

Maritime Students Call for Government Funding on Student Mental Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



26 October 2017 - Charlottetown, PE

Student organisations in Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia are calling on their respective governments to fund innovative mental health intervention programs to improve the mental fitness and well-being of postsecondary students in the Maritimes.

In August, the New Brunswick Student Alliance (NBSA) and Students Nova Scotia (StudentsNS) released [a national joint publication on the state of student mental health](#) along with partners in Ontario and Alberta. The report highlighted the unmet needs of postsecondary students in regard to mental health support services on campus.

Taya Nabuurs, the UPEI Student Union's Vice President Academic and External, explains how the union has already been consulting with students and advocating on their behalf. "A UPEISU survey conducted in Spring 2017 noted that mental health was one of the top concerns of UPEI students while attending post-secondary. The UPEI Student Union has been advocating this year for provincial funding to support student mental health. Designating a portion of this funding to technological advancements in mental health services in a combined approach with other Atlantic provinces would prove an extremely positive step forward."

The UPEI Student Union, NBSA, and StudentsNS are seeking a combined \$700,000 from their respective governments for a suite of technology-based solutions [already endorsed by the 16 public universities in Atlantic Canada](#).

Together, the suite of programs would improve four different areas known to impact student mental health outcomes: mental health literacy, peer support, professional counselling, and service delivery using e-mental health technologies. The suite includes online peer support and professional telephone counselling twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year. The utility and efficacy of these programs are [evidence-based](#) and the UPEISU, NBSA, and StudentsNS expect that they will be transformative to the mental health landscape for postsecondary students.

“A coordinated Atlantic strategy for student mental health will be a crucial step forward for all Maritime universities,” explains Nabuurs. Many of the issues identified by the NBSA and StudentsNS in their joint publication are very similar to what is being experienced by students here in Prince Edward Island, and the UPEI Student Union is committed to tackling these issues together.”

-30-

Media Contacts:

Taya Nabuurs

Vice President Academic & External

902.566.0648

vpax@upeisu.ca