



Executive **Summary**

Smarter Solutions for Campus Health

Smart lockers help colleges and universities bridge the wellness gap, easing student access to food, health, and wellness essentials whenever they need them – privately and securely.

AS COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES continue to broaden the scope of services they offer to support student well-being, many institutions still face challenges providing accessible, private, and flexible wellness resources. Programs designed to support student health are expanding, but not always at the pace or scale needed to meet students where they are.

As students are all too aware, wellness isn't a luxury; it's a critical pillar of academic success. With college campuses representing a microcosm of the broader communities they're a part of, it comes as little surprise

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WHERE DO STUDENTS FIND WELLNESS RESOURCES?



60%

Student health center



33%

Cafeteria



27%

Through partnership with
off-campus provider



25%

Campus convenience store



23%

Other



12%

Dormitory store

that college students suffer from many of the same health and wellness issues as their broader communities. In some cases, college students may face outsized health risks from stress, anxiety, and depression, largely due to the amount of work and study they juggle alongside pressures to perform. Adding in factors like substance abuse and general proximity to students who are sick – the list of health concerns for college students continues to grow.

To meet students' evolving needs, institutions are exploring innovative ways to incorporate greater flexibility and convenience in their current health and wellness offerings, without overstretching budgets or staff. This report briefly highlights the findings of a recent wellness-focused survey conducted by Spaces4Learning and **Parcel Pending by Quadient**. It explores how institutions are adapting their wellness strategies and how smart technology, like smart parcel lockers, is emerging as a practical tool to close the access gap.

Campuses Want to Offer More Resources for Student Wellness

According to the survey, most higher education institutions distribute wellness items, such as food pantry supplies, hygiene products, and over-the-counter medications, through student health centers, with 60% of survey respondents reporting this method.

Others have adopted more decentralized approaches: 33% distribute through cafeterias, 27% partner with off-campus providers, and 23% offer vending or online ordering for wellness resources. The desire to expand wellness access is strong, but challenges remain. Nearly a third (29%) of respondents cited lack of funding or available budget as the top barrier to broader distribution. Another 21% said staffing limitations made maintaining or scaling existing programs difficult.

Yet despite those obstacles, the survey found nearly 86% of respondents believe that discreet, flexible access to wellness resources for students on their campuses is either "extremely important" or "somewhat important." Especially during non-business hours, or when students are sick or managing health-sensitive issues, having secure, self-service options can mean the difference between receiving timely support or not.

Creating More Access to Student Wellness with Smart Lockers

Smart lockers are stepping in as a flexible, low-touch solution that enhances the student experience while easing the burden on campus staff. "Lockers have become an exchange point system for all of the different campus services today," said Robert Zinsky, vice president of business development at **Parcel Pending by Quadient**, manufacturer of campus smart locker solutions.

Smart lockers can offer round-the-clock, private access to critical resources without requiring the student to wait in line, ask for help, or adjust office hours. Smart lockers also provide a means for contactless exchange, limiting face-to-face interactions between sick students and campus health teams or other officials. Programs that incorporate online ordering allow students to access pain relievers

MAKING FOOD MORE ACCESSIBLE

In September 2024, State University of New York (SUNY) Chancellor John B. King Jr. announced a pilot program to expand food pantry capacity at five SUNY campuses using automated food lockers, which allow students to access food during hours when campus food pantries are closed.

Many college students today face a lack of regular access to food, with a June 2024 analysis from the **Government Accountability Office** noting that about

3.8 million college students (about 23%) experienced food insecurity.

“At SUNY we won’t let them face it alone,” a release from the SUNY Board of Trustees noted at a the pilot’s announcement, adding that the program marks “another step toward making good healthy food accessible, when a student needs it. By removing this worry, students can concentrate on getting a good education at our colleges and universities.”

Use cases for smart lockers continue to evolve in creative and unique ways, depending on specific campus needs or student requests. Their role in enhancing the student experience only continues to grow.

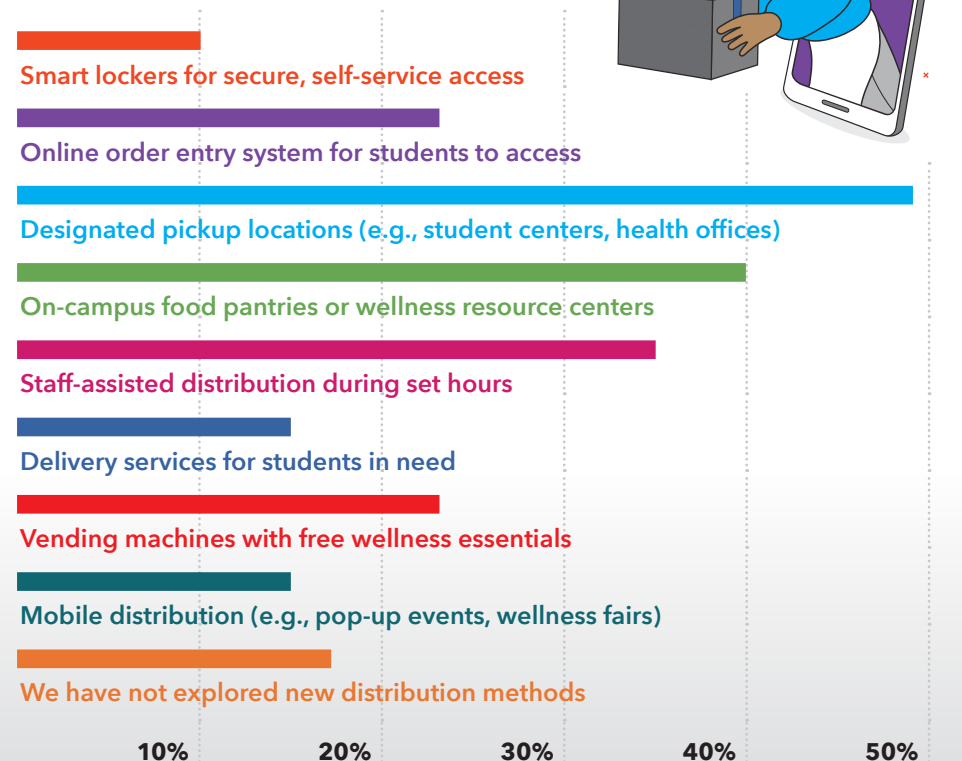
or fever-reducing medications in the middle of the night, without having to wait to visit the student health center the next day, when they may have an important exam or interview scheduled. Discreet and flexible access may also boost students’ participation in such programs, particularly where students may fail to report hunger or food insecurity, or refuse to access resources in front of their peers.

