

January 2022

ENGWellness Graduate Newsletter

Produced by: the ENGWellness Ambassador



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Welcome Back and Happy New Year!

Welcome to 2022 and the Winter term. It certainly is not the start we were all looking forward to this year, but as always, we stay strong and continue to support each other as the family we are, here at the university and beyond. While it is hard to get out there and meet the community physically, we strongly encourage you to get out there and try to meet everyone virtually.

We Have a New ENGWellness Logo

While you may not have known this (as we come across quite organized:), we have been running through many different designs and ideas for our official ENGWellness logo. We are proud, pleased, and delighted to officially unveil and announce our new logo with our very first newsletter of the 2022 year. As you can see it is featured in the top right corner and will be from now on with each newsletter, but for your enjoyment (and a little bit of not so subtle branding) we are showing you a blown up version just below!



The design is rooted in the University of Waterloo crest for its base, but redesigned in colours to be fitting for us Engineers! While the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department may claim otherwise, the light bulb in the center represents the ideas and knowledge we all share everyday. Wellness itself is represented by the flowers that are growing amongst the lightbulb, with its main bud being replaced with a gear to really bring home that this is Engineering!

Bell Let's Talk

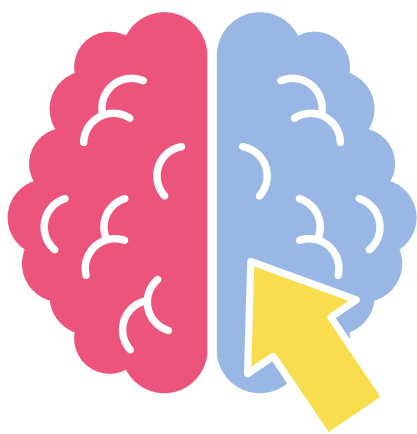
Each year, Bell launches a campaign to help raise awareness about mental health and wellness through social media filters and hashtags across every platform. On [January 26 Bell Let's Talk](#) will kick off, signifying a day where Bell will donate 5¢



for every applicable text, tweet or TikTok using #BellLetsTalk or the use of their Facebook frame and Snapchat lens. This campaign has committed just over 120 million dollars to mental health initiatives in the last twelve years since the start of the annual event in 2010. The goal is always to help break the stigma surrounding mental health and to help provide grants and funding opportunities to programs that are designed to help everyone responsibly.

Ending The Stigma

Just as Bell is a company all about connecting families through communication, ending the stigma is all about language and connection. [The first step in helping](#) is to use language that does not put down others and to be mindful of the impact your words have instead of just focusing on your intent. Simple changes in the language we use can help to minimize the impact of certain phrases we might not think twice about, such as labeling someone as "nuts" or a "psycho". In the moment of a heated conversation it may seem appropriate, but in the long run words often hurt people more than anything else and take much longer to heal from.



A second key element is to educate yourself and to be open to learning from different people and situations. This can be accomplished in many different ways, but the simplest and best way is to listen and ask questions. This can be as simple as learning how to better ask how someone is feeling, to more complex learning opportunities such as actively listening to personal stories and experiences from a friend. In all of these situations, it is very important to be mindful of your language, both verbal and non-verbal, as you may be saying you understand and are being open to someone's situation, but if your facial expression says otherwise, they might feel very hurt and might not trust you in the future.

Lastly it is very important to talk about mental health and emotions. This is the goal of combating stigma at it's root- to create a safe world where people can feel comfortable and open with their feelings and experiences without fear of being judge or ostracized. If everyone is willing and prepared to be open with how they feel then we will no longer need to worry about the stigma that surrounds these conversations as they would simply become the norm. This is very important, especially during a pandemic where everyone is physically distanced, as human beings desire and need connection to others and emotional connection has never been more important.

The Effect of COVID

COVID-19 has drastically changed the world over the past two years at every single level, from the world to each individual, and in every possible field, from economics to health. With all these changes to life it is no wonder that the health and well-being of each individual has been challenged with each step along the way. With the impact of all the social distancing and people being forced away from activities they love, it comes with no surprise that the mental health of the world has taken quite the blow. Hence, Bell has added an entire page to their [Let's Talk website](#) to allow for everyone to quickly access and find the resources that are available.

Take Care of Your Mental Health, too!



There are links to articles on different tips and tricks with helping to manage your mental health as well as monitor that of the people around you. They have even devoted a section of these links to be specifically targeted towards anxiety, stress, and worry surrounding the virus so that you can have a better understanding of everything that is going on and specific resources that are designed to help alleviate some of the worry from your mind. Lastly, a portion of the website is devoted to resources for supporting children and youth. While this section might not be as applicable to yourself, it still has many wonderful resources and helps to break down some of the more complex topics surrounding COVID into simpler terms.

COVID Protocols, Policies, and What They Mean for You

With the announcement of another Ontario wide lockdown, there have been some further additional changes to the policies and procedures around the university as a whole. With the ever changing facts and circumstances we recommend that you check the university's [COVID information](#) page for updates regularly.

The first and biggest change you should know about is that with the [province wide shutdown](#), the initial delay for in-person university to resume of January 24th has now been **extended to January 27th**, one day later than the province is currently set to reopen. This date will change though if the province decides to further extend the "modified version of Step Two", so again please be sure to monitor your email and the website for further updates.

