



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

# Mental Health Crisis Algorithms for AKU students in Pakistan

Prepared by: Counselling Services and Wellness

# Situation 1: **Mental Health Crisis**

**Where there is an acute risk of harm to self or others involving a student.**

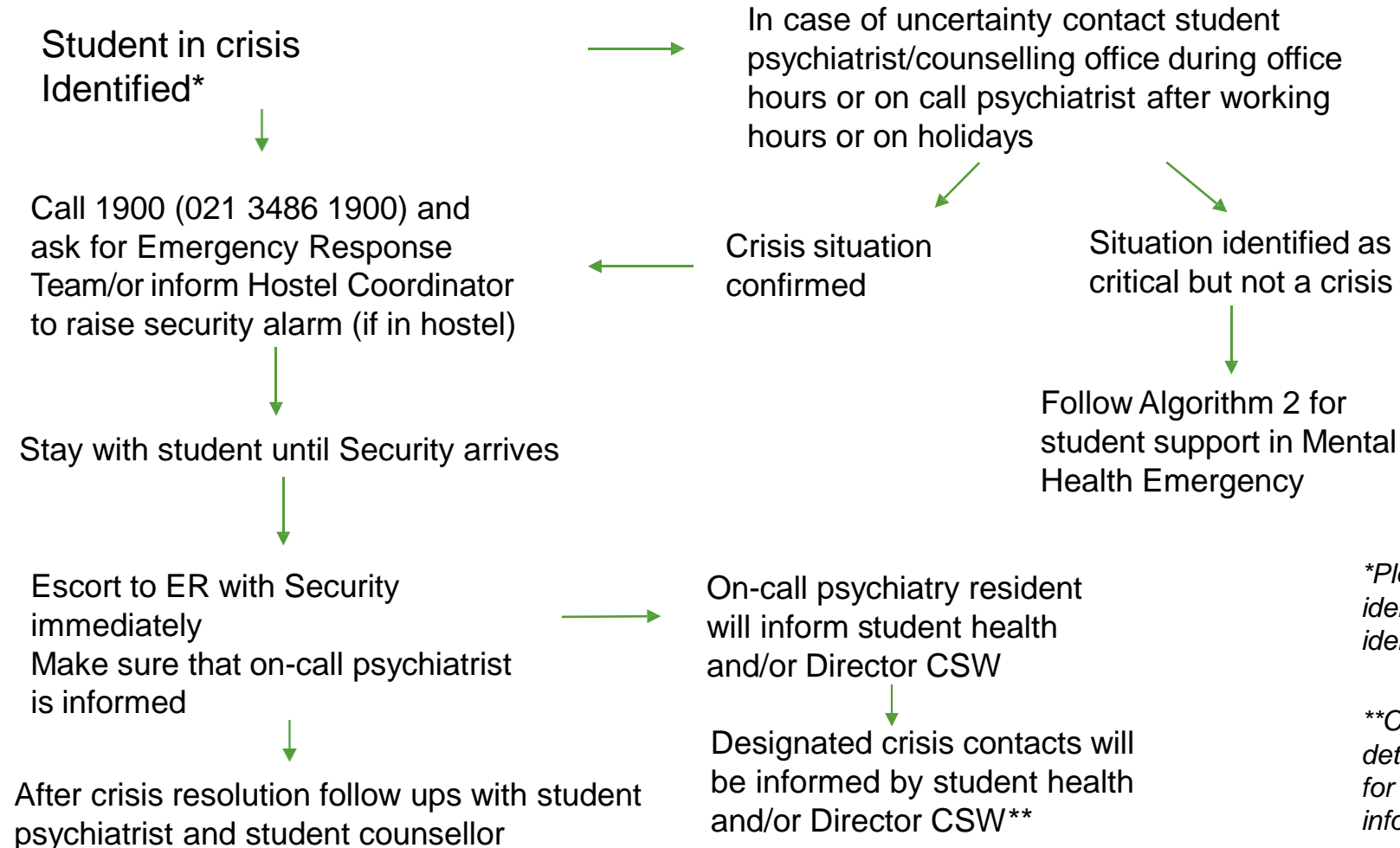
A student reaching a breaking point manifesting as:

- Suicidal attempts/self-injury that requires immediate medical attention
- Expressing suicidal/homicidal/violent intent\*
- Displaying aggressive/agitated behavior
- Evidence of being in an intoxicated\*\* state to the extent of displaying extremely disruptive behavior, or being unresponsive

*\*Intent can be conceptualized as a clear plan as to undertaking injurious behavior*

*\*\*Intoxicated: (of alcoholic drink or a drug) cause (someone) to lose control of their faculties or behavior*

# Algorithm 1: Student support in Mental Health Crisis



*\*Please note student in crisis can be identified by anyone if warning signs are identified.*

