

# AB001. Mental health policy for university students in Hong Kong: a shared responsibility among all university members

Toi Wing Tseng

Department of Social Work and Social Administration, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

*Correspondence to:* Toi Wing Tseng. Department of Social Work and Social Administration, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China. Email: carlttw@connect.hku.hk.

**Background:** The rationale for this paper is based on the pressing concerns on the impacts of the social unrest, particularly of the university students who participated in a majority of the movement arising from the Extradition Bill since 2019. The outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic that began in 2019 further deteriorated the campus life of university students in Hong Kong. This paper aims to propose short-term initiatives and future directions in addressing university student mental health issues in Hong Kong.

**Methods:** This paper reviews the literature on the (I) mental health challenges posed by the university students, (II) mental health services provided by the public sector of the mental health system in Hong Kong, and (III) obstacles encountered by the university mental health services and outlines the initiatives for a coordinated system of university health system according to the Hong Kong context.

**Results:** Short-term initiatives for enhancing accessibility of counselling services and future direction for developing a coordinated system of the university health system are discussed. The author proposed that (I) Mental Wellness Clinic, (II) Campus-wide Promotion and Assessment, (III) Effective Triage, and (IV) Clinical Emergencies and Crisis Support should be considered in the university health system.

**Conclusions:** A timely tackle is required to respond to the overwhelming needs of student mental health services in Hong Kong. Mental health resources and efforts will fail if not supported by a coordinated health system within the campus and not considered as a shared responsibility among all university members. This paper also calls attention to the importance of setting up universal policies for informing standards of university mental health care services in Hong Kong.

**Keywords:** Student mental health; university students; mental health policy; university health system; Hong Kong

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## Footnote

*Conflicts of Interest:* The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

*Ethical Statement:* The author is accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

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