

SUBJECT	AMS SASC – COVID-19 Trauma Counselling Emergency Fund
MEETING DATE	April 22, 2020
	<i>For Information only</i>
PREPARED BY	Annette Angell, SASC Manager Abdul Alnaar, Senior Student Services Manager

DESCRIPTION & RATIONALE

While access to free or low-cost trauma counselling services is always a barrier for survivors of sexualized violence, COVID-19 has exacerbated that barrier and created emerging mental health and counselling needs. To meet that need, the AMS Sexual Assault Support Centre (SASC) is proposing an emergency fund for trauma counselling for survivors of sexualized violence who may be experiencing increased violence or increased triggers, isolation and other trauma responses due to physical distancing measures currently in place.

The SASC proposes allocating \$10,000 from the Sexual Assault Services Fees FY 2019/2020 towards the creation of the emergency fund. A portion of the fund would be allocated towards two virtual support groups open to all community members this summer and the remainder would be allocated towards funds UBC students could use towards one on one counselling services with a practitioner of their choice. Students would be asked to exhaust any existing extended benefits options, if it is safe to do so, before applying for funding under this emergency fund. Students would be eligible for a subsidy of \$125 per appointment with a psychologist, RCC or RSW.

A preliminary budget for the emergency fund is below:

Trauma Counselling Emergency Fund	Proposed budget
Roots & Resilience Online Support Group	\$500 for 2 weeks with RCC guest facilitators (\$250 ea) during the 6 weeklong support group
Trans Youth Online Support Group	\$2,000 to subsidize a new support group for trans

	youth, in partnership with Islai Rathlin, MA, MSW, RSW.
Subsidy for 1:1 counselling with any R Psych, RCC or RSW of students' choice	\$7,500 (subsidy of up to \$125 per appointment would cover approximately 60 counselling sessions for students)
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>

BENEFITS
 Reputational,
 Financial,
 Sustainable,
 Social

Supporting this emergency fund demonstrates the AMS' commitment to improving the lives of students during this particularly challenging time of COVID-19 and would benefit the Society's reputation for being responsive to student needs.

RISKS
 Financial,
 Operational,
 Reputational

The emergency fund would need to be managed carefully, with appropriate eligibility requirements to ensure it was meeting the desired impact of reaching students who are significantly impacted due to COVID-19 and sexual violence. The SASC, due to the nature of our services, is positioned to distribute this fund to those who need it most and is committed to ensuring the fund is managed in a way that is accessible and equitable. As mentioned above, students would be asked to exhaust any other extended health benefits before accessing the fund and would be asked to submit receipts for 1:1 counselling.

TIMELINE
 Implementation
 timeline

The emergency fund, including the support groups and applications for 1:1 counselling would be available to students over the summer terms 1 & 2, ending on August 13th. We would therefore request the code suspension be effective until that date. If money remains in the emergency counselling fund, the option to extend could be revisited at a later date.