



## Student Mental Health Policy

Document is uncontrolled if downloaded or printed.

Always view the current version of the document via the Knowledge Exchange Policy Hub.

DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION			
<b>Document type</b>	POL (Policy)	<b>Full Document Number</b>	DIRPOL005
<b>Version:</b>	1.0	<b>Superseded Version:</b>	New document
<b>Originator job title:</b>	Lesley Bennett Student Welfare and Experience Manager	<b>Add document to external LSTM website?</b>	Yes
<b>Department / Function:</b>	DIR (Director's Office)	<b>Subject category:</b>	Safeguarding
<b>Authorship date:</b>	19-JUL-19	<b>Published date:</b>	01-AUG-2019
<b>Management Committee sign off date:</b>	31-JUL-2019	<b>Date for Review:</b>	01-JUL-2021
<b>Signature (optional):</b>		<b>Frequency of review:</b>	2 years
<b>Date of <a href="#">Equality Assessment</a> "due regard" form (Equality Act 2010):</b>	July 2019	<b>Equality Assessment reference number:</b>	EIA – 45921

## Target Audience

People who need a detailed knowledge of the document	Dean of Education; Safeguarding Focal Points in Education; Registry Staff, and Student Welfare Staff
People who need a broad understanding of the document	Director of Studies of courses, course leads and moderators and lecturers.
People who need to know that the document exists	All staff and students

## Annex of Modifications

Version	Date of issue	Details of modification from previous version
1.0	10.09.2019	Minor amendments to 16.1 under Admissions by Student Welfare Officer
1.0	13.09.2019	Minor change to the wording for 5.8 and 16.2 following recommendations from Equality Impact Assessment

## Contents Page

1. Introduction
2. Equality and Diversity
3. Definition of Mental Health Difficulties
4. Roles and Responsibilities
5. Support for Students with Mental Health Difficulties
6. Training for staff
7. Freedom to Speak Up
8. Responsibilities of personal tutors and supervisors with regards mental health/wellbeing
9. Supporting a student who discloses a mental health concern
10. Safeguarding
11. Psychological First Aid
12. Suicide Prevention
13. Handling crisis incidents
14. What is an emergency situation?
15. When help is needed urgently
16. Safeguarding
17. Admission and induction
18. Studying away from the LSTM
19. Interruption of study
20. Academic Assessment and Reasonable Adjustments
21. Conduct and Discipline
22. Confidentiality
23. References
24. Appendices

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This Policy sets out how the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) seeks to provide a coherent institutional approach to supporting the mental health of LSTM students. A range of procedures and guidance support the implementation of the Policy. The Policy is strongly informed by the Universities UK's documents: "Student Mental Wellbeing in Higher Education" (2015) and "Suicide Safer Universities" (2018).

**1.1** LSTM has specific legal responsibilities towards students whose mental health difficulties fall within the definition of disability within the law. These students may require reasonable adjustments to enable their equal participation and access to the curriculum.

**1.2** The aims of LSTM, in respect of student mental health, are to:

- Promote positive mental health among the whole student population.
- Raise awareness of mental health issues and provision and reduce stigma so that students in difficulty are encouraged to seek help and staff are confident in their response.
- Provide LSTM staff with relevant, up to date mental health training and supervision opportunities in order to efficiently and effectively support students.
- Provide consistent and effective support to students experiencing mental health difficulties, with a co-ordinated approach within LSTM and, where required, a timely referral to appropriate specialist NHS services.
- Create a culture in which confidentiality and dignity are not only respected, that they are an expectation for all who are part of the LSTM community.

**1.3** LSTM is committed to providing a supportive environment however, it is important to recognise that it is not a provider of specialist mental health services nor is it a therapeutic community. Whilst a small number of LSTM support staff are experienced student support professionals and are able to offer short term support and brief counselling interventions, LSTM is not equipped to replicate existing NHS specialist and community services. There will be limits to the support that can be offered to individual students and their needs will always have to be considered in the context of the community. LSTM does not provide a crisis support service and the support that we do offer is not available 'out of hours'. LSTM also has its own procedures for academic integrity, which will apply to all students irrespective of their medical condition or specific needs.

