

Challenge	Description	Solution
Access to care	College counseling centers are often understaffed and overbooked, resulting in lengthy wait times for appointments.	Book appointments early before demand spikes. Promote telepsychiatry services that may have more availability than on-campus providers.
No long-term care	Many centers are geared toward short-term support and may not offer long-term medication management.	Provide a vetted list of local providers who accept student insurance or offer sliding scale fees.
Cost of medication	Some students may be uninsured or have inadequate coverage for mental health services. Even with insurance, copays for psychiatrist visits or medication can be too expensive for students on tight budgets. Students may be far from home, and their insurance may not cover local providers. Transferring prescriptions across state lines or between providers can be logistically complex.	Offer sessions that teach students how to use and understand their insurance, as well as affordable student health insurance options that include mental health coverage. Promote telepsychiatry services that may have more availability than on-campus providers. Advise incoming students to discuss with their current providers the continuity of care and the transfer of prescriptions.
Social stigma	Social stigma around mental illness can prevent students from seeking help. Some worry that faculty or peers will discover their treatment.	Encourage faculty and student leaders to speak openly about mental health. Reassure students that HIPAA and FERPA protect services.
Cultural challenges	Cultural beliefs about mental health can discourage seeking treatment. Non-native English speakers may struggle to communicate effectively with providers or comprehend treatment options.	Connect students to peer-led groups where they may feel more comfortable discussing their concerns. Ensure access to diverse counselors or therapists who are trained in cultural sensitivity and teach students how to request interpreters or translated materials when needed.
Awareness of need	Some students may not recognize their symptoms as signs of a treatable condition. Students might not know what services are available on campus or in the community.	Include mental health and medication information in orientation programs. Distribute easy-to-read guides on recognizing symptoms and train staff to identify signs of mental distress and refer students to appropriate services.
Keeping appointments	Balancing classes, jobs, and other responsibilities can make it hard to attend appointments regularly. Some students avoid care because they worry it will interfere with their academic performance.	Offer evening or weekend telehealth options and educate students about mental health accommodations through disability services. Share resources like planners or apps that help schedule without compromising academics.