



Welfare Campaigns Meeting - 03-11-2020

Attendance: ES (Senior Welfare Officer), HH (Campaigns Manager), SWC (President), MP (Vice-President), , GT, GF, MPi, BC, TAF

Apologies: JGa (Female Welfare), CA, JG (Male Welfare)

Not Present (Meeting at short notice): IA

Location: A Zoom Call

Lockdown and Reporting incidents Awareness

SWC I've recently met with welfare team with regards to raising awareness of how we respond to reported incidents that may contain COVID/Drug incidents. We need to establish that students should not fear seeking help – the JCR is under no obligation to report any infringements, and College does not prioritise enforcing the “Zero tolerance” drug policy. Unless people are seriously at risk, we do not have to work with student support. There is a limit to how blatant we can be about college not disciplining students for drug use, and I will consult the Trustees on this, but I'm sure we will be able to take at least a moderate stance. Lockdown is obviously difficult, and we are concerned about people using drugs/binge drinking in an unsafe environment, potentially alone – so good information is key, their safety is always the priority. Equally we must address looking out both for yourself and your housemates that you will have contact with - raise awareness of red flags and symptoms of mental health issues, which aren't always clearly noticeable. The Assistant Principal requests that we should wait about a week before publishing information about Drug policy. Be sure to spread this campaign via word of mouth.

MPi It can be hard to know when to support friends yourself, and when to contact someone higher up to get help. This plan sounds helpful from a Fresher perspective. Traditional welfare contacts can feel a bit more distant due to a lack of face to face drop ins, so friends are even more important for support.

GF Having the level of support as you suggested is so important due to Covid, rules are obviously important, but people have to know that wellbeing is always the priority, and we are all on the same page, especially with the impending 2nd lockdown.

SWC COVID rules are harder to work around, and we don't have an established response like we do to Drug use. I want people to know that they can disclose things to me. Of course this is the law, not just the university. It is a tightrope to walk. Wording of this will be very important, we need the fundamental message of “don't worry about getting help” to be clear – the rest is situation specific.

HH Due to sensitive nature, all information must be thoroughly checked, both by the team as a whole and by SWC.



Organising this campaign

HH We need to sort out roles by tomorrow evening, we'll have a google doc again. Please be sure your resources are very reliable, and that we take a sensible stance about drugs. We could potentially do some sort of event – this is sensitive and hard to know what approach to take, but welfare hasn't done anything for a while, so perhaps a pub quiz is in order.

BC If lockdown-related loneliness is an issue, a pub quiz could make sense. Framing within the drug related stuff is an issue.

HH I agree, it's important at the start of lockdown they see familiar faces, and we could integrate more factual things.

MPi We could introduce the team? Perhaps with a photo or a short video?

BC We could make a Facebook post like other societies have. We're so disconnected compared to other years, and this would add accountability and make us seem friendlier.

HH I'd like to mention how housemates have a heightened welfare role. Obviously this is a very extreme and novel situation, and we don't want to make people entirely responsible for their friends, but encouraging small things is a good move, and raising awareness of red flags is commendable.

GF We could also emphasise that it can be a bit of a burden to look after your friends – phrasing is important.

SWC We could do "Keep it up Cuth's" again, perhaps in slightly different words. Something to bring people together during difficult situations. As was mentioned at the weekend we shouldn't overdo it on the serious stuff, but it's important that people have access to the information. Clearer, and more concise, the better, and the more likely it is to be read.

ES I created a thing called "Lockdown Letters" – an online version of a pre-COVID welfare cards scheme. We could launch this simultaneously. Messages would be sent to me then passed on.

MP We could do a template for it and decorate it to make it a bit more personal.

Generally accepted that posters will be made and put up in various places around college – remember to reclaim printing costs.

HH We will also need an official name for this campaign, I'll make a spider map [sic] to come up with some ideas.

Engagement

generally accepted that Instagram and Facebook have their own benefits – we can post in Freshers' Groups if necessary