“Everyday Matters - Healthy Habits for University Life” – an innovative time use and wellbeing microcredential for UCC undergraduate and postgraduate students

Name of institution and initiative lead
University College Cork. Dr. Eithne Hunt, Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy

Date and timeframe
Ongoing

What was the reach?
The Everyday Matters intervention has been disseminated widely including at conferences (Student Affairs Ireland, European First Year Experience Conference, NUIG Annual Health Promotion Conference, Association of Occupational Therapists of Ireland). It has also featured on the Network SMARTEN blog, Thrive Global and the Flourishing Education podcast. This dissemination promotes this innovative Occupational Therapy intervention and enables Occupational Therapists and others to access educational content on the intervention. The intervention featured in a national seminar “Showcasing a Tiered Public Health Occupational Therapy Approach to Supporting Student Participation, Health, Wellbeing and Success in Higher Education” in June 2021 and a national seminar on “Curricular Approaches to Wellbeing in Higher Education” in May 2022.

Aims and Objectives
Develop an evidence-based time use and wellbeing intervention to support the mental health, well-being and success of students.

Aligned frameworks, policies, or strategies
Curricular Jigsaw
Healthy Campus
HSE national Health Ireland
UCC
Student Mental Health
Connecting for Life, Ireland’s National Strategy to Reduce Suicide, 2015-2020

Project Collaborators
This innovative, low-cost, wide-reaching and scalable programme is a collaboration with the UCC Skills Centre, thus ‘mainstreaming’ the programme as a universal intervention, increasing its appeal for students.

Key Learning Points
Mental health and well-being are critical to student success in higher education and beyond (Leshner, 2021).
University student mental ill health, mental distress and low well-being are a serious concern nationally and internationally.
Despite enduring stigma around accessing mental health supports, demand for 1:1 counselling exceeds supply.
Developing and resourcing a range of evidence-based interventions targeting the mental health, well-being and success of students is critical across universal, targeted and intensive supports.
As the curriculum is the only guaranteed point of contact between a university and its students, curricular approaches to well-being are particularly important and impactful.
“Everyday Matters: Healthy Habits for University Life” is a novel, free, online, asynchronous, co-curricular microcredential available to all students at UCC.
This highly successful, innovative, low-cost, wide-reaching and scalable programme is a collaboration with the UCC Skills Centre.