

# STUDENT PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCIES IN RESIDENCES OR ON CAMPUS AT UCT

## Preamble:

A small number of students experience emotional or psychiatric breakdowns in residences or on campus every year. While the ideal is to identify students at risk before they reach this critical point, this is not always possible.

The Student Wellness Service (SWS) is a primary health care service which provides medical and psychological care from a clinic base at 28 Rhodes Avenue, Mowbray from 08:30 to 16:30 on weekdays. However SWS is neither mandated nor resourced to attend to medical/psychiatric emergencies that occur on other parts of our campuses.

The following procedure for dealing with specifically psychiatric emergencies (which falls under the broader university protocol dealing with **medical emergencies**<sup>1</sup>) should therefore be followed by staff or students in such cases:

## Procedure:

1. In situations where the warden, academic or PASS staff member, or fellow student identifies another student in crisis, **for example:** is losing touch with reality – psychosis, is expressing suicidal or homicidal intentions or thoughts, or appears to be a danger to themselves or others, then the following steps should be followed immediately in an attempt to minimise risk and contain the situation as soon as possible:
  - Contact Campus Protection Services (CPS) at 021 650 2222/3 who will contact ER24.
  - If CPS cannot be reached for any reason then contact ER24 directly at 084124. ER24 will transport the student to Groote Schuur Hospital (GSH) for a voluntary admission (i.e. the student agrees to be transported to the hospital for assessment and treatment).
  - If, in your personal observation, the student is considered to be a danger to him/herself or others, but she/he refuses a health intervention, then CPS as well as SAPS (South African Police Services) should be contacted to effect an involuntary admission and transportation of the patient to GSH usually by SAPS.
    - i) Mowbray Police Station - (021) 680 9580
    - ii) Rondebosch Police Station – (021) 685 7345
  - The ER 24 paramedic/s or SAPS representative/s will hand over the patient to the medical officer on duty in Casualty in GSH who will assess the student.
  - While you wait for these service providers, you could contact the UCT Student Careline for guidance and support at 0800 24 25 26.

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<sup>1</sup> see <http://www.uct.ac.za/students/health/campussafety/#health> or <http://www.uct.ac.za/services/properties/emergencies/medical/>

If the student is in a UCT Residence, then the personal details on the 'White card' in the residence office, should be sent with the student to the hospital.

**Follow-up information:**

The Warden or delegate facilitating the admission or referral to Groote Schuur Hospital, should notify the parents, as they are not bound by the same confidentiality as Health Professionals.

Groote Schuur Hospital will refer the student to Student Wellness Services or the treating private professional upon discharge from the hospital to facilitate after care.

For easy reference, please see below:

<b>Ambulances</b>	
ER 24	084124
Provincial	10177
<b>Security</b>	
CPS	021 650 2222/3
Mowbray Police Station	021 680 9580
Rondebosch Police Station	021 685 7345
UCT Student Careline	0800 24 25 26 <i>You can also sms <b>31393</b> for a call-me-back.</i>