

A comprehensive Staff Survey was completed in 2012. Subsequently a full 2012 – 2017 welfare and wellbeing action plan was developed and we have been executing this plan over the past five years. Checks and balances have been built in to the plan throughout the timeframe to ensure the activities carried out are fit for purpose and meeting staff needs. A new survey will be completed towards the end of 2017.

Staff Welfare and Wellbeing is a standing agenda item on the highest level of governance in the University - Governing Body. We have a dedicated Health Promoting University Steering Group as well as dedicated resource appointed in the Dept. of Human Resources, Staff Wellbeing and Development Advisor. In particular, staff mental health is of significant importance amongst senior management. Senior management recognise that to maintain good mental health a holistic approach to health and wellbeing needs to be considered by delivering programmes which address mental health, physical activity and food & nutrition. These areas are of integral importance when seeking to improve staff health and wellbeing and should therefore not be seen as mutually exclusive.

One of the key priorities of the 'University Strategic plan 2012-2017' is to 'enhance support to all staff through improved induction, employee well-being programmes and by professional development' and to 'develop a plan for staff wellbeing and welfare' (developed following staff survey in 2012). UCC is committed to enhancing staff welfare and wellbeing and has taken responsibility for the planning, design and delivery of an appropriate organisational response to ensure that welfare and wellbeing needs within the University are addressed. The activities and initiatives developed aim to benefit staff by improving the quality of the workplace experience and morale, enhance engagement and overall staff health & wellbeing. The university has invested significantly in this important area of staff support. In addition, various committees have been established and collaborative efforts forged all with a common purpose of staff health and wellbeing promotion and delivery. We have and continue to establish mutually beneficial partnerships and leverage from existing relationships and internal expertise e.g. continued collaboration with Student Health/ Counselling/Mardyke Arena Sports facility /internal subject matter experts (e.g. academic staff members of the Dept of Epidemiology and Public Health)/external vendors etc.

Such staff health promoting efforts as well as health promoting activities for students became formally recognised by the HSE in February 2015. Marked by a flag-giving ceremony, UCC became the first officially recognised Health Promoting University in Ireland. This was thanks to the efforts and dedication of the UCC Health Matters initiative which is a joint staff and student collaboration. This achievement for the university displays the spirit of innovative thinking, and considerable hard work in the area of health promotion and support. The initiative, which is a wonderful example of student and staff collaboration, seeks to improve the health and wellbeing of all within UCC. The success of the 'UCC Health Matters' initiative has been noted in Ireland and overseas and has served as an example to other institutions seeking to improve the health and wellbeing of their community. Our health promoting university flag serves as symbol of the University's continued commitment to the health and wellbeing of staff and students.

The staff wellbeing agenda centres mostly around addressing three key areas i.e. Mental Health, Food & Nutrition, and Physical Activity. We have also built in initiatives to address the practical needs of our staff facilitating workshops covering topics such as: Parenting Talks, Money Management, Legal Advice, Caring for Elderly etc.

### **Staff and Student Large Scale Annual Health Promoting Initiatives**

**2013 – 2016:** Mirrors the RTE production with 4 staff and 4 student leaders as well as many groups across the University participating. This event is supported by a host of activities such as complimentary yoga, fitness classes, mindfulness sessions, nutrition workshops, BMI checks, weekly weigh-ins, weekly desk to 5k training and culminates with a 5k campus run.

**2017:** New Year New You (see programme of events on [www.facebook.com/ucchealthmatters](http://www.facebook.com/ucchealthmatters) )

**2013 – 2017:** Mental Health Week – A series of mental health activities. Talks, resilience programmes, suicide awareness workshops, mindfulness programmes and much more.

**2013 – 2017:** Health Matters Day – This annual event holds a variety of fun and feel-good activities which is held on UCC's main campus, to promote the wellbeing of students, staff and passers-by. UCC Health Matters Day. The initiative helps co-ordinate health promoting activities on campus with the aim of improving staff and student wellbeing. Health Matters Day is a chance for the UCC community to see that there are supports in place enabling all to improve their own health. It is a great day which not only promotes healthy living but harbours a collective sense of goodwill towards all who take part. (See attached press release that featured in a Cork newspaper which gives full detail of this event) Photos also attached.

