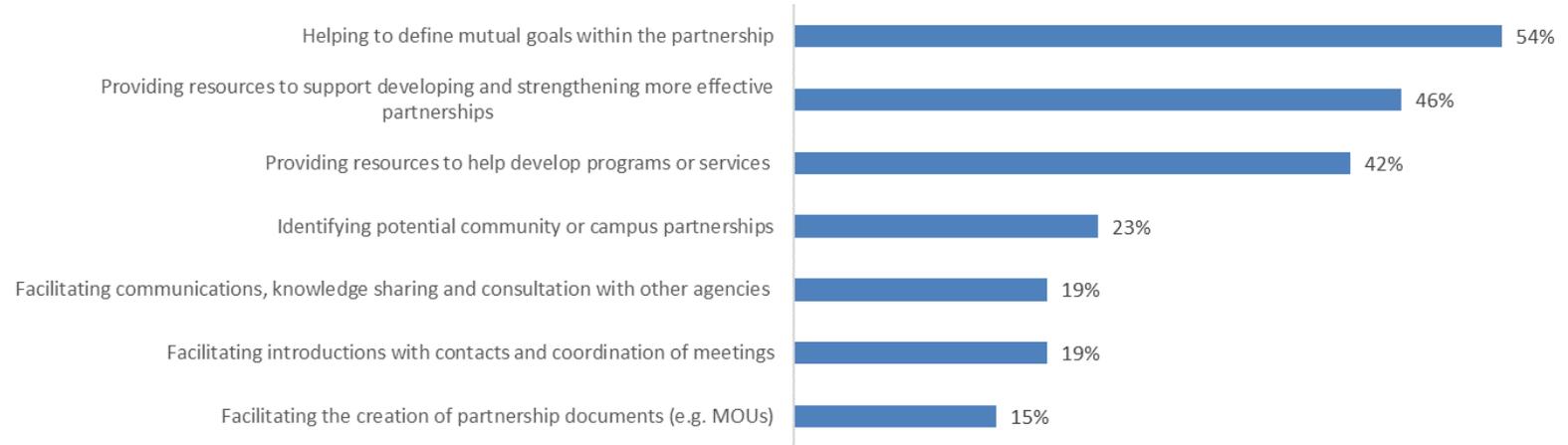
“Define the problem well. This will help identify the right community partners and institutional partners to engage with.”

“Thank you so much for providing us with the opportunity to deliver Safetalk on campus. The difference to this campus cannot be put into words. We want to do more.”

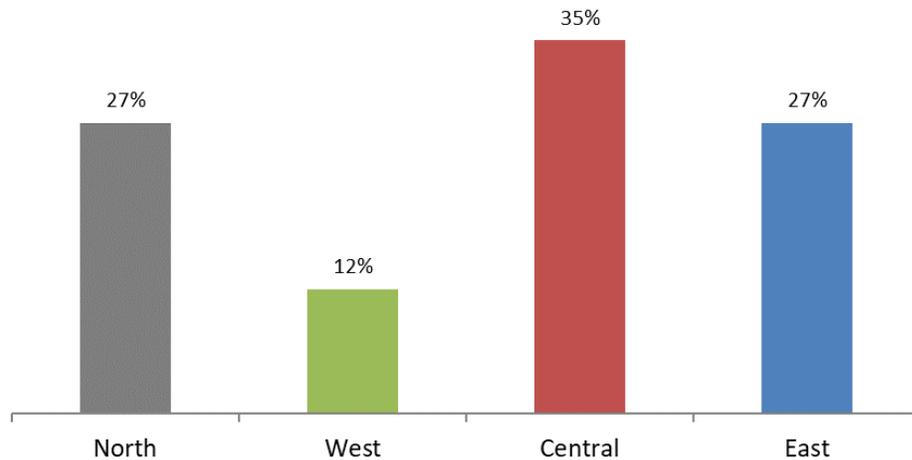
CICMH provided a range of strategic supports and resources to enable and facilitate partner projects across the province

The majority were new, innovative programs or services, and almost half were with new partners

