

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:

- **Immediate risk of suicide or self-harm-** any suicidal ideation reported by the student, suicidal thoughts, self-mutilation, reported thoughts or ideations.
- **Severe panic attacks or extreme distress**
- **Psychotic episodes or disorientation**
- **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: 8626899833 (Mindpeers), 18008914416 (Tele-Manas), 02225521111 (i-CALL)**

Seek immediate support from the following:

- **Chief Warden: Prof. (Dr.) Niraj Kumar - 98910 80985**
- **Wardens:**
Girls Hostel:
 - **Dr. Garima Tiwari, Associate Professor of Law - Warden**
 - **Dr. Monika Negi, Assistant Professor of Law - Warden**
 - **Dr. Kheinkor Lamar, Assistant Professor of Law- Warden**

Boys Hostel:

- **Dr. Prem Chand, Associate Professor of Law- Warden**
- **Dr. Sidharth Dahiya, Deputy Registrar- Warden**

Campus Counsellors:

- **Ms. Sheetal Choudhary - 7289 972 307**
- **Ms. Akanksha Singh - 79066 56994**

Trained Peer Mentors:

- **Mr. Yash Kanwat (2028), SWC Co-Convenor, Cell: 9829427901**
- **Ms. Vedanshi Keyal (2027), SWC Convenor, Cell:9102153020**

- 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 (**Mindpeers, 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:
 - a) **Ensure safety:** Make sure the student is in a secure, calm space; refer to the resource packet for taking necessary steps.
 - b) **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 them. 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.
 - c) **Provide support:** Use active listening and assist the person as per the SOP. Avoid judgment or giving advice beyond your expertise.
 - d) **Refer appropriately:** Guide the student to available resources (counseling center, health center, faculty mentor, peer support).
 - e) **Follow up:** Ensure that the student receives ongoing support and follow up with them. In case of need, a Faculty Mentor to 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

- **Campus Counselor:** Ms. Sheetal Choudhary: sheetal.choudhary@nludelhi.ac.in or Ms. Akanksha Singh: akanksha.singh@nludelhi.ac.in
- **Visiting Clinical Psychologist and Counselors on weekends**
Clinical Psychologist- Udisha.mriash@nludelhi.ac.in,
Visiting Counselor Gurbani.singh@nludelhi.ac.in
- **Faculty Mentor Program:** You may meet your Faculty Mentor.
- **Digital Mental Health Platforms:** Calm, Headspace, Outlive Chat, Mindpeers
- **National Mental Helplines:-**
NIMHANS, Bengaluru- 0804611007
KIRAN, Ministry of Social Justice- 18005990019
ASARA (Suicide Helpline 24*7)- 9820466726

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.

Enclosed Resources to be used:

1. Grounding Technique: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=30VMIEmA114>
2. Progressive Muscle Relaxation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ClqPtWzozXs>