

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) On Mental Health for Colleges

1. Purpose

This SOP establishes a systematic framework for promoting mental well-being, identifying students in distress, providing timely support, managing mental health crises, and creating a safe and inclusive campus environment.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to:

- Pre-service Trainee Teachers
- In-service Teachers
- Faculty members
- Administrative staff
- Hostel residents
- Contractual employees
- Visitors participating in college activities
- Student Volunteers and Peer Leaders

3. Policy Statement

The institution is committed to fostering a mentally healthy campus where every student is treated with dignity, respect, empathy, and confidentiality. Mental health concerns shall be addressed through prevention, early identification, support, referral, intervention, and continuous follow-up.

4. Objectives

The institution shall:

1. Promote positive mental health and emotional well-being.
2. Reduce stigma related to mental health concerns.
3. Facilitate early identification of students in distress.
4. Ensure access to counselling and support services.
5. Establish crisis response procedures.
6. Strengthen resilience, coping skills, and help-seeking behaviour.
7. Provide a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

5. Governance Structure

Institutional Mental Health Committee (IMHC)

Composition

- Principal/Director (Chairperson)

- Dean Student Welfare
- IQAC Coordinator
- Counsellor/Psychologist
- Medical Officer
- Hostel Warden
- Faculty Representatives
- Student Representatives

Responsibilities

- Policy implementation
- Monitoring student well-being initiatives
- Organizing awareness programs
- Reviewing crisis cases
- Annual evaluation and reporting

6. Mental Health Promotion Activities

The institution shall organize:

Awareness Programmes

- Mental Health Awareness Week
- Orientation Programmes
- Stress Management Workshops
- Life Skills Education Sessions
- Emotional Well-being Campaigns

Student Development Activities

- Peer Support Groups
- Mentorship Programmes
- Recreational and Cultural Activities
- Physical Fitness and Yoga Programmes

7. Early Identification of Students in Distress

Faculty, peers, and staff shall remain alert to:

Academic Indicators

- Sudden decline in performance
- Frequent absenteeism
- Incomplete assignments
- Loss of concentration

Emotional Indicators

- Persistent sadness
- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Emotional withdrawal

Behavioural Indicators

- Social isolation
- Noticeable personality changes
- Risk-taking behaviour
- Expressions of hopelessness

Physical Indicators

- Sleep disturbances
- Fatigue
- Significant changes in appetite
- Neglect of personal care

8. Referral Mechanism**Step 1: Identification**

Concern may be raised by:

- Student
- Faculty Member
- Peer
- Parent
- Hostel Warden

Step 2: Initial Support

The concerned person should:

- Listen respectfully
- Avoid judgment
- Encourage help-seeking
- Maintain privacy

Step 3: Referral

Refer the student to:

- Institutional Counsellor
- Student Welfare Office

- Medical Officer (if required)

9. Counselling and Support Services

The institution shall ensure access to:

1. **Individual Counselling:** For emotional, academic, social, and personal concerns.
2. **Group Counselling:** For stress management, adjustment issues, and skill development.
3. **Referral Services:** Referral to qualified mental health professionals when specialized care is needed.

10. Crisis Management Procedure

A mental health crisis may include:

- Severe emotional distress
- Acute psychological breakdown
- Risk of harm to self or others
- Extreme panic or disorientation

Immediate Actions

1. Ensure the student's immediate safety.
2. Stay with the student when necessary.
3. Contact the Counsellor or Crisis Response Team.
4. Inform designated authorities.
5. Arrange emergency medical evaluation when required.
6. Notify parents/guardians when safety concerns exist and institutional policy permits.

11. Confidentiality and Privacy

The institution shall:

- Maintain confidential counselling records.
- Limit access to authorized personnel.
- Protect student dignity and privacy.
- Share information only when necessary for safety, legal compliance, or professional referral.

12. Faculty and Staff Capacity Building

Annual training shall be conducted on:

- Mental health literacy
- Student support skills
- Identification of distress indicators
- Referral procedures

- Psychological first aid

13. Hostel Mental Health Support

Hostel administration shall:

- Promote social connectedness.
- Conduct periodic wellness interactions.
- Identify isolated students.
- Facilitate timely referrals.

14. Documentation

The institution shall maintain:

- Referral records
- Counselling records
- Training reports
- Awareness programme reports
- Follow-up records
- Annual mental health review reports

All records shall be maintained confidentially.

15. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Institutional Mental Health Committee shall review:

- Number of awareness programmes conducted
- Counselling service utilization
- Student participation rates
- Referral statistics
- Feedback from students and faculty

Review shall be conducted at least once every academic year.

16. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- Mental health awareness programmes conducted
- Percentage of students reached
- Faculty trained in mental health support
- Counselling utilization rates
- Student satisfaction with support services
- Timely referral and follow-up rates

17. Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

- Provide leadership and resources.
- Approve annual mental health action plans.

Counsellor

- Conduct assessments and counselling.
- Maintain records and referrals.

Faculty Members

- Identify students requiring support.
- Refer concerns appropriately.

Hostel Wardens

- Monitor resident well-being.
- Facilitate support and referrals.

Students

- Seek help when needed.
- Support peers responsibly.
- Participate in awareness initiatives.

18. Review of SOP

This SOP shall be reviewed:

- Annually,
- After any major mental health incident,
- Or when revised guidelines are issued by relevant authorities.

Prepared By: Institutional Mental Health and Well-being Committee