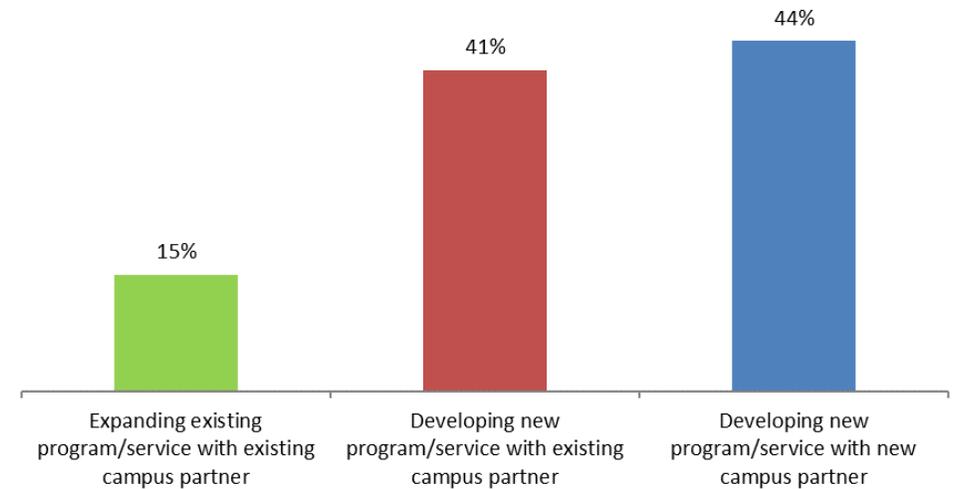
Ways in which CICMH Provided Assistance



Regions



Types of Projects & Partnerships

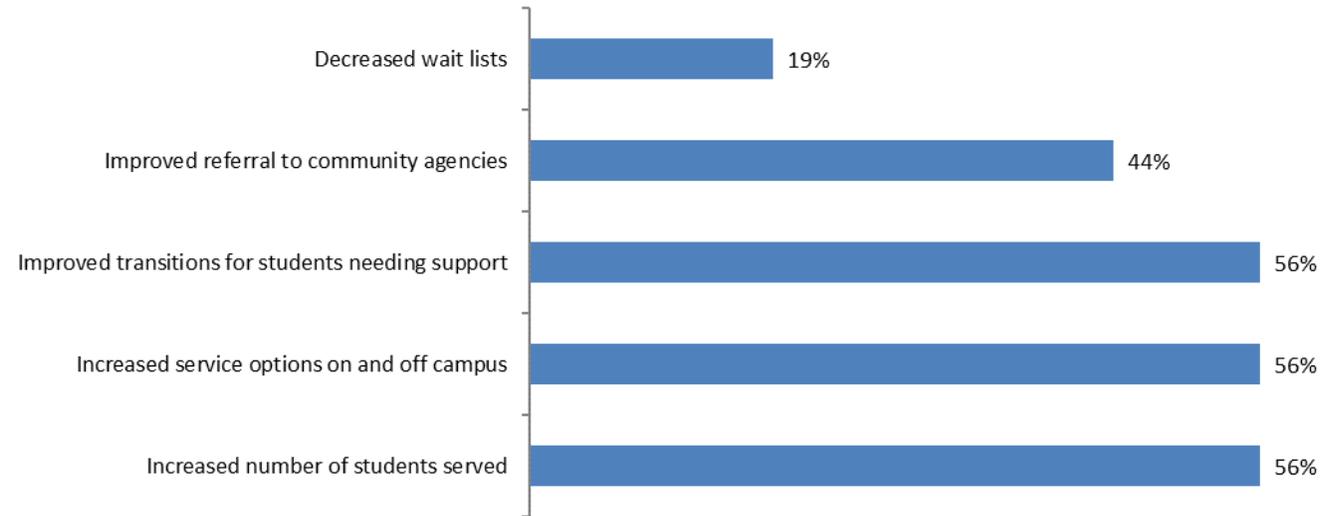


Impact of the projects

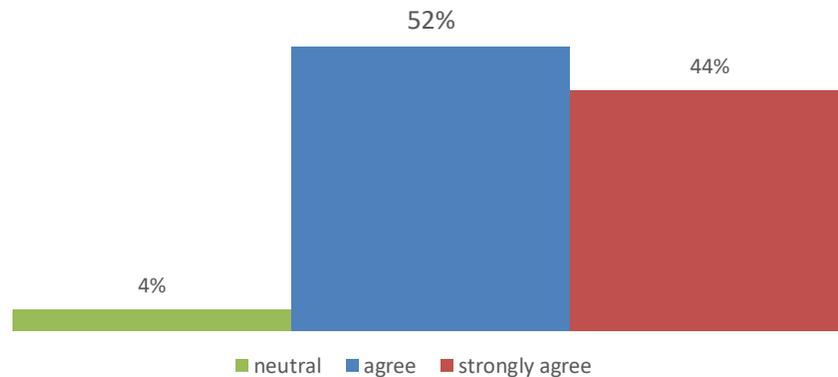
The campus community project enables more students to be served with more options and improved transitions/referrals

