

Collaborations in providing services to international students; using a Peer Model Delivery Service.

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The reluctance of students in seeking help is highlighted by Douglass and Islam (2007, p.7), who found that 40% of students sampled reported a need for assistance in coping with emotional issues though stated an unwillingness to seek this assistance. The Student Wellbeing team is aiming to reduce that barrier and unwillingness to seek professional help by allowing students to be the introductory touch point for student services.

By employing students, known as Peer Assistants, students that may not have sought professional services are being triaged and referred accurately to services. The minimalist pop-up stand and high traffic location ensures a convenient and accessible contact point for any inquiry.

The introduction of peer assistants to the Student Wellbeing service delivery has increased the number of appointments with Wellbeing Advisors; 21% increase in drop-in appointments, 41% increase in phone appointments and 31% increase in appointments as compared to last year.

International students were surveyed and responded to how they felt about approaching another service as a result of their interaction with a peer, more than 90% reported feeling more confident about their issue after the interaction with a peer.

Overall our findings, indicated by increased service delivery through appointments comparative to previous years and data on the evaluation of services by students, support our hypothesis that peer assistants are reducing international students' unwillingness to seek services by normalising the experience. Secondly, peer assistants may be perceived as a credible role model, and their endorsement of a service can reduce stigmatisation of seeing a professional. Thirdly, peers are acting as brand ambassadors and carry a degree of authenticity by being relatable.