## 2. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

LSTM is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, combatting unlawful discrimination and promoting good community relations. We will not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination or behaviour that undermines this commitment and is contrary to our equality policy.

### **3. DEFINITIONS OF MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES**

- 3.1** The primary focus of this document is to support the needs of those students with some form of mental health difficulty. However, some consideration will be given to LSTM's commitment towards reducing stigma commonly associated with mental health difficulties and how, as an organisation, mental wellbeing can be promoted and improved.
- 3.2** Terminology within the area of mental health can often be confusing because it is not always used in a consistent manner. The term 'mental health', when properly used, describes a sense of wellbeing; the capacity to live in a resourceful and fulfilling manner, having the resilience to deal with the challenges and obstacles which life presents. "Mental health difficulties" is a term that can be used to describe temporary reactions to a painful event, stress or external pressures, or symptoms of drug or alcohol use, lack of sleep or physical illness. This terminology has also been used to describe long term psychiatric conditions which may have significant effects on an individual's functioning.
- 3.3** It is important to note that many of us experience some of the symptoms of mental health difficulties at certain points in our lives (e.g. disturbed sleep patterns, lack of motivation, anxiety etc). The degree of severity is reflected by the intensity of the symptoms, their duration and the impact on the individual's capacity to function. In addition to clinically recognised mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, eating disorders, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder etc, certain behaviours may be indicators of mental health difficulties or may cause concern. These include deliberate self-harm and plans for an individual to take their life through suicide.
- 3.4** This document is concerned with the needs of, and responsibilities for, LSTM students whose mental health difficulty, be it long term mental illness or a temporary but debilitating condition or reaction, may inhibit a student's ability to participate fully in higher education without appropriate support.

### **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **4.1 All students and staff**

- It is everyone's responsibility to support students and to signpost students who are struggling with mental health issues to appropriate services both within LSTM and the NHS. Staff should follow LSTM's Mental Health Policy, safeguarding and protecting children & vulnerable adults' policy, safeguarding students' policy and the LSTM code of conduct.
- Staff and students can raise concerns regarding welfare or safeguarding (whether in our education and research work in the UK or overseas), through the [Freedom to Speak Up](#) system.
- LSTM recognises that staff, students and contractors are not expected to be experts in the field of mental health. However, we all have a duty to:

- Be alert and responsive to problems and the potential indicators of emotional distress, changes in behaviour and signs of vulnerability.
- Be alert and responsive to the risks which individual abusers or potential abusers may pose to young people or vulnerable adults.
- Be alert and responsive to situations and activities during which young people or vulnerable adults may place themselves at risk of abuse, neglect or other harm.
- Be alert and responsive to situations and activities which may pose a more general risk to the health and safety of young people or vulnerable adults.

## **4.2 Dean of Education**

Act as the designated lead for safeguarding and conduct within education at LSTM:

- Have overall responsibility for the effective implementation of the Student Mental Health and safeguarding student policies across LSTM
- Have specific powers to oversee suspension of students pending investigations and where a significant risk of harm to a vulnerable individual is considered to exist
- Ensure induction processes are in place for staff and students within education which clearly outline the organisations' policies and processes to support students who disclose mental health difficulties.

