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The Barriers and Facilitators to Mental Health Care in a University Student Population

Debbie Chiodo, PhD.

Rick Ezekiel, M.Sc

OVERVIEW OF TODAY'S PRESENTATION

Context of Students Seeking Mental Health Care at a large Canadian PSE Institution

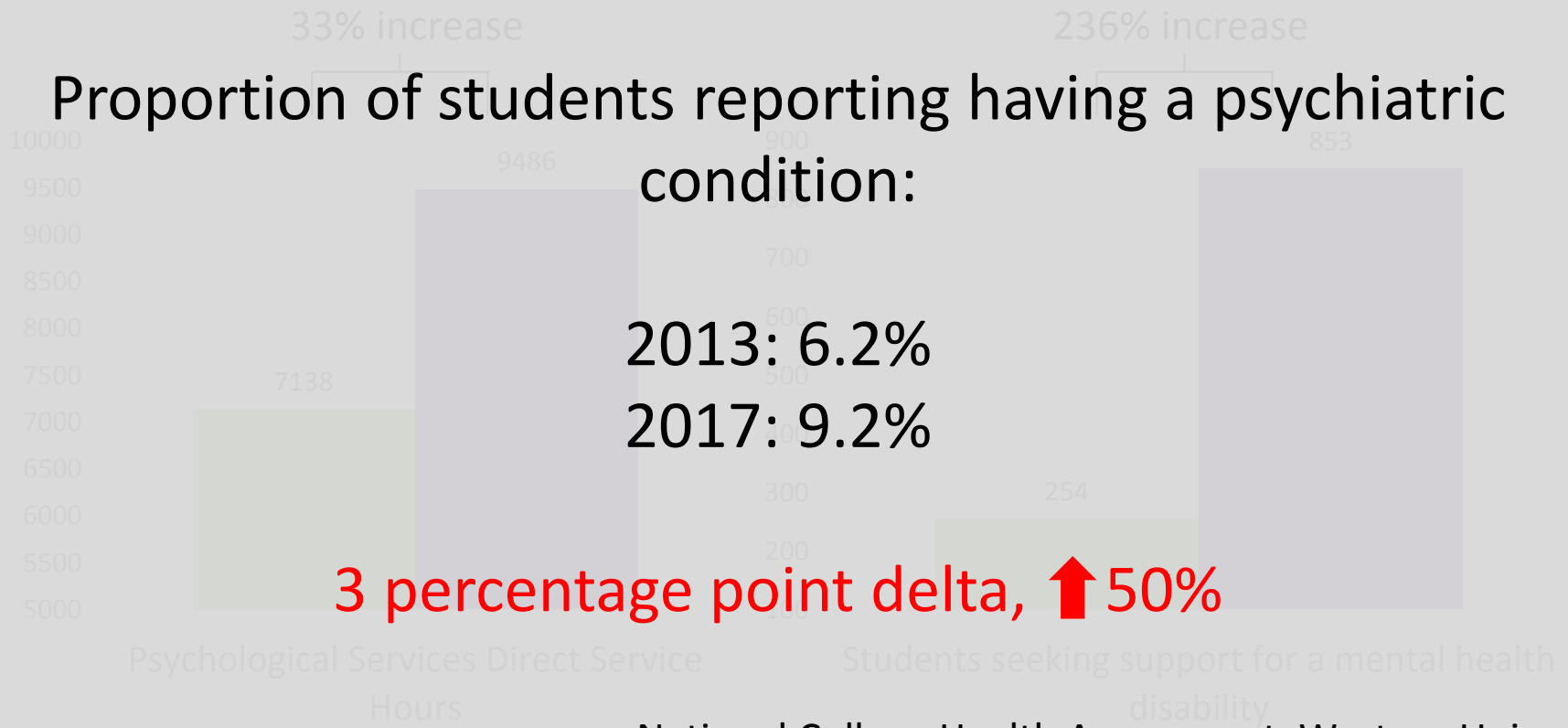
Growing Mental Health Service Usage at Western

Proportion of students reporting having a psychiatric condition:

2013: 6.2%

2017: 9.2%






3 percentage point delta, **↑ 50%**



National College Health Assessment: Western University

Alignment with provincial and national trends:

