



REPORT

From the office of the...

Student Health Education Centre (SHEC) Services Coordinator

TO: Members of the Executive Board

FROM: Sydney Cumming (She/Her)

SUBJECT: SHEC Report (IV)

DATE: Thursday November 5th, 2020

Year plan Update

The proposal for our physically-distanced resource circulation program was expected to be completed before this EB report, however the new reporting duties that were introduced this term (i.e. lieu hour management and extra meetings with the VP Administration) have made it increasingly difficult to arrange a meeting with our counterparts to get this initiative up and running. We will eventually be collaborating with the McMaster Library, who has offered to assist with funding for packaging supplies and to safely distribute them to students via their curb-side pick-up program. Other potential circulation partners include the SWC and the Residence Mail Distribution Centres. We also provide free supplies to the Food Collective Centre for their distribution programs and will partner with MSU WGEN to help fulfil provide gender-affirming products.

Since submitting the second SHEC Executive Board Report at the beginning of October, official committee meetings have only just begun. Thus, we did not have “Committee Performance Reviews” as planned for the month of October; this will instead occur closer during the Winter Break. Nonetheless, the Co-Executives that lead each committee have been asked to reassess their specific Year Plan to ensure it is both up-to-date and reasonable. Both sets of executives are opting to prioritize the projects that most interest their committee members, as retention is of increased concern this year. Notably, after surveying the SHEC volunteers in August and early September, it was discovered that the majority of volunteers could not commit the standard 3 hours/week of on-shift peer support duties this year. Thus, SHEC volunteers were each allowed to designate the number of hours they are comfortable volunteering this year— as a form of universal accommodation in recognition of the impacts of COVID-19. As such, there is not a formal option to reduce the number of on-shift hours in return for committee involvement and “absentee committee members” will not be asked to adopt an extra peer support shift.

An informal “Promotional Strategies Review” was completed between the two Promotions Coordinators almost immediately after the new executive was introduced. Another formal review will happen alongside the PTM during Winter Break. The

decision to postpone this meeting reflects the relative success of these two executives in working together and increasing promotions for the service over the last month!

Service Usage

Warmline Use

Approximately 3 to 4 students have used the new SHEC Warmline to contact a peer support volunteer since our soft launch in late September. A total of 17 incoming chats were logged by the Tawk.to reporting system, however, many of these were our volunteers exploring the student-facing side of the chat-based platform. An increase in Warmline use is expected in the upcoming weeks as SHEC amps up promotions of this new anonymous service. Additionally, there were 4 “missed” incoming chats, however, these were likely to have occurred when Kaitlyn and I were trying to troubleshoot the issue of the chat widget not popping up on a returning visitors screen—this has since been remedied.

General Social Media Engagement

| Platform | Insights | Weekly | | Monthly | |
|-----------|----------------|--------|----------|---------|---------|
| | | Value | Change | Value | Change |
| Instagram | Followers | ~850 | + 4 | - | - |
| | Impressions | 2563 | + 245.4% | - | - |
| | Profile Visits | 68 | + 94.2% | - | - |
| | Website Visits | 3 | + 50% | - | - |
| | Emails Sent | 0 | 0% | - | - |
| | Reach | 635 | + 108.1% | - | - |
| Twitter | Followers | - | - | 1161 | + 5 |
| | Mentions | - | - | 1 | + 1 |
| | O.P. Retweets | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | O.P. Likes | 5 | + 4 | 6 | - |
| | Link Clicks | 8 | + 6 | 12 | + 6 |
| | Profile visits | - | - | 221 | + 82.6% |
| | Impressions | 979 | + 222.5% | 2026 | - 58.5% |
| | Engagement | 2.6% | + 2.0% | 1.0% | - 0.5% |
| Facebook | New Likes | - | - | 5 | - 67% |
| | Reach | - | - | 1575 | - 47% |
| | Views | - | - | 150 | - 30% |
| | Engagements | - | - | 205 | - 42% |