### **Staff Only Initiatives Co-ordinated by Staff Wellbeing**

- Weekly Yoga classes
- Weekly Samba Classes
- Weekly Art Relief Classes (Stress relief therapy)
- Mindfulness lunchtime classes facilitated by an internal staff member
- Weekly meditation classes
- Half day wellbeing workshops facilitated by Jerry Kelly from First HRD
- Tai Chi – Tai Chi Staff club
- Fitness classes facilitated by the Mardyke Sports Arena (nominal fee – subsidised by Staff Wellbeing)
- Fitness Classes on Campus facilitated by staff member and Staff Wellbeing Champion, Dr Wesley O'Brien (Lecture in Physical Education)
- Health & Lifestyle Challenge: 10 Week Lifestyle Coaching Intervention - Weekly one-to-one meetings with a lifestyle coach to help staff achieve their diet and exercise goals. - Mardyke Sports Arena
- Pedometer challenge – Weekly step challenge
- Musculoskeletal disorder workshops
- Health checks (BMI, Blood pressure, pre-diabetes screening, cholesterol, eye tests) – Facilitated by Student Health Dept for Staff and external companies Redicare and Crowley Opticians.
- Provision and regular promotion of our external Employee Assistance Programme – 6 free face-to-face counselling sessions and unlimited availability of 24/7 telephone counselling.
- Financial advice (tax tips, preparing will making advice, budgeting) – Facilitated by the National Consumer Agency, Cornmarket Financial Services, Carol Jermyn Solicitors and from EAP Consultants.

- Stress Management and Building Resilience and Personal Coping Skills Workshops – Facilitated by EAP Consultants, First HRD, Mental Health Ireland.
- Suicide awareness workshops – Facilitated by safeTalk
- Mind Body Soul Programme: Capacitor, Mindfulness, Tai Chi, Donna Eden Energy Exercises – facilitated by Maeve Lankford, Kaleidoscope.
- The Vision Workshop – Achieving a good work/life balance – Dr Maeve Lankford, Kaleidoscope
- Sleep Workshops: Facilitated by Liath Sheehan, Disability Support Services
- Mind your Mental Health Workshop: Facilitated by Mental Health Ireland
- Regular Email Communications on Mental Health: e.g. ‘5 ways to Wellbeing’
- Pop up Complimentary Spa: Main campus and Dental School
- Free Health Assessments: Number of Days ran throughout the year by Redicare
- Managing Your Life by Managing Your Mind Talk
- Regular email Communication: Mental Health Awareness for Employees
- National Workplace Wellbeing Day: Full programme of wellbeing events in the Mardyke Arena and across campus incl. Lunchtime Mile, Healthy Food Tasting, Interdepartmental Games, Lane Swimming, 5-a-side, Human Foosball, Fitness Classes, Sleep workshops, Facebook Launch and Competition; Dancing for Birth.
- One-to-One Staff Welfare Support: Ongoing one-to-one confidential support for Staff provided by the Staff Welfare and Development Advisor
- UCC Campus Cycle Week
- Talk on ‘Impact of Our Sedentary Lifestyle on our health and Wellbeing’ Professor Patricia Kearney, Epidemiology & Public Health, UCC
- Nutrition Talks/One-to-one consultations with Nutritionists, including body composition analysis/Demonstrations/Emails – KSG Nutritionist, Food Choice at Work
- Complimentary flu vaccines.

**ePub** - An electronic Personal Use Barometer (e-PUB) is a brief self-assessment that provides you with accurate, detailed and personalized feedback on your use of alcohol, and specific information and helpful resources in the University College Cork community.

**Bibliotherapy** - A guide to Bibliotherapy for staff. Bibliotherapy is the use of books for therapeutic purposes and can be used to help you through a tough time. The types of literature used can include: self-help books, poetry, fiction and personal stories. These books are made available to staff.

**Parenting Seminars:** Run parenting seminars every year on a variety of topics. The most recent event focused on internet safety & cyber bullying by

**Communications:** Regular communications to all staff on health and wellbeing related matters e.g EAP support, articles, healthy living advice/tips, mental health. Recently created a staff wellbeing facebook page and the website is currently being redeveloped.

**Staff Wellbeing Charter:** The staff wellbeing charter is a statement of intent by the President and the University Management Team to the staff of the University regarding the positive wellbeing of staff on campus. The Charter outlines the guiding principles by which the University will assist staff to maintain positive health and wellbeing. This Charter recognises that with the provision of clear information and pertinent real time supports, staff will be able to make more informed decisions with regard to improving and maintaining good health. In return, UCC will continue to evolve as a

productive, attractive and corporately responsible working environment with a motivated, engaged and productive staff.