

QUALITY REVIEW FOLLOW-UP MEETING

DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT HEALTH

A meeting to discuss progress made in implementing recommendations for improvement arising from the quality review of the Department of Student Health was held on 1 October 2009.

Present: Mr Con O'Brien, Vice-President for Student Experience
Dr Michael Byrne, Head, Department of Student Health
Ms Chris O'Brien, Senior Executive Assistant, Department of Student Health
Dr Norma Ryan, Director, Quality Promotion Unit
Ms Deirdre O'Brien, Administrative Officer, Quality Promotion Unit

General Comment

The Department of Student Health wished to record the fact that the Quality Review was a very positive experience for the department and the department has benefitted greatly from the framework put in place by the review. The department also commended the support given by the Quality Promotion Unit both prior to and during the review itself and the support received from the Vice-President for Student Experience in implementing the recommendations.

Following the initial report from the QPC to the Department on the review the Department was asked to complete a Quality Improvement Plan detailing the actions to take place and those responsible. This was done and the QIP was submitted to the QPC according to the procedures.

Introduction

Following the completion of the quality review of the Department of Student Health the Quality Promotion Committee commended the staff for their engagement with the process and for the positive endorsement by the reviewers of the activities and the plans of the Department for improvements. The QPC congratulated the Department on the successful outcome of the review. The QPC noted the detailed recommendations discussed below and that many of these had in fact arisen from the recommendations of the Department itself as an outcome of its reflection and self-analysis.

The QPC also noted the significant number of recommendations which require funding to be implemented. The QPC endorsed almost all of these in principle (see Table for details), but noted that funding may not be available immediately to implement all of these recommendations. The QPC referred all recommendations requiring funding to the VP Student Experience for consideration as to how the funding may be acquired and recommended strongly that the Head of Department consult and work with the VP Student Experience to achieve this.

Abbreviations

PRG: Peer Review Group

QPC: Quality Promotion Committee

HR: Human Resources

ACSSS: Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences

PDR: Performance Development Review

VP: Vice-President

QIP: Quality Improvement Plan

MH: Medicine & Health

UMTS: University Management team (Strategy)

PRG Recommendation	QPC Recommendation	Action	Follow-up Meeting October 2009
Recommendations to the University			
<i>Structures</i>			
That the existing building be reconfigured to ensure that the reception area is redesigned to enable improved patient confidentiality, office space for the office manager, self check-in service, introduction of electronic payment/fee collection system.	Endorsed. QPC noted that this issue is of particular importance in improving the quality of the student experience and recommended that this recommendation be implemented as soon as possible.	VP Student Experience Department	Implemented. The reception area has been redesigned and office space for the office manager has been provided. The self check-in service has not been implemented and electronic fee collection has not been implemented as the amounts are not large enough and the Finance Office in UCC did not recommend this action. However, the fee collection system has been improved.
That the Physiotherapy aspect of the service be relocated to the Mardyke Arena. This recommendation would facilitate the reconfiguration of the current building.	QPC recommends that the VP Student Experience explore this recommendation with the Mardyke Arena and the Corporate Secretary.	VP Student Experience	Not implemented. This recommendation has been overtaken by events as the Mardyke Arena now has its own physiotherapy service.
That the room which currently houses the photocopier be re-designated as a staff toilet and shower facility. That a smaller office photocopier be purchased in keeping with modern health and safety ventilation requirements.	Endorsed. QPC noted the importance of ensuring adequate facilities for staff in such a unit.	VP Student Experience Department	Implemented. A smaller photocopier has been purchased and moved to a more appropriate location. A new staff toilet (though not a shower) has been installed and a new student toilet has also been installed.
That the two consultancy rooms with limited ventilation be provided with air conditioning, to avoid compromising confidentiality by opening windows onto external areas where students congregate.	Endorsed QPC endorsed the need to ensure the confidentiality of the consultations and for appropriate environments	VP Student Experience Department	Implemented.
<i>Processes</i>			
That the pay of medical staff be benchmarked with other Higher Education Institutions in the State.	Endorsed.	VP Student Experience Department	Ongoing The timetable for completion approved by the QPC in 08/09 is the end of 2009.

