



How to Instill a Goal Oriented Focus in Individual Counseling Appointments

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National Meeting Webconference Series

Meeting the Growing Demand for Campus Mental Health Services

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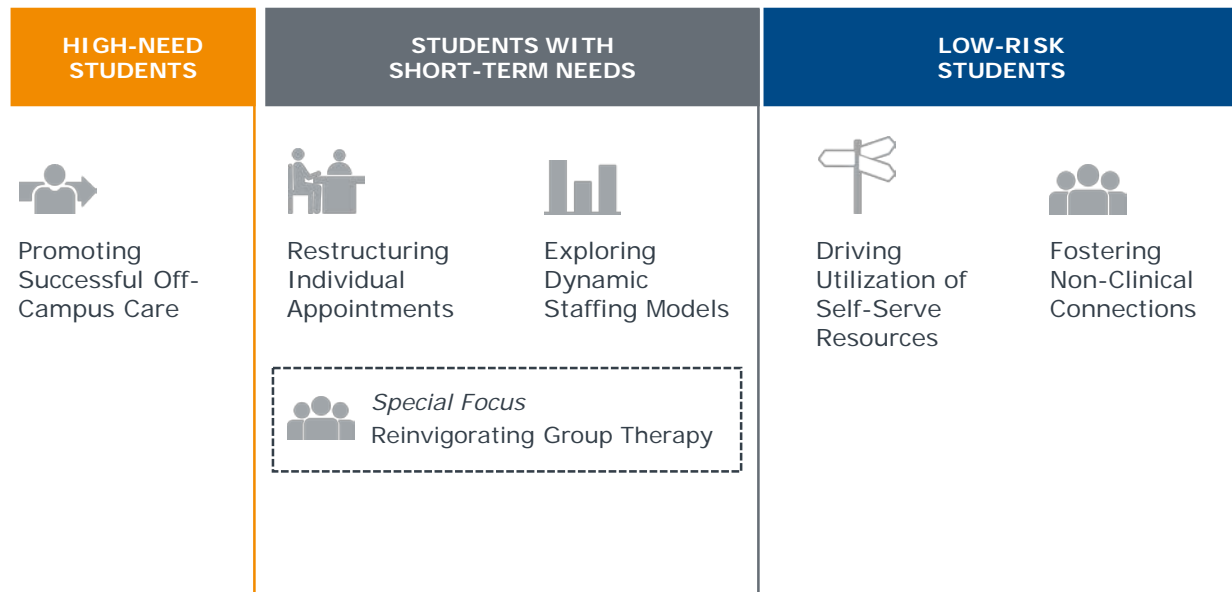
Institutions are struggling with an undefined and unsustainable scope of mental health care that is overly dependent on traditional models to connect students with on campus mental health support. EAB's research explores how institutions can maximize existing clinical resources and target interventions to key student segments on campus.

Upcoming Webconferences

- 3** **Tuesday, April 24, 1:00 – 1:30pm EST**
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How to Connect Low-Risk Students to Meaningful Resources on Campus

Meeting the Escalating Demand

Mapping Targeted Interventions to Key Student Segments



Wanted: Individual Therapy

More Students Are Seeking Short-Term Therapy on Campus

Demand for Individual Appointments Outpaces Enrollment Growth

Average Growth, 2009-10 to 2014-15

5.6%

Average percent change in
institutional enrollment

38.4%

Average percent change in
counseling center appointments

7x

Rate at which demand for
counseling center appointments
outpaced enrollment growth

Students Are Demanding Increased Access to Individualized Care

“Students come to campus expecting **individual counseling**. We had a protest last year where students were chanting, “more free therapy, less free football.” We can’t simply ignore them when they ask for more support on campus.”

*Director of Counseling Services
Public Research University*

“A growing attitude among our students is a desire to “**get their money’s worth**” from the fees they pay on campus. We’ve seen a rising number of students coming to counseling services because they feel like they already paid for it.”

*Vice President for Student Affairs
Public Research University*



More Students, Longer Wait Times

Counseling Centers Cannot Keep Pace with Students Seeking Help

Waiting for an Appointment...

1 in 3

About **one-third** of institutions maintain a **waitlist for individual therapy appointments**

2-3 weeks

Average wait times for individual therapy appointments on campus is **2-3 weeks** and **longer during busier times of year**, such as midterms and finals

...Means Students Don't Get The Help They Need When They Need It

“ Things start to **back up like a traffic jam**. A lot can happen in four or five weeks during a quarter in college. It really wasn't OK to have that delay in place.”

*Gary Dunn, Director of Counseling and Psychological Services
University of California, Santa Cruz*

“ When students summon the courage and make time to come to the counseling center, they are at the point of their own crisis. When we would put them in a queue it was problematic because they **didn't know how to manage their own manifesting behaviors**.”