COVID-19 Mini-Campaign Summary

| Platform | Action/ Engagement | Face Covering Graphics Cluster (Mon. Oct 26 th) | Social Bubbles Graphics Cluster (Tue. Oct 27 th) | Stages Guide Graphics Cluster (Wed. Oct 28 th) |
|-----------|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| Instagram | Likes | <u>56</u> | 44 | 41 |
| | Comments | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Saved | <u>6</u> | 1 | 2 |
| | Sent | <u>17</u> | 6 | 6 |
| | Profile Visits | 9 | 5 | <u>10</u> |
| | Reach | 480 | <u>498</u> | 473 |
| Twitter | Impressions | <u>165</u> | 126 | 82 |
| | Link Clicks | <u>2</u> | 2 | 1 |
| Facebook | Reactions | <u>43</u> | 3 | 4 |
| | Comments | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Shares | <u>2</u> | 0 | 0 |
| | Views | <u>35</u> | 4 | 12 |
| | Engagements | <u>112</u> | 16 | 20 |
| | Reach | <u>931</u> | 372 | 232 |

This mini-campaign had similar engagement levels to the 2019 “Join the Herd” flu-shot campaign. On average, each post from the COVID-19 mini-campaign had the same reach (~483 accounts) on Instagram as the “Join the Herd” campaign, but it garnered more positive feedback (likes) than the latter. As such, we considered the COVID-19 mini-campaign as a relative success (on Instagram).

Moreover, there was a miscommunication between the PTM and the Promotions Coordinators which led them to tweet the link *to Instagram posts* rather than tweeting the graphics directly on Twitter (hence why Twitter activity is indicated as either Impressions or “Link Clicks”).

Compared to the 2019 “Join the Herd” flu-shot campaign, the COVID-19 mini-campaign had lower levels of engagement on Facebook. Although the first day of the Flu campaign only had a reach of 783, less than the 931 for the COVID-19 campaign, more people viewed the photos for the flu campaign. In addition, the second and third day for the Flu campaign reached a high of 2373 people, while the highest reach for the COVID-19 campaign was 931. Although, a factor that could play a role in this difference is that the “Join the Herd” campaign was unique during its time, while there are no shortage of COVID-19 informational graphics circulating at this time. Additionally, the lack of promotions from SHEC over the past couple of months will result in a lag in engagement until a sense of name recognition is rebuilt with the student body.

Finally, a summary of insights from the public release of SHEC’s official letter to Premier Higgs and Minister Shepherd, alongside statistics on student engagement for our upcoming Sexual and Reproductive Wellbeing workshop, will be included in the next SHEC EB report.

Past Events, Projects, & Activities

Our first 3-day mini-campaign of the school year, focused on COVID-19 regulations and guidelines, was released over Monday, October 26th through Wednesday, October 28th on our 3 main social media platforms (Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook). The mini-campaign was started in the summer but was delayed due to the constant changes in pandemic-related recommendations from the Ontario government and ultimately ballooned in size because of those changes. It was a shared project between the Resources & Advocacy Co-Executives and the Promotions Coordinators. Featured topics included proper face coverings, the pausing of “social bubbles”, the 3 Cs to preventing transmission, campus-specific regulations, etc. For data analysis purposes, this campaign can be compared with the 5-day “Join the Herd” flu-shot campaign that SHEC released last year. See the Service Usage section for this comparison.

Moreover, following our recent Roundtable with the VP Administration and a couple of other PTMs, SHEC decided to switch from an embedded chat widget on our existing SHEC webpages to a dedicated page (tawk.to/msuSHEC) on the messaging platform. This allowed us to continue using the same software to send messages, Tawk.to, but provided more reliable on the visitor’s side (re: widget loading issues). It will also inevitably be easier to share with students whilst the new MSU website is being launched. Following this change service delivery, we were able to train volunteers on how to navigate the Tawk.to dashboard and create clear instructions for visitors to access the service.