PRG Recommendation	QPC Recommendation	Action	Follow-up Meeting October 2009
The University should have a single death policy.	Endorsed QPC noted that UCC does have a death policy and that it is important that this be communicated widely to staff, in both academic and support units.	VP Student Experience Department	Implemented. This policy has been revised; the policy will be reviewed by the Joint Board for the Student Experience.
<i>Staff: Career pathways/training</i>			
That a Deputy Head be appointed.	Endorsed recommendation.	VP Student Experience Department	Not yet implemented. This is not yet implemented due to the current financial difficulties. However, leadership roles with increased levels of responsibility have been developed for the doctors and cover for the head is not in place at all times, e.g. deputy head for swine flu and infection control.
The identification of a budget for training and continuing medical education for all staff, with locum provision as appropriate. Staff should not self-fund continuing medical education.	Endorsed QPC noted the importance of continuing health professional education for all professional staff.	VP Student Experience Department	Implemented. Staff continuing medical education and training is now funded from within the existing budget.
That consideration be given to the amendment of contracts to include provision for study leave.	Endorsed. QPC noted the need for additional resources to fund this recommendation.	VP Student Experience Department	On-going. This recommendation is subject to resources; a decision on this will be made by the end of 2009.
That up-skilling for nursing personnel be recognised as essential and be supported.	Endorsed. QPC noted that this would be welcomed by the nursing staff and would increase the range of services offered and the efficiency of the service. QPC recommended that the Department explore the possibility of developing links with College MH for provision of courses.	VP Student Experience Head of Department College MH	Implemented. Nursing staff are now undergoing up-skilling in a number of areas.

PRG Recommendation	QPC Recommendation	Action	Follow-up Meeting October 2009
<i>Planning</i>			
That support for re-grading when new roles and responsibilities have emerged be provided.	Endorsed	Department	Implemented
That consideration be given to the Department of Student Health taking over Ardpatrick to facilitate the immediate needs of the expanding health service and the change in student demographics.	QPC noted that this recommendation is linked to the integration of student support services and the planned new Student Services Building. However, space challenges have to be addressed in the short term. The QPC recommends discussion on this issue between the Head of Department, Director of Buildings & Estates and the VP Student Experience and awaits their recommendations.	Head of Department VP Student Experience Director, Buildings & Estates	This has not been implemented and there is no plan to change the current arrangement; however, the University's long term strategic aim of an integrated student service centre will fulfil the needs of Student Health in the long term.
That the University should expand the number of administrative staff to ensure adequate continuing support for existing service provision and the planned expansion.	Endorsed in principle. The QPC referred this recommendation to the VP Student Experience and Department for discussion as to how to implement.	VP Student Experience Head of Department	Not implemented. This is not possible to implement in the current economic climate.
That there be formal structural relationships between the key student services - to meet regularly with respect to development of ongoing policies, procedures and practices.	Endorsed	VP Student Experience Department	Implemented. Collaboration has improved enormously. A student support services group meets fortnightly and there are now scheduled formal meetings between Student Health and Student Counselling where training and procedures are discussed and practice shared. Case fora are also held to discuss the more challenging student cases.

PRG Recommendation	QPC Recommendation	Action	Follow-up Meeting October 2009
<i>Health & Well-being of Students</i>			
That a planning group be established to input into the design of the planned new Student Services Building and that the Head of the Department of Student Health be a member of that team.	Endorsed QPC recommended that a formal planning group be established with terms of reference developed and including student input.	Registrar VP Student Experience	Not implemented to date. Will be implemented once the planning process commences.
That in addition to the existing services, a Sexual Health Clinic be established, with staff appropriately trained, and appropriate funding be provided, given the high prevalence and increasing incidence in Ireland of Sexually Transmitted Diseases.	Endorsed QPC referred this recommendation to the VP Student Experience for consideration and for provision of funding to implement in consultation with other experts already in the Cork area.	VP Student Experience Head of Department	Implemented.
That a full-time consultant-led psychiatric service be provided linked to the Counselling Service, Disability Support Service and possibly to other institutions (CIT).	Endorsed QPC referred this recommendation to VP Student Experience for consideration as to how funding might be provided for implementation. QPC recommended that consideration be given to working with the HSE and voluntary agencies exploring the possibilities of provision of outreach services in UCC. The possibility of establishing links with CIT in this regard should also be explored.	VP Student Experience	Partially implemented. The service has been increased to 3 sessions per week. Closer liaisons have been developed with Student Counselling and Disability Support Service and CIT have agreed to investigate the possibility of engaging the UCC psychiatrist.

