

SHEC Report Based on Executive Board Feedback

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SHEC's Position Within the MSU and McMaster

SHEC is a peer-run, health promotion, education and referral service of the MSU. While there are several services that target certain aspects of health, SHEC is the only service that focuses on multiple aspects of health and offers unique services that fill important gaps. Along with our core services of peer support, free non-hormonal contraceptives, on-site confidential and anonymous pregnancy testing, SHEC provides reliable referrals to health services on and off campus. This acts as a filter to ensure McMaster students are accessing the services they need for their concerns. SHEC is the only service on campus where students can receive free on-site pregnancy testing without an appointment. This is important because it allows students to know their result as soon as possible and we are able to provide information and referrals regarding pregnancy options and/or birth control as part of the process of the pregnancy test. This allows students to feel more knowledgeable about the situation they could be facing. There are valuable services on campus such as counseling at the Student Wellness Centre and Peer Support Line, but SHEC is the only service that offers in-person peer support. Students do not need to book an appointment for peer support, which allows for quick access to address their concerns. In-person peer support can provide a neutral setting for students to seek immediate information and/or help with their concerns. Another unique feature of SHEC is that we are peer-run. A student service run by students can be a less intimidating atmosphere to seek sensitive information or help in. SHEC also offers unique experiences for its own volunteers. SHEC provides invaluable learning and leadership experiences for those students interested in health promotion and education, and because of our volunteer selection criteria, SHEC tends to develop a warm and welcoming volunteer community.

Present Volunteer and Executive Structure

SHEC's current volunteer and executive structure consists of the coordinator, nine executive members and 28 volunteers. Each volunteer is required to do three hours of shifts in the SHEC office, where they may provide peer support, pregnancy tests, referrals or information, etc. Volunteers are also required to join a committee. The following is a brief explanation of our current executive members and their roles and responsibilities:

Internal Programming and Scheduling Executive – Responsible for dealing with volunteers switching shifts, shift sign-up, booking event rooms and other administrative tasks.

Training Executive – Responsible for organizing monthly volunteer trainings, helping plan our September and January volunteer training weekend, training attendance and creating missed training assignments.

Media-Silhouette Executive – Responsible for producing bi-weekly SHEC article in the Silhouette, running the SHEC blog and contributes to the annual Sex and the Steel City magazine.

Media-Radio Executive – Responsible for hosting, planning and producing our weekly radio show “The SHEC Show”.

Outreach Executive – Responsible for contacting and organizing events with community services outside of McMaster. Organizes Stressbusters, a mental health workshop during MIAW, an eating disorder event in February and co-organizes New Years Resolution Fair with Educational Programming and Addictions Awareness committees.

Educational Programming Executive – Responsible for organizing general health promotion and educational events. Includes Sex 101, co-organizing New Years Resolutions Fair, Valentine’s Day Cards, and this year is creating SHEC ‘commercials’.

Resources Executive – Responsible for ensuring library and informational material available for students are updated and covers a diverse array of health subjects. Complies log book data and purchases books for our library.

Promotions Executive – Responsible for working with the Underground design team to create all promotional material needed for SHEC events. Helps to run our social media accounts and also responsible for creating our third annual SHEC cookbook.

Addictions Awareness Executive – Responsible for educating students about various addictions. Organizes such events as Bar Blitzes, Addictions Awareness Fair, Impaired Driving event, and co-organizes New Years Resolution fair.

Strategic Mandate

Based on feedback from volunteers and execs, I propose that we rename and reorganize the Outreach committee, Educational Programming committee and the Resources committee. We would reorganize these committees to be defined by a specific health subject. The three committees we propose are: Sexual Health committee, Nutrition and Exercise committee and Mental Health committee, which would each take on the roles and responsibilities of the current committees as well as any programs and events they may come up with. We propose these specific subjects because they are relevant health subjects for university students. For example, instead of EP creating Sex 101, the Sexual health committee would be responsible for Sex 101, a possible Sex 202, Valentine’s Day cards and potential collaborations with QSCC. The Nutrition and Exercise committee would be responsible for our cookbook and New Years Resolution Fair. Finally, the Mental Health committee would be responsible for Stressbusters, events during eating disorders week and a mental health workshop during MIAW. Along with the Addictions Awareness Committee, these three committees will be responsible for finding resources and/or books within their committees subject for the library and to share with other

volunteers. Since the events are spread more evenly within the committees, it was suggested that each committee organize a monthly table in MUSC to educate students about a subject specific to their committee. We feel this change would be very beneficial for SHEC because of the following reasons:

- Clearer understanding of committees when new volunteers are picking committees
- More balanced schedule of events between committees
- Allows for room to create new events within new committees
- Could create stronger presence on campus with monthly tables (if timed correctly SHEC would have a table in MUSC each week)
- Higher quality and specific resources and/or library books relevant to new committees

Goals for the rest of the term: If these potential changes are supported, then we would move forward with these changes to ensure that transition from the current structure to the proposed structure is smooth. We would also continue to create high quality events and work on continuing our pattern of increased service use. The following events are planned to take place this semester: New Years Resolution Fair, SHEC video tour release, our first ever SHEC Week, which would include such events as Sex 202 and an eating disorders workshop co-hosted with a health professional, and Stressbusters.

Goals within one year: Within a year, we would like to reach out to more first years. First years can be a vulnerable group with various health concerns because of the new environments, responsibilities and experiences they find themselves facing. SHEC could be a great starting point for first years to access for our services, information or referrals. By focusing on first years and building their knowledge of SHEC from their first year of university, this would build a larger base of students who are aware of SHEC from the start of their university experience, allowing more students to benefit from SHEC. Having increased presence or events during Welcome Week as well as creating more events specific for students in residence would help to draw in more first years.

Goals within five years: We would like to build a greater reputation on campus where SHEC is known as a place to seek immediate health information, services and referrals. It would also be beneficial to update sections of our library.

Conclusion

SHEC's core services of peer support, free non-hormonal contraceptives, on-site confidential pregnancy testing and referrals help to fill important needs within the MSU and larger McMaster community. The proposed changes to SHEC's current executive structure would allow for a more balanced, organized and focused structure. Our goals would focus on developing a greater presence within the first year community and building a larger reputation on campus.