Currently Working On

As mentioned before, both of SHEC’s internal committees have just begun holding their regular team meetings. An updated Year Plan from each committee is expected in the next few months, accounting for both the University’s decision to have second semester online and the delay in commencing normal committee activity. Over the next few weeks, our team will also be planning out our SHEC Cares programming which will primarily feature online giveaways to address the additional stress caused during exams in a more holistic manner. We will have several larger valued prizes that consist of expensive personal care items and multiple gift-cards to grocery stores to offer - thanks to the kind folks at the Student Wellness Centre who are giving us some extra money to help facilitate this! SHEC will also be teaming up with MSU Maccess on this project!

The two Promotions Coordinators are currently working on the release of promotional assets for the SHEC Warmline. These assets include a description of the Warmline, its hours of operations, instructions on how to access the new service, and a cautionary note that SHEC’s Warmline is not intended for crisis scenarios. This will be accompanied by the release of our WTH is SHEC assets, which were mentioned in previous SHEC EB reports. After this, they will be free to begin work on some of their supplementary service goals (i.e. their goal to bring back the former “SHEC Reads” book spotlights, etc.).

The two Volunteer Coordinators are working hard to ensure that our online Warmline operates smoothly and that the anonymity of services users is protected. They are also setting goals for our January peer support volunteer training and creating a plan for reduced exam-time operations. They will also be consulted by the SHEC Coordinator to provide feedback on the draft Space Allocation form and to help create service-specific survey questions to include in the upcoming SHEC 2020 Service Review.

The SHEC Coordinator will be actively consulting with the Vice-President Administration and any other applicable personnel to create a proposal to restructure the service. The process to do so remains elusive (see challenges section). They will also work with AVP Services to recommend specific questions to include in the SHEC 2020 Service Review and the Space Allocation Committee to find SHEC a more suitable location on-campus. She also needs to place online orders for 50 electronic gift-cards and arrange P.R.s for health supplies (mainly pregnancy tests) for distribution through our on-campus partners. Hiring for her successor will also likely begin soon, as this usually occurs between the months of December through March. Finally, they will need to complete a ton of Hour Logging.

Upcoming Events, Projects & Activities

Our first major event of the year “Cum One, Cum All! Safe(r) Sex During COVID-19” will be held Thursday, November 5th (tonight) from 7:00 – 8:00 pm (EST) on Microsoft Live Events. We will have a popular Canadian sexual health educator, Eva Bloom (she/her/hers), coming in to talk honestly about ways to ensure safety, consent, compassion and pleasure during sexual activity— with a special focus on COVID-19. Registration is being facilitated through Eventbrite (bit.ly/37v8mu6), as this is a designated safe(r) environment and thus the link to join the event will be privy only to those that register. The workshop has full EOHSS approval. This event directly relates to SHEC’s “Sexual and Reproductive Wellbeing” strategic pillar. Ultimately, this is a contemporary version of SHEC’s former (outdated) Sex 101 series, which was previously held by SHEC volunteers and/or SOGC Medical residents in Residence buildings twice a year. It was one of our team’s year goals to modernize this event and, so far, we are very pleased with the level of interest that students have shown in the event.

The tri-annual SHEC Service Review is about to begin in a couple of weeks in “mid-November”. These will remain open for two weeks to assess the opinions of both our SHEC volunteers and MSU community members about the success of SHEC and/or needs for improvement. We remain hopeful that this Review will provide further validity to the requests that the PTM has made to restructure and relocate the nearly 50-year old service. An update is needed to fit the modern needs of Generation Zee students as well as to increase accessibility, anonymity, and provide truly equitable (and transparent) job opportunities.

Budget

| ACCOUNT CODE | ITEM | BUDGET / COST |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| 6102-0116 | - | 2,500 |
| ANNUAL CAMPAIGNS | TOTAL SPENT IN LINE | 700 |
| | REMAINING IN LINE | 1,800 |
| 6501-0116 | - | 2,800 |
| ADVERTISING & PROMOTION | TOTAL SPENT IN LINE | 164 |
| | REMAINING IN LINE | 2,636 |
| TOTALS | | |
| TOTAL BUDGETED DISCRETIONARY SPENDING | | \$8,450.00 |
| TOTAL ACTUAL DISCRETIONARY SPENDING | | \$864.00 |
| REMAINING DISCRETIONARY SPENDING | | \$7,586.00 |