PRG Recommendation	QPC Recommendation	Action	Follow-up Meeting October 2009
<p>That a full-time health promotion officer be appointed, in keeping with the strategies outlined in the University Strategic Framework 2006-2011 to enhance the quality of the student experience. A Health Promotion policy will promote best practice in regard to smoking cessation, alcohol and drug awareness.</p>	<p>Endorsed Refer to VP Student Experience for consideration and funding to implement</p>	<p>VP Student Experience</p>	<p>Not implemented. The appointment of a full-time health promotion officer was not approved by UMTS; however the UCC health promotion strategy has been greatly improved and is closely linked to the Students Union. There are a number of activities in the planning stage, including a new alcohol and drug use. A cross-University group has been established to deliver these activities.</p>
<p>Recommendations to the Department</p>			
<p><i>Structures</i></p>			
<p>That the client waiting room area be redesigned and redeveloped to create a more welcoming, inviting and user-friendly environment.</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>	<p>Department</p>	<p>Implemented.</p>
<p>That within the waiting room area there should be a clear display of the student services on offer and the charges associated with each of the services. It is recommended that this information should be displayed electronically.</p>	<p>Endorsed</p>	<p>Department</p>	<p>Implemented. The department is currently awaiting delivery of electronic screen to complete the process.</p>
<p>That the urine analysis equipment should be moved from the public toilet to a more suitable spot.</p>	<p>Endorsed QPC requested that this be implemented as a matter of immediate importance</p>	<p>Department</p>	<p>Implemented.</p>
<p>That the kitchenette be reconfigured and a second fridge installed, thereby resolving the issue of having biological samples stored alongside food.</p>	<p>Endorsed QPC requested that this be implemented as a matter of immediate importance</p>	<p>Department</p>	<p>Implemented.</p>
<p><i>Processes</i></p>			

PRG Recommendation	QPC Recommendation	Action	Follow-up Meeting October 2009
That an effective and equitable system for fee collection, which is removed from the health professionals administering services, be developed immediately.	Endorsed QPC welcomed the action of the Department in implementing this recommendation immediately	Department	Implemented.
That the administration of the vaccination service, including fee collection, be handled by the relevant schools and that the Department of Student Health provide the clinical service.	Endorsed QPC stressed the importance of ensuring that the vaccination service is adequate and appropriate and recommended strongly that the relevant schools/academic departments should take full responsibility for ensuring that all students have received the appropriate vaccinations.	College ACSSS College MH Department	Implemented as appropriate. Ownership of the vaccination service and fee collection has been retained by the Department, as this is a more efficient mode of operation. The service has been streamlined and improved. Departments are happy with the system and are taking responsibility for ensuring that the students attend. The onus is on the academic department to ensure that the students are vaccinated; students are not allowed to progress into clinical years of their programmes without the appropriate vaccinations.
That the Department of Student Health assist the Schools in UCC in developing a protocol to prohibit students who have not had the prescribed vaccinations from registering for their programmes or progressing within the programmes.	Strongly endorsed.	College ACSSS College MH Department Admissions Officer	Implemented. Note of explanation: the Department of Student Health is not responsible for the vaccination of students nor for the protocols prohibiting students from registering for courses which require specific vaccinations. However the recommendation from the Review Group was made in order to encourage the university to avail of the expertise in the Department in this area.
That charges for services be revised to cover costs, to ensure that service provision does not erode the budget of the Department of Student Health.	Strongly endorsed.	Department	Implemented. Will be reviewed annually.
That a self check-in system for students with appointments be instituted.	Endorsed	Department	Not implemented. It is not technically possible at the moment.

