

Project Team

Jackie Phinney (MLIS) -Dalhousie University

Lucy Kiester (MLIS)- McGill University

Project Timeline

January 2020-June 2020:

- Project preparation; REB approval, Survey creation using REDCap

July 2020-August 2020:

- Data collection took place

September 2020-April 2021:

- Data analysis; Manuscript writing; Submitted to Journal of the Canadian Health Libraries Association for peer review

May 2021-September 2021:

- Manuscript accepted pending edits, Revised manuscript; Copyedits completed

December 2021:

- Paper to be published in the Journal of the Canadian Health Libraries Association

Description of the Project

The purpose of this research project was to explore if/how undergraduate medical education (UGME) librarians in Canada are supporting the wellness of UGME students. To accomplish this, we surveyed our librarian colleagues across Canada during the months of July and August 2020, using a bilingual survey on the REDCap survey platform. This survey contained both multiple choice and open-ended questions, and asked participants questions regarding their involvement with purchasing/recommending wellness-related resources, helping plan events and/or spaces on campus where medical students could engage in wellness-related activities, if they have ever adapted their own teaching resources to promote medical student wellness, and more. We were also interested to know if libraries were promoting their wellness-related initiatives directly to medical students, as communicating with this group can be somewhat challenging given their complex curriculum and changing geographical placements.

Once data collection was completed in August 2020, we analyzed the results to try and draw conclusions about Canadian UGME librarians' involvement with medical student wellness initiatives. In total there were 22 responses to our survey, with 17 datasets remaining for final analysis once incomplete surveys were removed. Quantitative data

was tallied using an Excel spreadsheet, and the qualitative responses were reviewed and key findings were extracted for the final presentation of the data. Worth noting is that we attempted to conduct statistical analysis on the quantitative data to try and explore relationships between variables, but were unable to do so as the data sample was too small to provide statistically-significant results.

Results

Our results showed that UGME librarians in Canada are mostly aware of the issues surrounding medical student wellness (with over half of the respondents admitting to encountering a medical student in distress), and have taken steps to try and assist in this area by adjusting their own teaching style/materials to support medical student wellness. Other initiatives such as resource purchasing, wellness-themed displays, planning wellness-themed events and spaces, and partnerships on campus in support of medical student wellness were less common, though there was some evidence that these do occur.

Worth noting is that our results did include comments related to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on librarians supporting medical student wellness. While we could not have anticipated our data collection taking place during a global pandemic, we were happy to see librarians being mindful of medical student stress during this time as we analyzed our data.

Overall, this study provides a small glimpse into UGME librarians' consideration and support of medical student wellness. Although this study contained a number of limitations, including our own biases of what 'wellness' initiatives are, we are happy to see that our colleagues are considering this important issue, which is even more important now as our society becomes more aware of healthcare provider burnout due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dissemination

This project has been developed into a manuscript and was accepted to the Journal of the Canadian Health Libraries Association (open access). It will be found in their December 2021 issue once it goes live:

<https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/jchla/index.php/jchla/index>

Breakdown of Expenditures

The funds from this grant were spent as follows:

- 130.44-Overhead fee to Dalhousie University's Research Services office
- 645.97-To McGill University's professional translation service (to translate our survey instrument, informed consent letter, and recruitment email into French)
- 200.00-To Dalhousie University's statistical consulting services (to conduct statistical analyses on our data)
- 23.59-Remaining funds that were returned to CAUL

Authors' Gratitude

The authors of this study (Jackie Phinney and Lucy Kiester) would like to thank CAUL/CBUA for their generous support to help us complete this project.