*John Austin
Interim Vice-Provost, Students
Ryerson University*

The Capacity Catch-22

You Can't Resource Your Way Out of the Current Situation

No Matter Your Size, Staffing Alone Is Not a Long-Term Solution

	Davidson College	Brown University	Cornell University	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Total Undergraduates	1,784	6,652	14,315	33,368
Total Mental Health Providers	4	15	32	26
Ratio of Undergraduates to Providers	446:1	443:1	447:1	1,283:1
Wait Time	Up to 1 week	Up to 2.5 weeks	Up to 2 weeks	Up to 12 days

“Institutions with **well-resourced counseling centers** are still seeing extreme demand and significant challenges in meeting the demand, which means that the solution is not more counselors. It may be a short term answer, but it's not a long term solution.”

Vice Provost of Students, Public Canadian University

A New Way Forward



Maximize Clinical Efficiency with Existing Resources

QUICK WINS

Restructuring Individual Appointments

Maximize existing individual sessions with goal-setting and regular progress checks



Individualized
Action Plans



Appointment
Checkpoints



Truncated
Appointments

What Does Success Look Like?

More Focus Needed on Individual Goals and Progress

Sessions Are Rarely Goal-Focused

26% Of on-campus, individual therapy appointments are terminated when treatment goals are completed

- ✘ Students **lack clear direction**
- ✘ Students **tick through therapy sessions** until they reach the end of the semester or an attendance cap
- ✘ Students are **not prompted** to consider pausing or ending on-campus therapy

”

Therapy Should Be a Goal-Directed Experience

“Counseling should not be a place where you come vent. It needs to be a very **goal-directed experience**. Too often, students are meandering through counseling until they come up on the end of the semester or an arbitrary appointment limit. Instead, they should be actively working with their counselor to answer this question: **“How do I know when I don’t need counseling anymore?”**”

*Director of Counseling Services
Public Research University*

Creating a Framework for Success

Rutgers University's Individualized Action Plan

Prioritizing Early Action Planning



Sets the Tone

Jointly developed by the student and their counselor at the first appointment



Establishes a Road Map

Serves as a guide for student's ongoing treatment plan



Guides Reflection

Prompts students to isolate concerns, articulate goals, and determine evaluation strategy



Drives Progress

Action plans are stored in students' electronic health record, revisited at every appointment

Wellness Action Plan

Sample Fields

- Goal
- Interventions you will use to work toward this goal
- Proposed number of therapy sessions
- How will progress be measured towards this goal? What measures will be used?
- How will you know that you have improved? What will be difference?
- Alternative treatment options and risks and benefits of each
- Out-of-session practices and/or in session work will be utilized

Employ Checkpoints to Track Progress

University at Buffalo Periodically Assesses Student Goals

How It Works



Logistics



Clinician reviews CCAPS data and session notes for each student



Engages student in an intentional conversation about their evolving goals and progress to date

Key Benefits



Ensures that individual therapy is a **goal-oriented** experience



Encourages students to **think ahead** about their treatment needs



Promotes **responsible stewardship** of limited clinical resources

1) CCAPS is the Counseling Center Assessment of Psychological Symptoms, a multi-dimensional assessment instrument used in college counseling centers.

Moving Away From the 50-Minute Standard

Using Shorter Sessions to Supplement Other Interventions

A Growing Trend: Truncated Appointments



15-30 minute appointments
between student and counselor



Can be completed **in-person**
or over the phone



Promotes **timely follow-up** to
concurrent therapeutic experiences



Ideal for:

- Debriefing a group therapy session or online module
- Checking in about a newly learned coping technique
- Troubleshooting an immediate complication or concern



Building in Flexibility

“Giving students the option to quickly meet with us **ensures that they feel supported** when they are using TAO, going to group, or practicing mindfulness on their own time. It did require our staff to adjust how they were talking with students, but now they **appreciate the flexibility of being able to touch base without holding an entire appointment hour.**”

*Director of Counseling Services
Private Research University*

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Using This Research on Campus

Forthcoming Resources from the Student Affairs Forum

Webinar Series

Each section spotlighted in 30- to 45-minute webinar sessions; perfect for team meetings and brown-bag workshops



Book-Length Publication

Every best practice from the study compiled in a bound publication, featuring guidance and worksheets for your team



Implementation Toolkit

Templates and examples from profiled institutions help student affairs leaders avoid “reinventing the wheel” and streamline new initiatives



Executive Briefing

Ready-to-go resource for senior leaders that explains the current state of affairs on campus and what institutions are doing to meet students' demand





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Student Affairs Forum