Ultimately, campuses will gauge the effectiveness of any wellness program based on student response and satisfaction: 42% of respondents said student usage rate will determine the success of wellness initiatives, while 19% will look to direct student feedback.

Supporting Students When They Go Hungry

Food insecurity continues to impact college students at alarming rates. Many campuses have introduced food pantry programs on campuses to help. Yet offering discreet, safe, and flexible options for distributing food pantry items to students in need presents a new challenge for campus communities. The Spaces4Learning survey asked respondents how they distribute food pantry resources as well as health and wellness items. According to the survey, 48% of the respondents rely on designated pickup locations like student centers to distribute food and wellness items. Another 40% said their campuses operate a dedicated pantry, while 35% still require in-person staff for distribution.

HOW DO CAMPUSES DISTRIBUTE WELLNESS RESOURCES?





ABOUT PARCEL PENDING BY QUADIENT

Parcel Pending by Quadient is the leading provider of innovative parcel management solutions for higher education institutions around the world. With more than 100 years of innovation supporting our clients' mail and parcel needs, Parcel Pending by Quadient solutions ensure secure, convenient student parcel deliveries and on-campus asset exchanges.

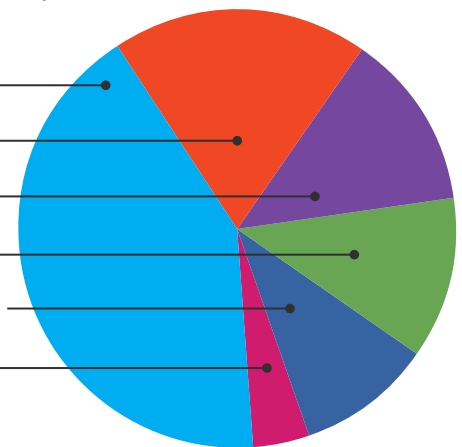
Parcel Pending's Campus Hub™ streamlines delivery and tracking for a safer and smarter campus experience. It can be used for various purposes, including package management and delivery, access to essential health and wellness resources, bookstore merchandise, moving materials, food pantry and on-campus dining pickups, and more.

For more information about how Parcel Pending® and Campus Hub can solve delivery challenges on your campus, visit parcelpending.com.

That's why some campuses are turning to smart lockers as a more efficient, dignified solution. In 2022, Bunker Hill Community College in Massachusetts installed three locker towers (including two refrigerated units) at its Charlestown campus, becoming the first college food pantry in the country to use refrigerated smart lockers for its food orders. As of 2024, **the college has fulfilled 3,586 grocery orders and 2,162 in-person pickups, distributing 95,659 total pounds of food, health and wellness resources, and household items** through its Grocery and Grab & Go programs. Of that total, more than 43,000 pounds of food were distributed to students for free through the Food for Free program. Smart lockers offer flexible and dignified access to food, and students appreciate their ease of use. Campus staff also benefit from cloud-based software that simplifies order coordination and inventory management.

HOW IS THE SUCCESS OF CAMPUS WELLNESS INITIATIVES MEASURED?

- 42%** Student response/use
- 19%** Student feedback
- 13%** Campus-wide adoption
- 12%** Retention/drop out rates
- 10%** Number of items sold/distributed
- 4%** Vendor interest/participation



Smart Use Cases for Smart Lockers that Extend Across Campus

Beyond wellness and food programs, smart lockers are increasingly being used in creative ways across campus. Some schools have begun distributing gratitude journals, mindfulness exercises, and self-compassion workbooks through lockers to meet wellness needs without requiring more formal interactions with students or campus staff. Lockers can also be used discreetly to retrieve medications a health center prescribes.

Florida's Valencia College serves as another innovative example of how smart lockers within a campus hub can positively impact campus life. Initially introduced during the pandemic as a bookstore solution, the VC Vault network now serves multiple facets of campus needs, including a food pantry as well as book distribution by the college library. The program has helped the library dramatically improve its service efficiency, with **more than 94% of students retrieving their requested materials within 24 hours**.

"Students don't have to work around our schedules because their time is important as well," said Frankie Ortiz, Valencia's assistant director of Auxiliary Services.