PRG Recommendation	QPC Recommendation	Action	Follow-up Meeting October 2009
That a ticketing system to process students through the system (i.e. students take a ticket on arrival at the clinic and sit and wait until called) be installed.	Endorsed QPC noted the response of the Department and requested that this be addressed, <i>inter alia</i> , in the QIP	Department	Not implemented. Student Health discussed this recommendation with centres that have implemented a ticketing system. Most centres subsequently abandoned the system and determined that it was unworkable. The confidentiality issues have been addressed. There still remains an issue with queuing and self-check in will remain the ultimate answer when the technology permits.
That an audit be conducted of nursing services and telephone contacts.	Endorsed	Department	Ongoing. This is expected to be completed in December 2009.
That all the team should contribute to the development of in-house protocols.	Endorsed QPC noted the action already taken by the Department in this regard.	Department	Implemented. This is also an on-going activity on a regular basis and will continue to be so.
Staff: Career pathways/training			
A training needs analysis is required for all staff, informed by workload analysis and that all staff should participate in the Staff Performance & Development Reviews.	Endorsed QPC noted that the Department has already progressed the implementation of this recommendation.	Department	Implemented. A training needs analysis has been undertaken. All staff required to undertake the PDR have done so.
That appropriate job descriptions be agreed with staff.	Endorsed	Department	Ongoing. This is expected to be completed in December 2009.
Planning			
That a survey of student health needs be conducted by the Department to inform planning and prioritisation of services and training.	Strongly endorsed QPC recommended that this be implemented as a matter of immediacy and that the outcome may provide support/evidence for the additional resources required.	Department VP Student Experience	Not implemented. A university wide survey of students was completed in March 09 by the student services group and it is anticipated that the results, when published, will inform the Department.

PRG Recommendation	QPC Recommendation	Action	Follow-up Meeting October 2009
That the possibility of job-sharing for all staff positions be explored.	QPC recommended that the mix of staffing arrangements should be reviewed. Best practice arrangements should be considered by the Department. QPC noted that this recommendation was made in the interests of the staff. The Department is staffed primarily by part-time staff who have no access to many facilities and opportunities that would be available if job-sharing was the norm.	Department	Implemented. All possibilities were explored and the Head of the Department confirmed that staff are happy with the current arrangements.
That the timing of transport of biological materials to laboratories be investigated with a view to ensuring same-day collection for afternoon samples.	Endorsed	Department	Implemented. In particular, where same-day collection is necessary.
Revision of current courier services and delivery/collection of medical supplies.	Endorsed	Department	Implemented. Responsibility for ordering supplies has been assigned to a staff member.
That the provision of a medical card for all students under 26 years of age be explored. It is recommended that this be explored in collaboration and partnership with all student health services in Higher Education Institutions in Ireland.	Endorsed	Department VP Student Experience	Not implemented Given the current national economic climate it was decided not to pursue this recommendation at this time.
That the Department investigate nurse-prescribing training.	Endorsed	Department	Implemented. A staff member is registered for course in January 2010.
The Department should develop a business plan, along with an annual review of medical inflation.	Endorsed	Department	Not implemented. Student Health is both strictly monitoring and making best use of its budget and therefore has no specific need for a business plan at this point.

PRG Recommendation	QPC Recommendation	Action	Follow-up Meeting October 2009
Communication			
That consideration be given to the establishment of a Case Forum to enable better identification of student needs. The forum would comprise of cognate professionals from Disability Support Service, Student Counselling & Development, Chaplaincy, Student Welfare Officer.	Endorsed	Head of Department Heads of Disability Support Service, Student Counselling & Development, Chaplaincy, Student Welfare Officer.	Implemented. This is currently in place for individual challenging cases and best practice is shared at the Student Services Management Group
That consideration be given to expanding the current level of cooperation with CIT Medical Services. For example the Department may consider a joint application for SIF funding, or the joint appointment of a psychiatrist, etc.	Endorsed	Department	Implemented. There is now an increased level of cooperation and collaboration between CIT and UCC, for example, in coping with the H1N1 pandemic, psychiatric services
Heads of Colleges/Faculties/Schools be invited to visit the Department of Student Health to familiarise themselves with staff and the services offered.	Endorsed	Department	Not yet implemented. Implementation is planned for 09/10.
The web site needs to be updated and regularly maintained.	Endorsed	Department	Implemented.
Health & Well-being of Students			
A mental health policy should be developed.	Endorsed	Department	Implemented.
The alcohol policy be updated.	Endorsed	Department	In process. Discussions are taking place with interested groups such as the Student Union. It is anticipated that a revised policy will be put in place during 09/10.

PRG Recommendation	QPC Recommendation	Action	Follow-up Meeting October 2009
That the service would examine the feasibility of having a female doctor available during the summer months.	Endorsed	Department VP Student Experience	Implemented. This was implemented during the summer 2009 and will be implemented in future years subject to budgetary conditions.
That the service examine the possibility of increasing the number of staff qualified in cervical smear taking.	Endorsed	Department	Implemented. The Department has paid for nursing staff to be trained in this area.