

Building partnerships between HE and NHS mental health services: The SPEQS toolkit

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| Context

"Lack of joined-up working means there are gaps transitioning between services..."

"Staff work defensively through fear of getting it wrong"

"Students are too critical for one service, but not critical enough for another"

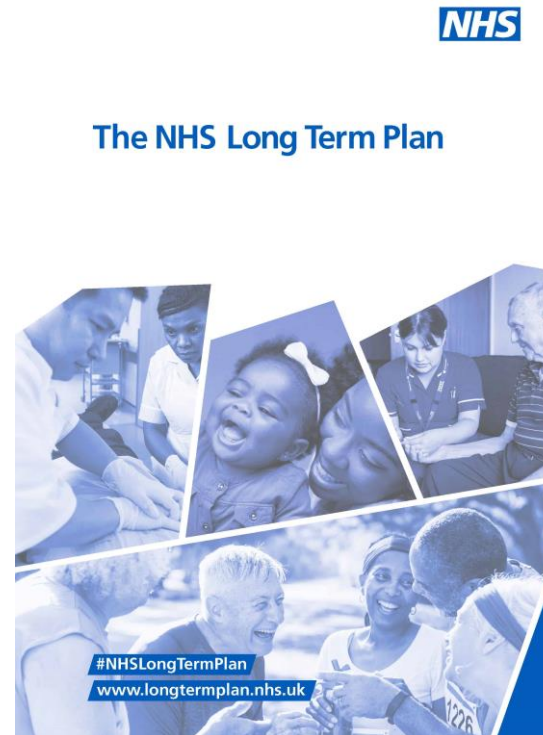
"I hate repeating my story over and over... it definitely stops me from reaching out"

An effective response requires:

- Stronger alignment between HE, NHS, and third sector services
- Movement towards coordinated mental health care for students

| Mentally Healthy University Movement

- Cross-sector working can enhance student mental health services and outcomes



| Aims and shared vision

Research aims:

1. Characterise partnerships between HE and NHS mental health services
2. Identify factors that contribute to successful partnerships
3. Develop a research-informed toolkit to facilitate partnership working



Student Services Partnerships
Evaluation & Quality Standards

| Research, consultation & coproduction

CONSULT

- University site visits
- Service users & non-users
- Professional staff

RESEARCH

- Systematic review
- Scoping activities
- Focus groups & interviews

ANALYSE

- Framework analysis
- Thematic analysis
- Dedicated risk analysis

SYNTHESISE

- Combine findings
- Respond to consultations
- Develop toolkit domains

CRITIQUE

- Student research team
- University partners
- Critical friends

SHARE

- Publish the toolkit
- Blogs & videos
- Conferences & papers

| A case study approach



- Case study approach (Crowe et al., 2011)
- Services = Counselling/mental health, disability, and wellbeing services
- Semi-structured focus groups and follow-up interviews
- In-person and video calls (2019/20)