## **4.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Act as the designated lead for LSTM for safeguarding to:

- Oversee, implement and monitor the ongoing assurance of safeguarding arrangements through the development and implementation of the safeguarding action plan
- Develop, implement and audit policy and strategy in relation to safeguarding
- Identify named focal points/lead professionals for safeguarding across the organisation and ensure support and mentoring of these individuals
- Support staff, through the design and delivery of safeguarding training and mentoring
- Work in partnership with groups/departments across LSTM, including partner organisations and donors, to ensure best practice in safeguarding/protection of children and vulnerable adults
- Ensure systems are in place across the organisation to assess risk in relation to safeguarding and promote protection of children and vulnerable adults
- Ensure that serious incidents relating to safeguarding are reported immediately and managed effectively and that appropriate systems are in place to learn lessons
- Oversee the referral of serious safeguarding incidents to appropriate external organisations and inform relevant donors and the charity commission.
- Ensure systems are in place to monitor progress against the implementation of our safeguarding action plan, policies and procedures through the Strategic Safeguarding Oversight Group, The Management Committee and the Board of Trustees.

#### **4.4 Student Advice and Wellbeing (SAW)**

The SAW team focus primarily on student welfare and student experience and are responsible for:

- Providing comprehensive, professional and timely support for all LSTM students regardless of where they are based
- Providing a range of mechanisms to support students academically and personally in order for them to have the opportunity to reach their full potential.
- Providing accurate information with regards to disability and mental health support, including applying for appropriate funding such as DSA
- Signposting and referring students to specialist services both within the NHS and the surrounding community
- Providing one to one therapeutic support to students who may benefit from brief clinical intervention
- Providing a range of wellbeing initiatives for staff and students aimed to improve mental and physical health
- Providing training and psychoeducational sessions for staff including; mental health awareness and suicide prevention to ensure that staff are equipped to support students and are aware of boundaries and when to refer cases on
- Assisting staff in supporting students who present with difficulties and challenges and providing a debrief space for staff who feel that they have been affected by issues raised by students.

#### **4.5 Registry**

The Registry team are responsible for:

- Registering students, collating timetables and ensuring a high quality of student experience
- Responding to day-to-day student queries, solving problems or re-directing via the Student Support Desk
- Ensuring that students who have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) have adjustments in place for assessments and exams as outlined in their ILP such as extra time, breaks, arranging smaller rooms to sit exams.

#### **4.6 Academic Registrar**

The Academic Registrar is responsible for;

- Providing information regarding Extenuating Circumstances applications, extensions and deferral or exams
- Advising staff and providing guidance and support to students regarding suspension and withdrawal
- Providing guidance to students on matters of progress including re-assessment requirements.

#### 4.7 Contact details for student concerns:

Phil Padfield Dean of Education	<a href="mailto:phil.padfield@lstmed.ac.uk">phil.padfield@lstmed.ac.uk</a> Tel: + 44 151 702 9550
Philippa Tubb, LSTM Designated Safeguarding Lead Managing Director, Well Travelled Clinics	<a href="mailto:phil.tubb@lstmed.ac.uk">phil.tubb@lstmed.ac.uk</a> Tel: + 44 151 705 3744
Lesley Bennett Student Welfare and Experience Manager	<a href="mailto:lesley.bennett@lstmed.ac.uk">lesley.bennett@lstmed.ac.uk</a> Tel: + 44 151 702 9593
Leah Dempsey Student Experience Officer	<a href="mailto:leah.dempsey@lstmed.ac.uk">leah.dempsey@lstmed.ac.uk</a> Tel: + 44 151 702 9591
Ruth Pollard Academic Registrar	<a href="mailto:ruth.pollard@lstmed.ac.uk">ruth.pollard@lstmed.ac.uk</a> Tel: +44 151 705 3266
Martyn Stewart Senior Lecturer in Research Methods	<a href="mailto:martyn.stewart@lstmed.ac.uk">martyn.stewart@lstmed.ac.uk</a> Tel: + 44 151 705 3292
Frances Wood Director of Studies Diploma in Tropical Nursing	<a href="mailto:frances.wood@lstmed.ac.uk">frances.wood@lstmed.ac.uk</a> Tel: +44 151 705 3130

