

BLOG

Beyond COVID - Three Emerging Topics in Higher Education

By Terry Lyons, Managing Director, Student Health

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Each year, higher education risk management professionals come together at the University Risk Management and Insurance Association's (URMIA) [annual conference](#). An event I look forward to with anticipation every year, the theme of this year's conference is particularly apt, "Emerging from the Storm."

This year, I am eager to hear the stories of how school leaders developed unique solutions to the challenges colleges and universities faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the face of multiple, complex challenges, they found ways to weather the storm that is COVID-19 and continue servicing their students.



Certainly COVID-19 remains a central topic in education, but I also expect a focus on a number of other issues facing higher education today.

Building Resilience in Young Adults: Adapting to COVID-19's Challenges

One of the common inquiries we receive from our college and university partners is how they can better incorporate behavioral health programs into their campus. From my experience, there is not a one-size fits all solution. There are many products out in the market designed specifically to support students - especially around resiliency. For each institution looking for a solution, a deep dive into their specific needs to be followed by a thorough review of the different options is critical to find a solution that will work best for their students.

Concerns About Mental Health Protocols for Student Athletes

Mental health needs have become more significant and complex in current times, especially for student athletes who are juggling their education and sports career. Constant demands on their time, the barrage of information from social media, and the limited ability to rest both physically and mentally exacerbate the problem.

Student athletes should have access to a broad array of mental health interventions and support. Unfortunately, many of our partnering college and university athletic departments feel there is a stigma



associated with seeking help and care for mental health concerns. Additionally, service providers are only recently beginning to embrace the value of newer forms of care, such as tele-medicine. Beyond providing students with the right resources and an understanding of how to connect with these resources, schools must push to decrease the stigma of mental health concerns and enable students to seek care.

Managing Travel Risks as We Emerge from the Pandemic

The pandemic has in many ways changed the way we prepare for travel abroad, especially as it relates to healthcare. We've seen an increased demand for flexible remote services, such as telehealth, and non-acute behavioral health solutions for students studying abroad. Additionally, schools are putting extra time and effort into proactively preparing students for travel. This is especially important as exit and entry regulations, such as testing, quarantine, preventive measures, and vaccine requirements, differ by country and are constantly evolving. We've also seen many schools wanting to mitigate financial effects with specialized coverage for non-acute mental health coverage, quarantine lodging, cancellations, and trip interruptions.

I look forward to seeing you at URMIA.

Want to learn more?

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