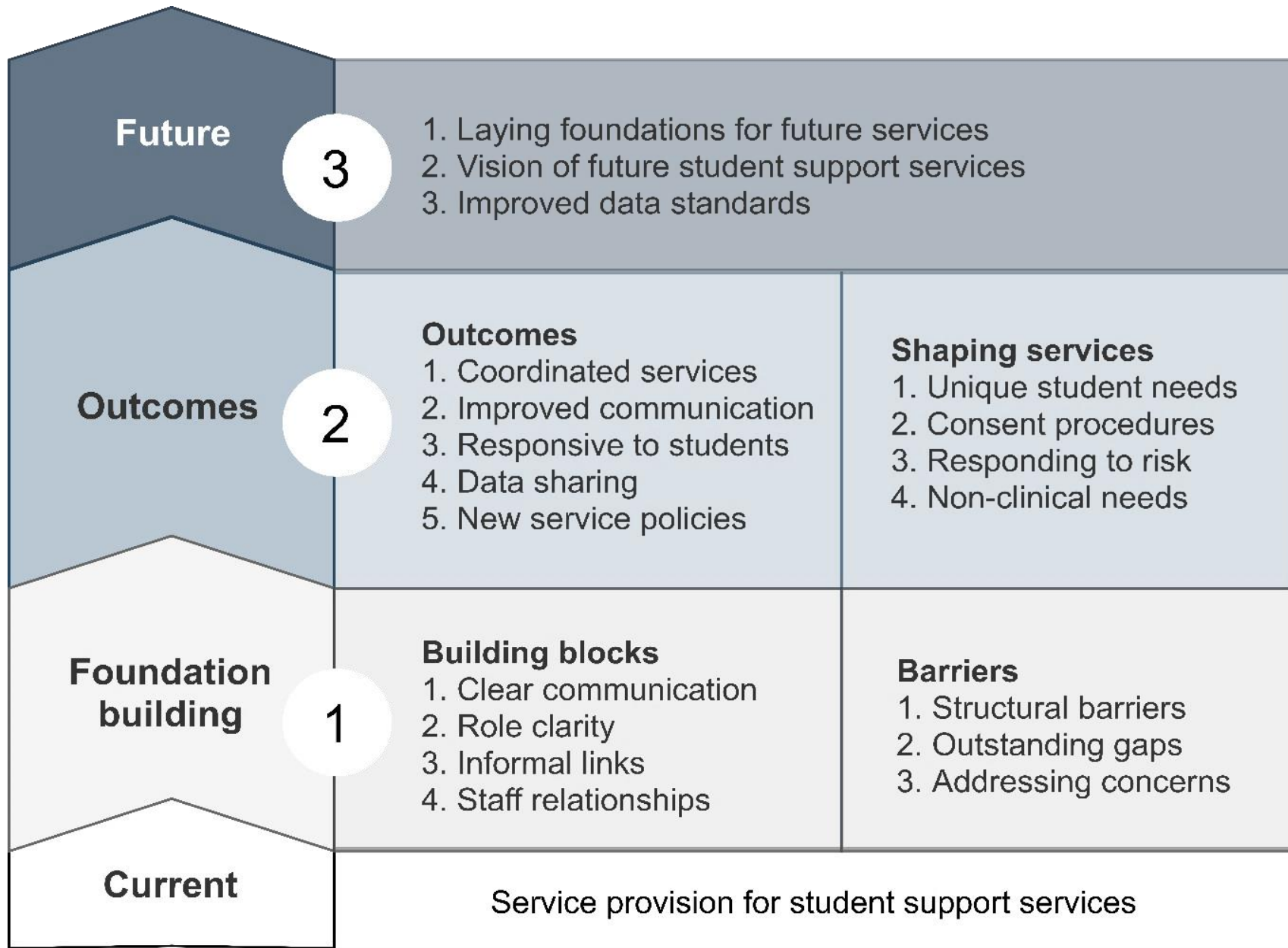


- Guided by an evaluation proforma:
 1. Service model & structure
 2. Data collection procedures
 3. Service goals & challenges



- 27 staff, 39 students
- 8 Uni's, 5 hubs
- Directors,
managers,
practitioners

Framework & thematic analysis



| Partnership building blocks

*“Partnerships are heavily reliant on specific staff members having **personal links**”*

*“Managers to come together to discuss **complex cases** and clarify a course of action”*

*“A space where staff from different services regularly come together to discuss **risk**”*

*“**Clarify** staff roles to enable them to hold **boundaries**”*



| Achieving positive outcomes

*“Dedicated student mental health liaison in the **NHS**”*

*“Good relationships with other services mean care is more **joined-up**”*

*“Obtain **medical evidence** more easily for students with disabilities”*

*“**Direct referrals** and same-day mental health assessments”*

*“Staff have developed **expertise** in student mental health”*

*“Working with the **NHS** [aids discussion] on what university services can and can’t do to **contain the work**”.*



| Vision for coordinated care

*“Shared **quality standards** across services including IAPT”*

*“**New strategy** for Student Emergency and **risk** procedures”*

*“Developing a **data sharing contract**”*

*“**NHS email and policy** that links services”*

*“Improve **communication** with NHS on **fitness to study** when **discharged** from inpatient care”*



