



## Policy Principle

This policy principle was updated and approved by the Board of Directors at the 2019 Annual General Meeting on March 10, 2019.

### Policy L03: E-mental health services

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**Updated:** March 10, 2019

**Expires:** March 10, 2021

**WHEREAS** positive mental health, irrespective of mental illness, is integral to the prosperity and success of individuals, families and communities;

**WHEREAS** 70% of mental health-related problems manifest during an individual's adolescence and early twenties, and postsecondary students typically fall within this age group;

**WHEREAS** postsecondary students face high levels of stress brought on by, but not limited to, expectations for academic success, high levels of student debt, limited job prospects upon graduation, and independent living;

**WHEREAS** the average wait time to access mental health services on university campuses in New Brunswick is between two to six weeks, which can have a detrimental impact on personal and academic success;

**WHEREAS** postsecondary institutions are now recognizing the importance of maintaining positive mental health, psychological interventions and preventative action, not only for students who have a mental illness, but also for students who have difficulties coping, and indeed, all students within the community;

**WHEREAS** the mental health crisis is a complicated issue and mental health services require financial and institutional support from the provincial government;

**WHEREAS** online based counselling services have proven to be effective in early intervention for low and middle intensity mental health concerns;

**WHEREAS** the Association of Atlantic of Universities (AAU) believes that the postsecondary sector can decrease the number of students with an unmet need for



mental health support by increasing institutional capacity through cost-effective, technology-based resources;

**WHEREAS** the Mental Health Commission of Canada's strategy *Changing Directions, Changing Lives*, recommends increasing, "the use of tele-mental health and e-mental health," as innovative service delivery methods that will ultimately, "have the capacity to not only overcome traditional geographical, attitudinal, and financial barriers to access care, but also lower overall delivery costs and reduce demand on the clinical workforce,"; and

**WHEREAS** Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island have already committed funding to adopt the AAU's recommendations to better meet the mental health needs of postsecondary students in their provinces.

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the New Brunswick Student Alliance advocate for the Government of New Brunswick to provide \$225,000 for a suite of evidence-driven, technology-based intervention programs that would together improve the mental well being of postsecondary students in New Brunswick.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the New Brunswick Student Alliance advocate for the Government of New Brunswick to provide \$25,000 to develop and implement a communications strategy to advertise and promote these technology-based intervention programs.