*\*\*CSW Director and Vice-Provost SAS will determine subsequent risk level and need for parents or any other personnel to be informed*

## Situation 2: **Mental Health Emergency**

**Non-threatening but highly disruptive behavior that requires immediate attention\* with no obvious immediate intent to harm self or others.**

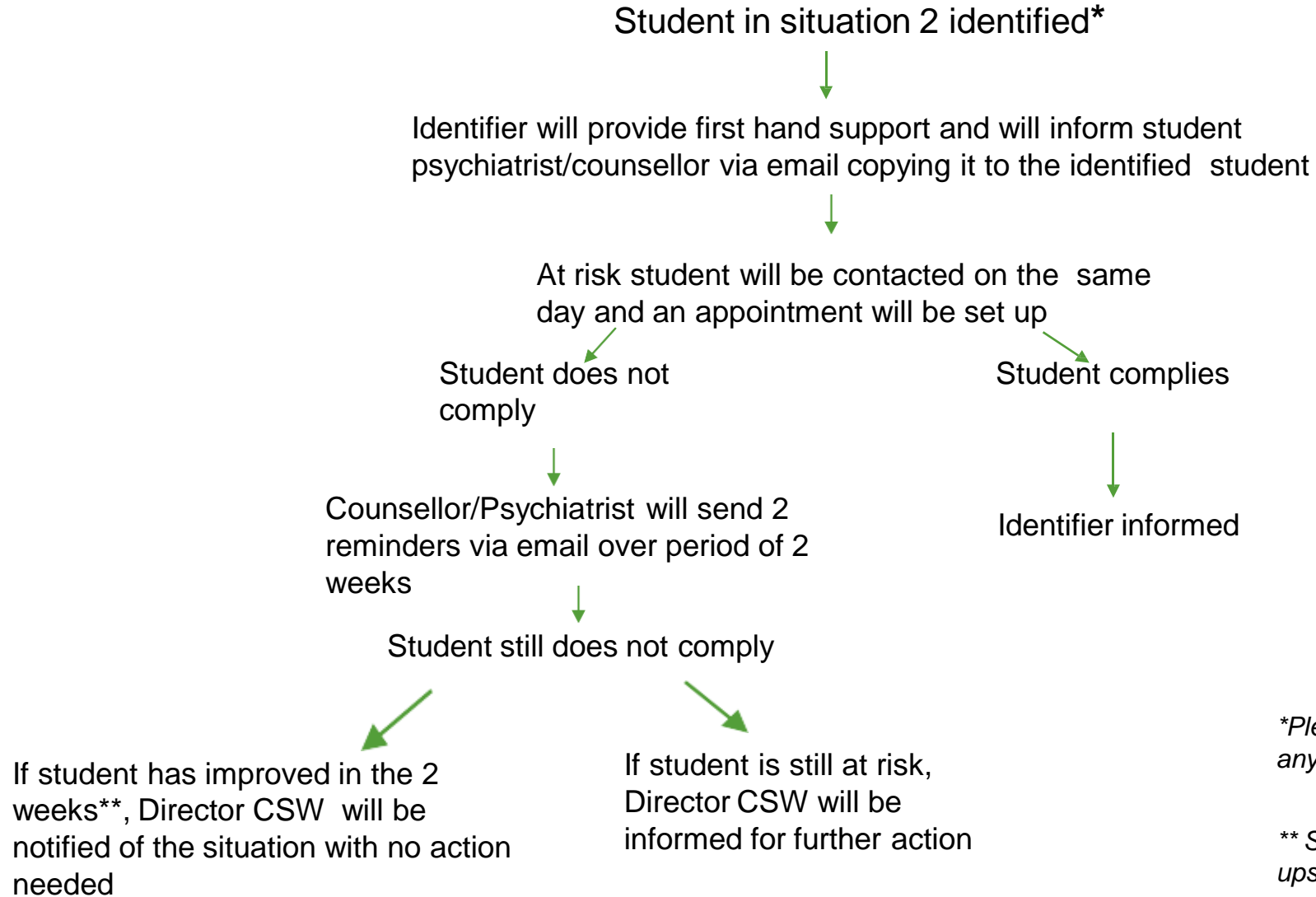
Student behaviour manifesting as:

- Talking about suicide
- Talking about threatening behavior
- Self-injury that does not require immediate medical attention
- Substance abuse
- Not taking prescribed psychiatric medication while having active symptoms
- Paranoid thinking with bizarre ideas and avoidance behaviours
- Experiencing hallucinations/delusions
- Disruptive behavior and/or harassment
- Extended\*\* withdrawal from activities and/or social interaction

*\*Immediate attention means at least the development of some plan to mitigate risk/harm/help the student.*

*\*\* Extended: anything longer than 2 weeks*

# Algorithm 2: Student support in Mental Health Emergency



*\*Please note student at risk can be identified by anyone if warning signs are identified*