We recently ordered two Digital Packages (\$150/each) from the UnderGround – one was financed through the Advertising & Promotion budget line, to create assets to spread the word about SHEC’s new Warmline, and the other from the Annual Campaigns budget line, for our sexual wellbeing workshop on Thursday. There was also a generous Speaker Payment that came from the Annual Campaigns budget line to compensate our workshop host for the development of unique COVID-19 specific content, presentation of the information, and the right to stream a recording of the workshop for one week following the event. We also plan to spend another \$10 or so on paid social media promotions this week to advertise our upcoming workshop with Eva Bloom as there was a last-minute change in platform from Zoom Webinar to Microsoft Live Events (upon instructions from the VP Administration).

I’ve just been made aware that reimbursements can be claimed at any point in the year, however, I have not received a copy of the reimbursement form.

Volunteers

The addition of a second Volunteer Coordinator, Gillian Grant-Allen (she/her), was absolutely the right choice for our service. Volunteer management, general troubleshooting, and training development has become increasingly efficient now that there are two students occupying the role. Moreover, the duties of the SHEC Coordinator to act as a Pod Leader were delegated to the new executive which, in turn, has provided the affected pod members with a more responsive (and personable) leader. Overall, this change has minimized the need for supervision and assistance from the SHEC Coordinator, allowing her to reduce the number of hours worked each week, and improved overall volunteer morale.

Mandatory SHEC training is on-going. Delivery of training materials was delayed this year, so materials are now being gradually uploaded to the designated Google

Folders for our volunteers to review. Since our last report, we have shared training materials on the subjects of Harm Reduction, Substance Use, and how to navigate the Tawk.to platform as a live chat agent. Upcoming training will include 2STLGBQIA+ competency, from the MSU Pride Community Centre, and more robust Crisis protocols.

The SHEC team recently had our first team-wide social on October 17th, a virtual Pet Show n' Tell, which was attended by about 11 volunteers and 4 executives with a line-up of 8+ pets. Featured pets included cats, dogs, several fishies, a hedgehog, and a personified rock (Bob)! Additionally, each Pod Leader has been instructed to begin brainstorming for their first pod socials which should occur before the beginning of exams. Due to the increased workloads around this time of year, most social activities will be very light-weight (i.e. study group, Skribblio, Among Us, etc.) and attendance of socials will remain optional. We are also planning on sending our volunteers \$5 electronic gift-cards as a token of appreciation and recognition. This expense was approved on October 20th, but we have yet to place the order due to personal circumstances.

The SHEC executive team has finally been able to start having weekly meetings to facilitate consistent communication amongst the nine of us. We had planned to start doing these by the end of August but were struggling to find free time during the start of the school year (as explained further in the [last SHEC EB Report](#)). Now that these meetings have begun, everyone is feeling a great deal more settled in their roles as executives and in their ability to answer questions posed by volunteers or the general McMaster community. One-on-one's with the SHEC PTM will hopefully begin soon as an additional check-in. There is also an upcoming SHEC executive social on the evening of November 11th from approximately 8:30 – 9:30 pm (EST). This is our third exec social, but our first of the Fall term and with our two new executive team members! We'll be playing one or two rounds of virtual card games similar to "What Do You Meme?" or "Headbands".

Current Challenges

[Hours Approval](#)

From my understanding of the response sent by the VP Administration to the recent submission of my Hours Log, most of tasks I completed during the hours that I reported working fell within the SHEC job description or the duty to complete other tasks "as delegated by the Vice-President (Administration)". However, I will not receive pay for many of those hours because approving all of them would quantify me as a full-time employee under the Ontario law and would be difficult to gain approval for. In comparison, the Food Collective Centre receives funds for 35-hours' worth of paid staff support each week:

- **8 to 10 hours/week for the FCC Director;**
 - ❖ General Role Summary... Oversight of the entire Centre and its staff, general MSU-mandated administrative duties, and acting as the official FCC representative for promotional reasons.

