Impact and Implementation:

* How is the team going to engage with peer counsellors and target users to get them involved in the design and implementation stage?

We met with Dr Silver on Friday 12th March to discuss the role of peer and student counsellors on our platform. Their main tasks would be:

* To engage with the forum users by replying to their posts/ queries/comments to create a positive and safe environment for the UST community. (Engagement)
* Writing about their own experiences with mental health to help kickstart the online forum (Writing)
* Act as part of the moderators to allow for upvoting as well as censoring any user that utilises the forums in a manner that is not supported. This is stated in our guidelines which will be sent to the user upon signing up for our website. (Moderation)
* Detailed plan on how to deliver the program to the HKUST community.
  + We plan to start engaging the UST community after we complete our beta testing. Two weeks before the launch date (to be decided but should be held near the May 29th), we will begin marketing the website using social media eg. LinkedIn, Instagram and internally through the SiGHT promotions. Creating posts, explaining the benefits of utilising the app to combat something this serious will feel safer for all. This is done to gradually warm students up to the idea of a mental-health sharing online platform (due to the negative perception some may have of mental health) and pique their interest to try out the forum when it is launched.
  + We will finally launch the app for the roadshow so that it will be accessible to all. Additionally, in order to gain feedback, we will allow for people to leave their comments of improvements that will be integrated into a future release.
* Illustrate the behavioral changes targeted and how you are going to measure it.
  + Primary// Openness towards (discussion around) mental health issues:
    - Description: Through the online forum, our team hopes that UST students can gradually accept the notion that it is okay to share their mental health experiences and that it is something many people experience.
    - How To Measure #1: We can measure this through looking at the growth of our platform:
      * # of Registered Users: Increased number of users means that more people are warming up to the idea of discussing mental health. Even if they are not posting, at least users can be on a platform that shows them many people are suffering from similar experiences that they are going through.
      * # of Monthly Posts: Increased monthly posts shows that more students are willing to share their experiences and are thus more open towards the idea of mental health.
      * Average # of Responses to Posts: Having more users motivate/ respond to other community members shows that people have become more accepting to those who have mental health issues and creates a more supportive community that will continue to push the behavioural change.
    - How To Measure #2: We can create a survey before the launch of our project and have bi-yearly surveys after the launch to see if there is any difference in student’s attitudes towards mental health from their answers to our questions (e.g. If a friend has a mental health problem, would be concerned about how your friendship would be affected or How comfortable are you reaching out to someone for help?). In this way, we can see whether students’ perception towards mental health has changed as a whole or whether the effect was only limited to our platform.
  + Primary// Normalizing asking for help:
    - Description: While our online platform would serve as a safe place for students to share their experiences, we hope that by introducing the forum, they would also start to reach out to other means of mental health care.
    - How To Measure: We can ask the Counselling & Wellness Centre for rough statistics about whether the number of students attending wellness centre programs and seeking for consulting services (both peer and professional help) have changed from the time we have opened our platform.
  + Secondary// Helping students take time to reflect their emotions:
    - Description: Our (personal) journaling feature encourages people to start acknowledging their emotions (especially ones who are not comfortable sharing their experience with others) . By being in touch with their emotions, they can be more aware of their feelings and take action to better their mental health.
    - How To Measure:
      * Average # of Personal Posts Written: By looking at the average number of personal posts written, we can see whether people are using this feature. If so, it can be assumed that more people are working towards changing their mindset about ignoring their emotions (which is a common problem we currently have) and instead, start being more aware of their mental health conditions.

User Feedback

* Categorize the feedback you have received from your stakeholders (eg. peer mentors, users, professionals) for your initial design concepts and elaborate on your response to them.

Feedback from Dr Silver and Eric (Counselling and Wellness Centre):

It would be hard for peer counsellors to act as moderators because they cannot monitor the website everyday.They can only help write posts and leave messages from time to time.

* + Find volunteers/ ask peer counsellor directly (or contact the peer counsellor manager)
* Counselling & Wellness Centre are making a 1-to-1 chat
* Letter writing example (Stanley’s letter in a bottle idea) - has been said that it is very good and could really make some impact.
* Concerns:
  + Manpower to respond to the posts and comments
  + If it becomes a chat platform (short replies), then it would be very hard to monitor
  + Logistics arrangement in general
* Feedback
  + It's a good idea and appreciates that we are trying to bring more awareness to mental health
* Permission is okay for 24/7 helpline
* Peer counsellor program still in the initial stage
  + Contact Chun Man Chan (chaneric@ust.hk)
  + Distribute survey to peer counsellors

Feedback from Peer Counsellors:

Feedback from Users:

* Introduce your detailed plan to receive feedback from stakeholders for the next rounds of development.

**In the same way we have been doing previously, we will meet with Dr Silver and Eric from the counselling and wellness centre. We plan to meet them again before the second internal check to further ask for their feedback on our work. We will also meet with them before the final roadshow so that they are aware of what the launched website details.**

**Meeting with the peer counsellors that have volunteered to help with our project would be very beneficial as they would guide us from a user perspective about what could be improved.**