### 5. SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES

- 5.1** The number of students disclosing a mental health condition to their higher education institution is increasing. In 2016/17, 57,305 students disclosed a mental health condition. This is a 26% increase on figures recorded in 2015/16 (UUK, 2018).
- 5.2** LSTM is committed to providing both academic and personal support to students. The Student Advice and Wellbeing (SAW) team comprises of a Student Experience Officer who offers disability support, advice relating to Disabled Students Allowance (DSA), Student Support Plans and exam adjustments and a Student Welfare and Experience Manager
- 5.3** The Student Welfare and Experience Manager is an accredited counsellor and member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and provides a free and confidential welfare support service to LSTM students. Support includes guidance around health and wellness, mental health support and signposting, psycho-education sessions and brief therapy. The delivery of support will depend very much on where a student is base as support provision will vary from student to student.
- 5.4** LSTM's Student Advice and Wellbeing team offer a drop-in facility which allows students, who are based in Liverpool, an opportunity to discuss briefly in person any challenges that they may be experiencing and to explore different avenues of support. Support may include; signposting to internal or external support or specialist services (including GP and NHS services), online psychoeducational materials (including self-help reference and eBooks), group sessions, personal developments workshops and referrals into local support groups and community mental health support.
- 5.5** Students who are studying offsite will be offered equal access to student support services however this may differ in delivery. Students who are overseas carrying out



project work or are permanently based overseas are encouraged to contact the Student Advice and Wellbeing team via the email address – [SAW@lstmed.ac.uk](mailto:SAW@lstmed.ac.uk) to discuss avenues of support. This may include support and guidance via telephone, Skype and email. In circumstances where a student is expressing concern for his or her mental health and wellbeing, the Student Welfare Officer will advise them to seek advice from a medical professional within the country that they are based.

- 5.6** Following a Student Advice and Wellbeing drop in session, and dependent on their needs and personal circumstances, students may be offered an initial session with either the Student Experience Officer or the Student Welfare and Experience Manager.
- 5.7** If appropriate, and where mental health concerns have been raised, students will be offered an initial assessment session with the Student Welfare Officer to gather some history and to assess the level of their current difficulties. Following the initial consultation, and once the student's needs have been established, the Student Welfare Officer will discuss the support options that are available to them. Support options may include; online self-help, attending one or a series of psycho-educational group sessions, participating in a therapeutic support group, joining a local community organisation, brief therapy sessions based at LSTM or a referral to a specialist NHS services.
- 5.8** The Student Welfare and Experience Manager is not able to offer out of hours crisis intervention or open-ended therapy. They cannot offer in-patient admission and cannot provide a diagnosis of medical conditions, medication monitoring, a prescription service or psychiatric support including key working or home visits. All of these are specialist services provided by the NHS and LSTM cannot replicate these services. If a student presents to the service requiring this level of input, a recommendation that they access the appropriate service would be made.
- 5.9** A representative from LSTM may be able to attend NHS led case conferences under certain circumstances. LSTM does not routinely liaise with families but would do so under certain circumstances with specific consent from the student concerned.
- 5.10** The Student Welfare and Experience Manager provides a range of psycho-educational resources available to students and contributes to initiatives which aim to foster positive health and resilience.
- 5.11** The Student Welfare and Experience Manager is available to provide consultation and guidance to members of staff who are concerned about a student's mental health and contributes to mental health-related staff training.

## **6. TRAINING FOR STAFF**

- 6.1** LSTM's Human Resources department and the Student Welfare and Experience Manager work closely to develop educational training sessions covering psychological first aid and suicide prevention. All members of staff from the LSTM

community have the potential of coming in to contact with vulnerable students and it is therefore considered to be essential to access regular mental health awareness training sessions.

- 6.2** Online Safeguarding and Prevent training is provided for members of staff to access and is a mandatory requirement for employment.

