

# Perception of Access and Quality of Mental Health Resources among UC San Diego Undergraduate Students

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How do undergraduate students perceive the quality and access of care of on-campus mental health resources (CAPS) versus off-campus mental health resources for all undergraduate students?

## Introduction

### Objectives

- To assess UC San Diego undergraduate students' perception of quality of care and accessibility of mental health resources, both on-campus and off-campus.
- To evaluate mental health resources accessibility and quality of care, both on-campus and off-campus utilizing quantitative data.

### Background

Many college students leave their mental health untreated due to financial and non-financial barriers:

- Younger adults in higher education have depression rates 3-6 times higher than that of the US adult population.<sup>1</sup>
- 20% of college students reported accessing mental health resources, whether on campus or off campus.<sup>2</sup>
- 89.7% of participants reported experiencing some form of mental health treatment discrimination.<sup>3</sup>
- Only one in five college students report seeking treatment.<sup>2</sup>
- Younger people in San Diego, California report feeling more stigmatized for their mental health struggle.<sup>3</sup>

Perception of accessibility and effectiveness of mental health services impacts student willingness to seek mental health treatment, whether on-campus or off-campus.<sup>4</sup>

## Research

### Methods

Cross-sectional survey of UC San Diego undergraduate students: Google form asked about their perceptions of mental health services, not their personal experiences with seeking services. No identifiable data such as date of birth or name was collected.

#### Survey Questions:

- Student perceptions/beliefs of the accessibility and the quality of mental health resources on-campus vs. off-campus
  - Scale of 1 to 5; higher score indicated higher accessibility, affordability, satisfaction, and quality of care
- Self-reported demographic questions including year in school, gender, race/ethnicity
- Question about which CAPS services students were currently aware of
- Question asking which service is perceived to be preferred

#### Data Collection:

- Survey via Google form
- Used social media, fliers with QR codes, and word-of-mouth to recruit survey participants

#### Data Analysis:

- Utilized Google sheets to produce independent T-tests for equality of means and p-values of data with a = 0.05 for each factor
- Utilized Google sheets to produce visual representations

### Results

- We obtained a sample size of N = 215 undergraduate students who completed our survey.
- The majority of respondents identified as female (57.2%). For the demographic of ethnicity, the majority identified as Asian (52.6%). As for year in undergraduate education, the majority of respondents were in their 4th year (36.2%).
- Perception of accessibility and affordability of CAPS was significantly higher than off-campus mental health resources with p-values of .0002, <.00001 respectively for the independent t-test. Perception of student satisfaction of CAPS was significantly lower than off-campus mental health resources with p = 0.024.
- Perception of consideration of student needs however showed no significant difference with a p-value of 0.16, which is greater than a = 0.05.
- Therefore, students perceive CAPS to be more accessible and affordable, but find off-campus resources to result in higher student satisfaction.

Independent T-test Comparing 2 Means CAPS: N1 Off-campus: N2	Means and Standard Deviations	Degrees of Freedom	T-statistic	P-value
Accessibility	M <sub>1</sub> : 2.9 SD <sub>1</sub> : 0.91 M <sub>2</sub> : 2.55 SD <sub>2</sub> : 0.93	df <sub>1</sub> : 214 df <sub>2</sub> : 213	3.75	0.0002
Affordability	M <sub>1</sub> : 3.36 SD <sub>1</sub> : 1.12 M <sub>2</sub> : 2.9 SD <sub>2</sub> : 0.93	df <sub>1</sub> : 212 df <sub>2</sub> : 209	13.58	<.00001
Consideration	M <sub>1</sub> : 3.15 SD <sub>1</sub> : 1.01 M <sub>2</sub> : 3.02 SD <sub>2</sub> : 0.93	df <sub>1</sub> : 210 df <sub>2</sub> : 207	1.41	0.16
Satisfaction of Student Needs	M <sub>1</sub> : 2.88 SD <sub>1</sub> : 0.84 M <sub>2</sub> : 3.00 SD <sub>2</sub> : 0.8	df <sub>1</sub> : 209 df <sub>2</sub> : 207	-2.27	0.024

Figure 1: Independent T-test results for comparing means of accessibility, affordability, consideration, and satisfaction of student needs on a scale of 1 to 5.

#### Overall Perceptions of Mental Health Resources

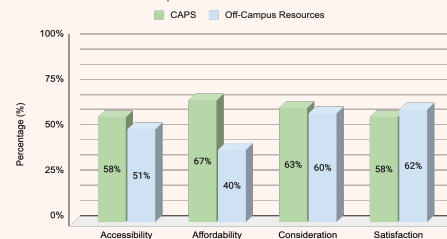


Figure 2: Bar graph of students ratings of perceptions of accessibility, affordability, consideration of student needs, and satisfaction of CAPS vs. off-campus mental health resources. A higher percentage indicates more positive perceptions. 100% indicates a score of 5 on our scale.

#### Students' Recommendations Based on Perceptions

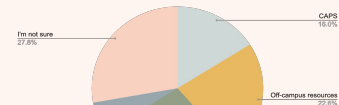


Figure 3: Pie chart of student perceptions of recommendations for mental health resources.

#### Gender Demographics

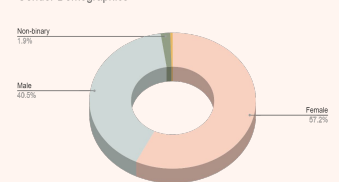


Figure 4: Donut chart of gender demographics of N = 215 respondents.

## Conclusion

### Conclusion

- UC San Diego undergraduate students perceive CAPS to be more accessible and affordable than off-campus mental health resources.
- UC SHIP covers all CAPS resources with little to no co-pay and CAPS is catered towards UCSD students, student perceptions of affordability and accessibility would be high.
- Perception of satisfaction is significantly higher for off-campus resources, indicating a low perceived quality of care at CAPS.

This indicates that while on-campus mental health resources such as CAPS are available to students, it may be low-quality or unreliable for effective treatment.

While students perceived CAPS to be more accessible than off-campus resources, many students indicated not knowing about many of CAPS resources. This indicates that there is not enough advertisement of CAPS and its resources, which may be why students perceive a lower quality of care

### Policy Implications

- The results imply that the university would benefit from increased advertisement of CAPS services. This could be done by collaboration with college deans and/or Chancellor Khosla.
- The university would also benefit from expanding CAPS access beyond UC SHIP - the school's health insurance.
- UC San Diego Health and CAPS can further collaborate to improve the quality of care of CAPS, potentially increasing student utilization of CAPS resources. This can be accomplished by increasing funding of CAPS to increase the number of providers and the quality of services.

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