

Mental Health Crisis Algorithms for AKU students in Pakistan

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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

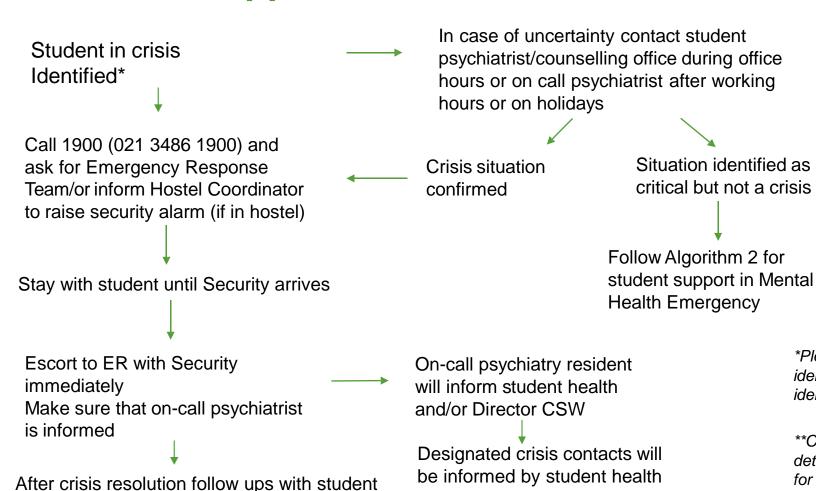
*Intent can be conceptualized as a clear plan as to undertaking injurious behavior

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

Algorithm 1:

psychiatrist and student counsellor

Student support in Mental Health Crisis



and/or Director CSW**

identified by anyone if warning signs are identified.

*Please note student in crisis can be

**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

Student in situation 2 identified*

Identifier will provide first hand support and will inform student psychiatrist/counsellor via email copying it to the identified student

At risk student will be contacted on the same day and an appointment will be set up

Student does not comply

Counsellor/Psychiatrist will send 2 reminders via email over period of 2 weeks

Student still does not comply

If student has improved in the 2 weeks**, Director CSW will be notified of the situation with no action needed

If student is still at risk,
Director CSW will be
informed for further action

Student complies

Identifier informed

*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 activates
- 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

Student in situation 3 identified*

Identifier to provide first hand support and encourage taking professional help

Student consents

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Makes referral to student counsellor/student psychiatrist

Student does not consent

Referral is not made but a follow up is arranged after a few days

If situation worsens and becomes mental health emergency, refer to algorithm 2

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