*\*\* Student Health/counsellor would take follow ups from the identifier*

## Situation 3: **Mental Health Concerns**

**No evident threat of harm to self or others involving a student. A student undergoing a high level of stress in relation to academics, social, health, financial or personal issues.**

Student behaviour manifesting as:

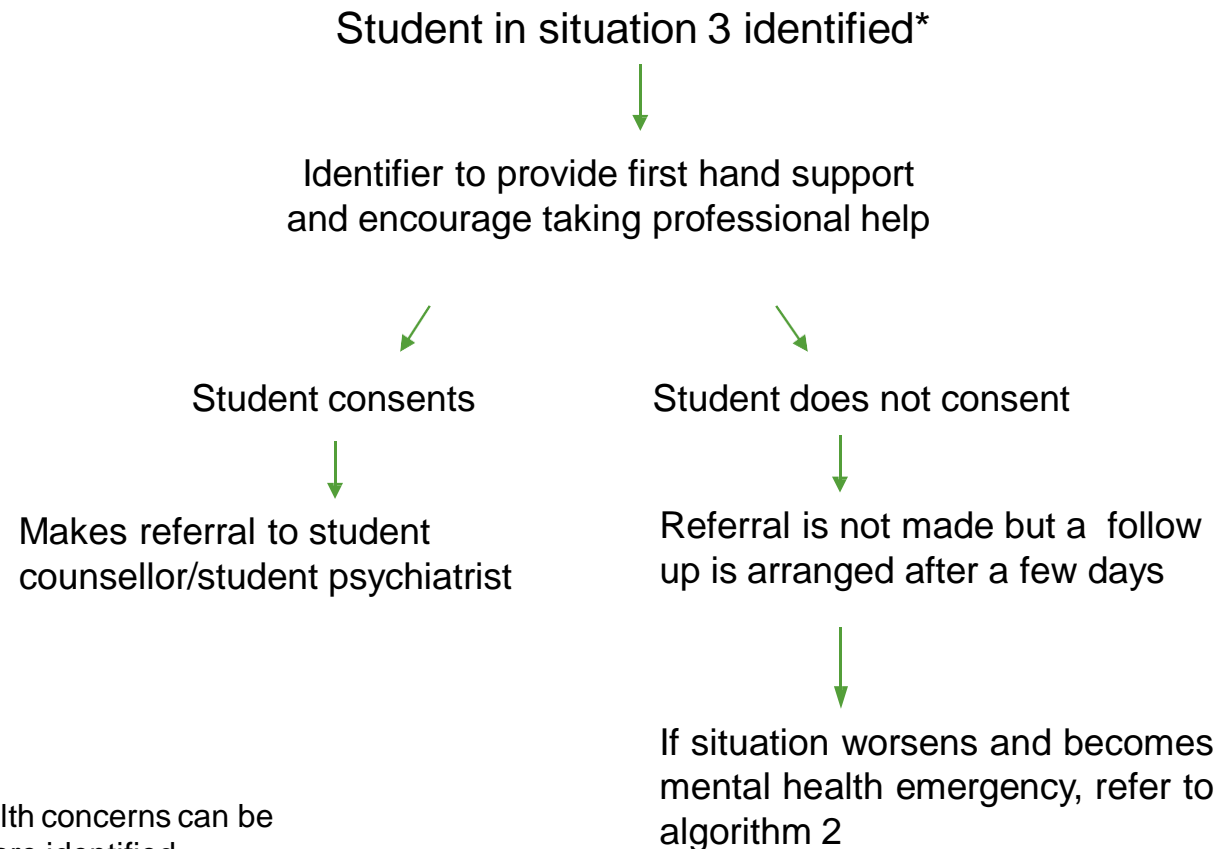
- Low mood, excessive crying, persistent sadness
- Lack of interest in activities, inability to derive pleasure from previously enjoyable activities
- Expressing low self-esteem or worthlessness
- Excessive worry: apprehension, nervousness, indecision,
- Concerning changes in unusual appetite patterns\*; sudden weight loss or gain
- Concerning changes in sleep\*\*
- Emotional outbursts: irritable behavior, quickness to anger
- Persistent health issues without an identifiable cause
- Decline in academic performance
- Acute\*\*\* withdrawal from social interaction accompanied by a sense of isolation

\*Eating too much or not enough, binge eating, vomiting after eating

\*\*Difficulty in falling asleep, early awakening and difficulty in falling asleep again, continuous nightmares, continuous excessive sleep (more than 8-9 hours), feeling unrefreshed even after long hours of sleep

\*\*\*Less than 2 weeks

# Algorithm 3: Student Support in Mental Health Concerns



\*Please note student with mental health concerns can be identified by anyone if warning signs are identified