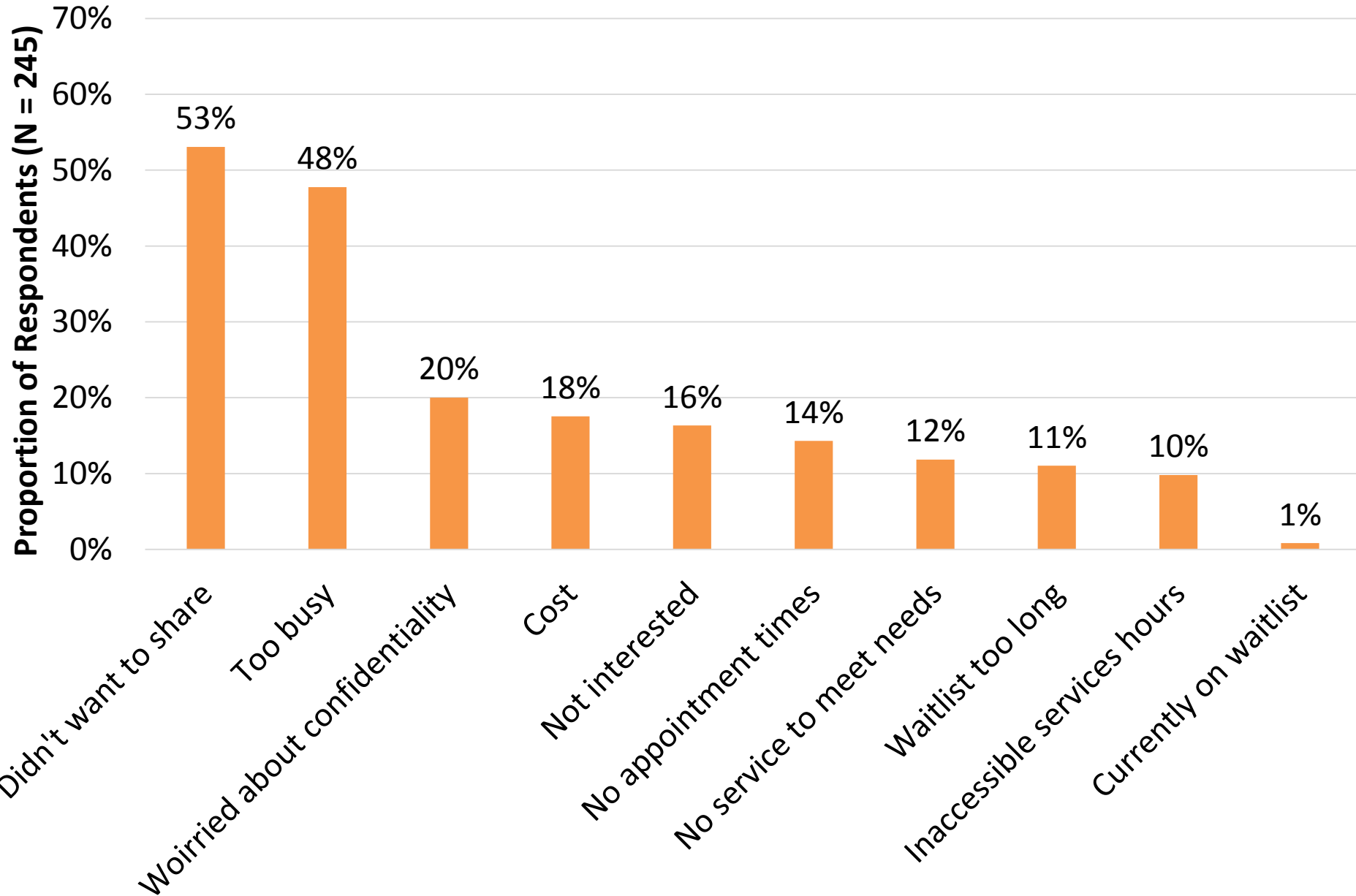
Areas of Greatest Change from 2013 to 2016 (NCHA Canadian Reference Group)

| Indicator | Change Direction | Change |
|---|---|--------|
| Students feel that they are part of a community |  | 6.20% |
| Student experiencing both anxiety and depression |  | 4.30% |
| Anxiety negatively impacting academic performance |  | 4.10% |
| Students who have seriously considered suicide |  | 3.50% |
| Students experiencing a psychiatric condition |  | 2.00% |

Vastly increased reporting and service demands indicate:

- 1 Increased access to postsecondary education for individuals experiencing mental health challenges
- 2 Reduced stigma related to mental health issues
- 3 Increased help-seeking behaviours among students

Reasons Why Students who Experienced a Mental Health Challenge Did Not Access Supports (Western FYE Study)



METHODOLOGY

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

- What does Western do well with respect to supporting student mental health and wellness?
- What barriers exist to supporting student mental health and wellness?

Facilitators to Supporting Student Mental Health and Wellness

- Access to a large number of support services
- Effective mental health promotion and education
- A caring and inclusive campus environment
- Supportive faculty and staff of student mental health needs
- A culture of help-seeking on campus
- Peer leadership and first year orientation

Barriers to Supporting Student Mental Health and Wellness

- Inadequate access, responsiveness, and effectiveness of support services on campus
- No time
- Lack of student understanding and awareness of how, when, and where to seek support
- Stigma associated with mental health
- Previous negative experience with support services on campus

Barriers to Supporting Student Mental Health and Wellness

- Difficulty navigating mental health information online; misinformation shared through social media
- A university culture and climate that does not support mental health and wellness
- Academic calendar, stress, and competition
- Physical environment of campus

Western's Mental Health and Wellness Strategic Plan

- **Broad Strategic Directions**
 - **Promote and Support a Resilient Campus Community**
 - **Develop and Deliver Effective Mental Health and Wellness Education**
 - **Inclusive Curriculum and Pedagogy to Support Student**
 - **Provide Accessible and Effective Mental Health and Wellness Services**



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