The second big change is that now all recreation facilities are closed and all campus food services will be limited to takeout only. This also means that you will no longer be able to eat in the common food court areas in an effort to minimize the spread of the new Omicron variant.

All in-person activities are being cancelled except for essential in-person components and learning opportunities. This means that if you are scheduled to be a TA this term, you might find yourself suddenly working from home. However, if the course you are assisting with is deemed to be essential than you will be on campus still, just in a very limited capacity. If you have concerns over any matters with your TA position please contact your supervisor, [Departmental Graduate Officer](#), or [Departmental Coordinator](#).

In order to help us all return to a "normal" university experience as soon as possible, we kindly ask that you help by following a few proactive measures. If you are able to, please get your booster shot as soon as possible. If you need to book a booster shot, you can do so through our very own [Health Services](#) here on campus, but you can also book through [Vaccine Ontario](#).

Please remember the continued wearing of face coverings in public areas to help minimize the spread of COVID via airborne droplets. The key factors behind a good mask is that it contains two layers of tightly woven material, such as cotton, and an effective middle layer filter. This middle layer is key to how effective your mask can be, so please do your best to use multilayer masks as much as possible. Your mask should also be well fitted to your face, such that there is little excess room around your face to ensure that proper fit.

Finally, we know it is a huge ask, but we ask that you continue to maintain your distance from others and limit large gatherings to follow the guidelines that have been put in place provincially. We are all well aware of just how much social distancing has affected us, but with hope, we can one day be back on campus able to high-five our colleagues and hug our friends.

What's happening around campus?

WUSA Welcome Week

Welcome Week for the Winter 2022 term will be kicking off on January 17th and running until the 21st. With the sudden change to online, their original plans are also being shifted to an online format, but we are sure no matter what events they plan they will be fun as always! Some of the past online events have included Boombox Trivia and Sex Toy Bingo, so with any luck we might see a couple of these events return. Check out their [website](#) over the week for any updates.



Winter 2022 Workshops

With the term kicking off, the Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Anti-racism (EDI-R) is very excited to provide a new round of [workshops](#) you can attend. In particular, they have three new workshops- Disrupting & Decentering Whiteness, Pathways for Addressing (with care) Disclosures of Racism, and Identifying & Uprooting Internalized Racism. Be sure to register early this term before all the spots are taken!

Wellness Programs: Move Your Mind!

MOVE YOUR MIND

A peer-to-peer program dedicated to leveraging physical activity to support our mental health

PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE:

- » Support in finding enjoyable ways to be more active
- » Support in identifying goals and tackling barriers
- » Accountability
- » Access to a Buddy matching program (optional)

HOW TO JOIN:

- » Self refer at:
www.gowarriorsgo.ca/MoveYourMind

INTERESTED IN BEING A VOLUNTEER BUDDY?

- » Buddies are paired with participants to join in activities, provide support, and help with motivation and accountability.

Check LEADS for volunteer postings or email: athcpwel@uwaterloo.ca

Take Time to MOVE!

Additional Resources

The following mental health supports are available to you
[Counselling Services - 519-888-4567 ext. 32655](#)

The following crisis supports are available to you as well
[Crisis Services Canada: 1-833-531-2600 or text 45645](#)
[UW Police - 519-888-4567 ext. 22222](#)

[Academic Support](#)

- [Student Success Office - Compilation of learning and life skills resources.](#)

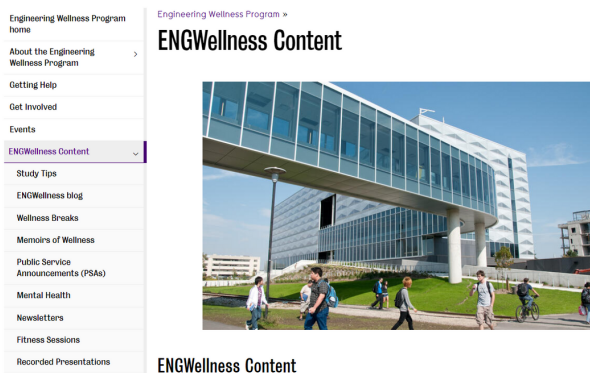
Contacts to book a one-on-one coaching session: (Sessions to be offered virtually until further notice.)

Sam Vandekerckhove (MME) - srvandek@uwaterloo.ca /
ENGWellness@uwaterloo.ca

Leah Foster (ECE) - ljsims@uwaterloo.ca / ENGWellness@uwaterloo.ca

ENGWellness Content

Check out our ENGWellness resources including mental health pages and PSAs. All resources as well as previous newsletters can be accessed under the [ENGWellness Content](#) section of our website.



Stay Connected

Be sure to follow us on social media to stay connected and updated.



[@uwengwell](#)



[@uwENGwellness](#)



[@UwengW](#)



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LEARN 'Course'

Get news and access to our content modules through our ENGWellness Learn 'course'! Students can enroll using the Self-Registration function within Learn.

**WATERLOO
LEARN**

Calendar Pebble+ **Self Registration** UW Resources ▾ Course Request Help