Overwhelmingly, partners saw their organizational capacity increase and the relationships with partners strengthened

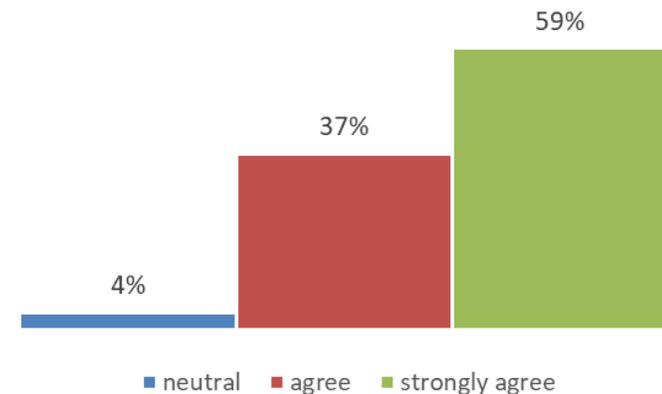
Ways project has or will enhance mental health and wellness needs of students



Due to the support of CICMH, my organization's capacity to support and serve the mental health and wellness needs of post-secondary students has increased



As a result of this project, the relationship with our partner has been strengthened



Types of Projects

The partner projects ranged from training and supports across campus to programs and services dedicated to meet the specialized needs of targeted populations. Projects included:

- Meeting the **mental health and wellness needs of Indigenous students** in a more culturally relevant way, by providing students access to traditional healing modalities and culture.
- A series of videos to **raise awareness and foster safe spaces for the South Asian international student** community, by breaking down the stigma about accessing service and building mental health literacy. *“Data indicated that this population was underutilizing our services. The need was not just to better support international students but to get them to even come into our doors”.*
- **Safetalk training**. This project met a real need as all sessions were filled within a week (30/session) with a mix of students, faculty and staff.
- **Mindfulness and yoga** sessions for students. Students found the sessions timely, beneficial and were seen to be applying their skills immediately. Campus now plans to offer career mindfulness as a companion program.

Benefits

All partners were tremendously proud of the programs and services delivered or under development. The projects provided:

- Access to broader networks, services and activities for both partners
- Shared planning and brainstorming to identify and address gaps
- Campus has access to more services beyond existing programs
- Recognition from senior management of the benefits
- Exposure to CICMH and the range of resources and supports it provides

“Educational institutions are very insular. This partnership has enabled me to strengthen our connections in the community”.

Key Success Factors

- *“Develop a **clear and common vision** from the onset and have clear roles and responsibilities”.*
- *“Be **flexible and support each other**. Try to think and act as one team, not two separate organizations”.*
- *“**Define the problem well**. This will help identify the right community partners and institutional partners to engage with”.*

Advice for Others

- *“Whatever idea you have, run with it. Look for programs that you can create with as **little red tape as possible**. If you can capitalize on great ideas quickly there is a tremendous benefit. Don’t try to overthink and make things complicated”.*
- *“**Don’t be afraid** to reach out to new partners”.*
- *“As a new relationship, **attend each other’s programs**, to learn more about the services and programs available and identify other opportunities to work together”.*

Most Proud of

*“Getting **traditional healing modalities** and having those opportunities for students to have access to them and our culture”.*

*“People are **writing to our office to ask if we will be running more training**. They want to see this offered in campus.”*

*“This partnership! This opportunity allowed us to **expedite a new partnership with real deliverables** in a short period of time. We were agile and relatively quickly figured out together what the deliverable would be, and the resources needed to make it happen.”*

*“Getting this **up and running so quickly, with great student interest and impact** . It is totally sustainable”.*

Support from CICMH

Partners felt the support from CICMH for this project and overall (resources, website materials, training, workshops and conferences) is critical to develop and keep momentum on these projects and their ongoing success.

*“Thank you for taking the chance on us. Know that **the students are benefiting**. We are noticing a huge difference in them. Our program is already creating change.”*

*“The **more support we can get from CICMH the better**. “The website content is amazing. The information about what is happening on other campuses and best practices and very useful for planning. Going to their website is the first thing I do each April when planning.”*

*“CICMH is fabulous. the leadership is amazing, so **supportive, responsive and accommodating** to the needs of the institutions they serve. Their resources, training, MFOTG and conferences are amazing and a resource we should never lose.”*