- ❖ This matches ~30% (or more) of the SHEC Coordinator's current Job Description (JD) or any other PTM position.
- **8 to 10 hours/week for the FCC Assistant Director;**
 - ❖ General Role Summary... Liaise with community partners to provide FCC with free or reduced cost items for their programs, maintain a directory of further support resources, assist in volunteer recruitment and hiring.
 - ❖ This largely mimics many points from the JDs for the SHEC Coordinator (~30%) *and* the Volunteer Coordinators (~15%). SHEC works with Public Health Hamilton to receive donations for both of our services, and the service receives nearly 850 applications each year for just over 60 positions.
- **5 hours/week for the FCC Good Food Coordinator.**
 - ❖ General Role Summary... Train the Good Food space volunteers, oversee daily operations of the space, orders supplies, and track inventory.
 - ❖ This matches ~30% of the SHEC Coordinator's JD and ~55% of the Volunteer Coordinators JD. SHEC distributes thousands of free personal health products in a typical calendar year and our space remains open to drop-in visits throughout most of the week (previously from 9:30 am – 7:30 pm every weekday). We also provide approximately 30-hours of training each year to our volunteers.

Project Timelines

I would like to begin this section by making it known that, upon occasion, I will need to take time off abruptly as I attend to personal family matters. This will not prevent me from being able to complete the allotted 10 to 12 hours per week, but it will affect my ability to respond to immediate requests from the MSU's BoD to complete large projects and will (undoubtedly) influence my general wellbeing. I want to thank you for your patience and willingness to accommodate during these difficult times.

While it is understandable that the MSU has policies, bylaws, and constitutions that dictate when certain tasks must be completed by, it does not seem unreasonable to modify deadlines during a time of collective trauma (upon direction from the EB/BoD/SRA). Presently, I am finding it rather frustrating that we receive very little notice about many upcoming large projects from the MSU Office. Most tasks assigned by the MSU's BoD and EB require anywhere from 2 to 10 hours of work, yet PTMs are typically notified of such undertakings with less than two weeks from their deadlines. The PTM then has very little time to rearrange their personal schedule, delegate service responsibilities to other members of the executive team, and then complete the entire task. What does not help is that we rarely receive templates or even guidelines for completing such projects, and then PTMs are scrutinized for devoting either too much or too little time to complete each task (after submitting our Hour Logs). This is particularly challenging as a neurodivergent student.

- I was further disappointed to receive an automatic response via email from one of the BoD members, which included 15 points of criticism concerning the (apparent) inpouring of requests for assistance and/or clarification from the staff they supervise. I understand we are all tired but this email seemed extremely insensitive given the level of stress that everyone is under and the fact that we are all working towards the same common goals (which were set by the MSU's BoD).

Continued MS Teams Issues

During our last EB meeting together, the members of the Executive Board seemed to misunderstand the “split account” issue. I will be submitting a supplementary memo in the next several weeks to illustrate how this issue presents itself through Microsoft Teams and how we have identified the MSU's privacy settings as the source of the issue. Moreover, I will be working with my Volunteer Coordinators to explore solutions to other issues related to MS Teams and/or to identify an alternate platform for hosting video and audio peer support sessions (potentially Zoom). We did not have time to do this before submitting this report.

Successes

We have once again promoted one of our returning volunteers to a member of the executive team! Gillian Grant-Allen (she/her) is joining the team as a second Volunteer Coordinator, alongside Kaitlyn (she/her), to help support our team of 60+ students in their roles as peer support volunteers. She has been a beneficial addition to our executive team so far and we are excited to see what we can all achieve together this year!

Additionally, we have had success with our COVID-19 mini-campaign on Instagram. This project was created with younger students specifically in mind, so it is no shock that Instagram was where we saw the most engagement as that is where our younger followers tend to congregate.

Finally, the SHEC executive team recently wrote Premier Higgs and Minister Shepherd of New Brunswick to express our concern with the lack of accessible abortion care options in the Maritime province. We have requested a formal response, but have made our letter [public access](#) in the meantime and encourage other MSU Services to share our [Facebook post](#) to apply pressure on the politicians as we await said response.