Toolkit & podcast now online

SPEQS

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<https://open.spotify.com/episode/6QDUEv6TRcaXVijjCAINWm>



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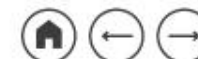
Student Services Partnerships
 Evaluation & Quality Standards

SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN HIGHER EDUCATION AND NHS MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

A practical toolkit for service managers and practitioners striving to develop partnerships to respond to diverse student mental health needs. Part of the Mentally Healthy Universities Movement.

Broglia, E., Nisbet, K., Chow, H., Bone, C., Simmonds-Buckley, M., Knowles, L., Hardy, G., Gibbon, L., & Barkham, M. (2022). Student Services Partnerships Evaluation and Quality Standards (SPEQS) toolkit.

This project was funded by Office for Students as part of the Student Mental Health Partnerships project led by the University of the West of England.



STEPCHANGE: MENTALLY HEALTHY UNIVERSITIES



UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

Eight universities across 5 regional hubs in England engaged with toolkit development as part of an Office for Students funded project led by the University of the West of England.



student
 minds

It aims to facilitate partnership between HE and NHS services by sharing informed strategies and good practice from universities that are successful in partnership working. This toolkit is a practical guide for Students (OFS) funded projects across 8 university partners across 5 regional hubs in England, as well as Universities of the West of England and NHS England.

It is aligned with the Mentally Healthy Universities Movement comprising the Stepchange, Mentally Healthy Universities framework, the Student Minds framework, and the NHS Long Term Plan. These frameworks are committed to developing partnerships and sharing best practice. Through developing partnerships, these frameworks propose that working together will enhance mental health services for students. To achieve these goals, the toolkit comprises 5 Domains that provide areas for universities to develop partnerships. Each case study provides good practice that correspond with each of the 5 domains and consultations with staff underpin the Domains, overall toolkit.

¹Batchelor, R., Pittman, E., Sharplington, A., Stock, M., & Cope, E. (2019). Student perspectives on mental health support and services in the UK. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 33(4), 483-497.
²Universities UK (2020). *Stepchange: Mentally Healthy Universities*.

| Domains represent a commitment to:

CO-PRODUCE WITH STUDENTS

Involving students in the development of new services and policies, to learn and respond to their priorities for mental health services.

GO TO DOMAIN 1 →

COLLECT AND SHARE DATA

Developing data collection strategies to underpin service evaluation. Enabling secure data sharing where appropriate, to facilitate decisions about student care.

GO TO DOMAIN 2 →

MANAGE RISK ACROSS PATHWAYS

Ensuring that procedures are in place to manage risk when students transition between services. Ensuring staff are adequately supported to manage risk.

GO TO DOMAIN 3 →

MEASURE PSYCHOLOGICAL OUTCOMES

Using relevant and consistent measures on a regular basis, to monitor outcomes for all students and determine what works for whom.

GO TO DOMAIN 4 →

EVALUATE SERVICES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Creating a robust service evaluation strategy that makes use of relevant data to improve services, inform decisions, and critically appraise practice.

GO TO DOMAIN 5 →

- Case studies, good practice examples, student and staff voice, recommendations

| A call to action – where to start

MAP

Existing services/pathways to identify gaps in students' journey and data sharing

IDENTIFY

Primary contacts from local services and provide a platform to enable cross-service staff to meet regularly, build relationships, share expertise and decisions

INVOLVE

Students, practitioners, and senior staff early to identify priority areas

Thank you

Research team

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