The University of South Carolina (UoS) proposes Together We Can, a project to deepen our mental health infrastructure, increase access to mental health and substance use services, and impact mental health culture on campus by decreasing barriers to care, including negative beliefs about mental and behavioral health disorders for campus populations found to be at-risk for increased suicidal ideation and/or decreased help seeking behavior. This project includes education, outreach, and training to impact five identified target populations: student veterans, LGBTQ students, students of color, students with low economic resources, and students displaying high-risk behavior. The UoS main campus is located in Columbia, SC, where roughly 34,000 students are enrolled. Within a 12 month period, 10% of students seriously considered suicide at some point, 6% intentionally caused harm to themselves, and 1.3% attempted suicide (NCHA, 2017).

Strategies in this grant include: adding access to ProtoCall behavioral health hotline, regular screening events for students, adding Kognito Veterans On Campus faculty/staff and peer training, offering BASICS interventions within Student Health Services Patient-Centered Medical Home, and using Care and Concern follow-up postcards to students who have participated in BASICS mandated and voluntary screenings, as well as students screened with PHQ-9 within medical clinics, or referred by our Behavioral Intervention Team who did not followup on advised referrals.

Our outreach to target populations includes two innovative projects: identifying faculty and staff within points of contact (positive or stressful) for students in target populations to offer specialized training and messaging; and a Mental Health Advocate program for students, modelled after the Recovery Advocate concept, that will train students, especially those in target populations, to share a positive mental health story and advocate for students seeking services and supporting each other when they have mental health concerns. Culturally relevant training and materials will be developed for our top five international student populations. We will partner with the Student Veterans Association to develop a Veterans Peer Listening training. We anticipate reaching at least 2,650 campus community members per year through trainings, educational programs, and increased service utilization. A major message of Together We Can is that there are many routes to mental health and substance use resources at UoS to serve every student: our ProtoCall hotline, Interactive Screening Program, TAO self-directed or therapist-assisted services, and screening within medical clinics and at screening events, as well as a campus community rich with members who have the knowledge and skills to refer students to appropriate care. The Together We Can project aims to increase access.
to mental health and substance use services, decrease barriers to care particularly to target populations, and create a more nuanced and skillful campus safety net for our highest risk populations, improving our overall campus mental health climate.

Links within this resource

Printed on 05/06/2020 from https://www.sprc.org/grantees/university-south-carolina-2