

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Mental Health Emergencies

Mental Health Emergency SOP for Students and Faculty

1. Identifying a Mental Health Emergency

A mental health emergency includes, but is not limited to:

1. **Immediate risk of suicide or self-harm-** any suicidal ideation reported by the student, suicidal thoughts, self mutilation, reported thoughts or ideations.
2. **Severe panic attacks or extreme distress**
3. **Psychotic episodes or disorientation**
4. **Severe depression**

A student may be experiencing significant distress if they exhibit:

Emotional Signs:

- Excessive sadness, anxiety, or irritability.
- Sudden mood swings or emotional outbursts.
- Expressions of hopelessness or worthlessness.
- Social withdrawal from peers, faculty, or activities.

Behavioral Signs:

- Noticeable changes in academic performance (e.g., missed assignments, frequent absences).
- Sudden lack of motivation or disinterest in studies.
- Increased substance use (alcohol, drugs, excessive smoking).
- Increased conflicts with peers or faculty.

Physical Signs:

- Neglect of personal hygiene or sudden weight changes.
- Frequent headaches, fatigue, or unexplained physical complaints.
- Sleep disturbances—insomnia or excessive sleeping.

Verbal Cues:

- Mentioning feeling "trapped" or like a "burden."
- Talking about "not being here anymore" or wishing to "disappear."
- Frequent self-deprecating statements.

Signs of a Student Experiencing Psychosis

Psychosis involves a loss of contact with reality and may present with the following:

Cognitive Signs:

- Disorganized thoughts, confusion, or difficulty following conversations.
- Trouble concentrating or responding to questions appropriately.
- Paranoia—believing others are plotting against them.

Perceptual Signs:

- Hallucinations — hearing voices, seeing things that are not there.
- Delusions — believing things that are clearly untrue (e.g., "I am being watched," "I have special powers" "Someone is out to get me").

Behavioral Signs:

- Speaking in a disorganized or incoherent manner.
- Unusual or inappropriate emotional responses (e.g., laughing during serious discussions).
- Agitation, pacing, or excessive suspicion.
- Poor judgment or risky behaviors.

Severe Cases Requiring Immediate Medical Attention:

- Complete inability to communicate logically.
- Threats of harm to self or others.
- Extreme disorientation—forgetting their identity or location.

2. Immediate Steps for Students in Crisis

- If you or someone you know is experiencing a crisis, **call the 24/7 Mental Health Helpline: YourDost- 080 47359593**
- Seek immediate support from:

Chief Warden

Prof. (Dr.) Niraj Kumar - 98910 80985

Wardens

Dr. Nidhi Gupta - 96101 16169

Dr. Monika Negi - 98712 26916

Dr. Bharti Yadav - 97173 55955

Dr. Neeraj Tiwari – 96439 91393

Dr. Prem Chand - 92788 88608

- **Campus Counsellors:**

Ms. Sheetal Choudhary - 7289 972 307

Ms. Akanksha Singh - 79066 56994

- **Trained Peer Mentors**

Mr. Vasushrava Mahipal (2021), Cell: 9821596732

Mr. Ayush Sharma (2024), Cell: 8630819123

Ms. Gadha R. S. (2024) Cell: 8848103486

- If in a public area, move to a quiet, safe space or an open space with no active means to harm oneself, checking with the person concerned what feels safe in the moment.
- Use campus mental health apps for immediate guidance (**Your Dost, Calm, Headspace, Outlive Chat**).
- If the situation is critical (e.g., suicide attempt, complete loss of functioning), a member of faculty needs to be informed and consequently emergency services need to be informed (Venkateshwara Hospital or Akash Hospital)

3. Faculty and Staff Response Protocol

- If a student approaches you with a mental health emergency, the following steps should be taken:
 - 1. Ensure safety:** Make sure the student is in a secure, calm space; refer to the resource packet for taking necessary steps.
 - 2. Assess risk:**
 - If there is an **immediate risk of self-harm or suicide**, take measures to get the student in a secure place where he/she has no access to means to harm themselves. Also take measures to ensure that the student is not left alone till necessary formal steps are taken.
 - If the student is in distress but not at immediate risk, encourage them to talk to you since they have approached you with a sense of trust, listen to whatever extent possible and then gently encourage them to reach out to the mental health helpline service or the campus counsellors.

- 3. Provide support:** Use active listening and assist the person as per the SOP. Avoid judgment or giving advice beyond your expertise.
- 4. Refer appropriately:** Guide the student to available resources (counseling center, health center, faculty mentor, peer support).
- 5. Follow up:** Ensure the student receives ongoing support and follow up with them. In case of need a Faculty Mentor be appointed.

4. Night-Time Support Protocol

- If a crisis arises at night:
 - **Contact the trained first responder or in their absence any friend on campus, any student, faculty, or warden.**
 - Move the student to **a safe location.**
 - **Use digital resources** (e.g., mental health helplines, mindfulness apps mentioned above) for immediate relief along with the resource packet attached below.
 - Inform a trusted emergency contact of the person concerned.
 - If the situation escalates, **call campus emergency services or arrange transport to a medical facility.**

5. Confidentiality and Reporting

- Any case of mental health crisis should be reported to the university counselor while maintaining **strict confidentiality.**
- Peer mentors, faculty, and staff must adhere to the **ethical guidelines on mental health support.**
- Any imminent risk to life should be reported to the appropriate emergency contacts immediately including the emergency contact of the person concerned.

6. Mental Health Resources on Campus

- **24/7 Mental Health Helpline: 080 47359593**
- **Campus Counselor:** Ms. Sheetal Choudhary: sheetal.choudhary@nludelhi.ac.in or Ms. Akanksha Singh: akanksha.singh@nludelhi.ac.in
- **Faculty Mentor Program:** You may meet your Faculty Mentor.
- **Digital Mental Health Platforms:** Calm, Headspace, Outlive Chat, YourDost

7. Post-Crisis Support

- Students who experience a crisis should be offered **follow-up counseling and peer support.**
- Faculty and staff involved in crisis response should receive **post-incident debriefing and guidance.**
- The university should periodically **review and improve crisis response protocols** based on feedback and effectiveness.

This SOP should be included in student orientation materials, displayed across campus, and periodically reviewed for updates.

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Resources to be used:

1.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oVM1EmAii4.&pp=vgUUZ29ydW5kaW5nIFiRIY2huaXFiZXM%3D>

2.

<https://www.voutu.be.com/watch?v=86HUcX8ZtAk&t=68s&pp=ygUKS1BtciBhdWRpbw%3D%3D>

3. Link for the google drive:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/ITWV3RciZX4vx031t9PSCBgTmLXHhbkCHL?usp=sharing>