## **7. FREEDOM TO SPEAK UP**

- 7.1** Members of staff who have concerns for the welfare or conduct of a student can raise a concern using the [Freedom to Speak Up](#) reporting system on SharePoint. All LSTM staff and students have access to this system.
- 7.2** The types of concerns that can be raised may include, but are not limited to: student conduct/behaviour (including sexual harassment and discrimination), student health and wellbeing, exploitation of a student (personal or professional) and concerns related to terrorism and extremism in student as per the Prevent agenda.
- 7.3** The Prevent agenda highlights that vulnerable people, including those with poor or deteriorating mental health, may be at greater risk of radicalisation.

## **8. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONAL TUTORS AND SUPERVISORS WITH REGARDS MENTAL HEALTH/WELLBEING**

- 8.1** Members of staff working in student facing roles should be alert to indicators of mental health difficulties and be able to offer an appropriate response to a student's disclosure of such difficulties and to be able to efficiently signpost students to appropriate support services within LSTM or within the community.

### **Potential signs of mental health difficulties may include:**

- Withdrawing from everyday activities such as spending time with family and friends (not replying to texts/emails, not answering the phone)
- Loss of motivation and lack of interest in life (not engaging in previously enjoyable activities such as exercise, hobbies etc)
- Not engaging with academic work or running into academic difficulties or dropping off the academic radar
- Not engaging with other students or staff or not being involved in community/student activities
- Changes in behaviour (loss of interest/withdrawal, giving away possessions)
- Increased anxiety or agitation
- Inability to concentrate, memory problems
- Over involvement in academic work, exercising excessively
- Physical indicators (recurrent illness, weight loss, lack of interest in appearance, eating disorders, difficulty sleeping)
- Expressing thoughts or feelings (hopeless, sad, guilty, worthless)
- Not paying rent, fees or fines
- Disciplinary issues

- Self-harming behaviour
- Risk taking behaviour (taking risks with regards to personal safety, unprotected sex)
- Commenced using or increased use of drugs, smoking and alcohol
- Hearing voices, paranoia, suspicious of others
- Words/language being used (“I can’t take it anymore”, “Everyone would be better off without me”) could all be indicators that someone is experiencing thoughts of suicide.

**8.2** Personal tutors are encouraged to sensitively explore whether the difficulty that the student is experiencing is perceived to be as a result of, or is exacerbated by, academic work. An example of this would be where a student has expressed stress, anxiety or panic as a result of forthcoming deadline or assessment. In such cases, it is not always necessary to signpost the student to the Student Advice and Wellbeing team as an application for an extension may alleviate some of the symptoms that the student is experiencing.

**8.3** Personal tutors and supervisors are encouraged to include an agenda item relating to personal wellbeing and to encourage students to speak about their workload, how well they feel they are functioning (i.e. sleeping/eating) and if they feel that they are maintaining a healthy and meaningful level of wellbeing.

## **9. SUPPORTING A STUDENT WHO DISCLOSES A MENTAL HEALTH CONCERN**

**9.1** In the course of everyday work activities, you may develop concerns about a student, and it is important that when this happens you address the problem with them sensitively and in a timely manner.

**9.2** If you simply ask the student how they are they are, this may provide them with an opportunity to discuss their concerns with you. This scenario requires empathic listening, non-judgement and time.

**9.3** The student may be reluctant to disclose, or you may find that they approach you first. Disclosing a mental health concern can prove to be extremely challenging for students and in order for members of staff to be able to effectively receive the information that they are being given it is important to consider the following

- Consider where the disclosure is taking place and whether the location is confidential, and the conversation is not a risk of being overheard.
- Listen carefully and do not interrupt. Be mindful that the aim is not to solve the problem but to understand the situation in greater detail.
- **Be clear about the boundaries in your role.** Remember that you are not expected to respond or act as a mental health professional.
- If the student indicates that they are experiencing mental health difficulties it can be useful to check whether they are already seeing a GP, Counsellor or Psychiatrist about it. Check also if they have been in contact with the Student Advice and Wellbeing team (Student Welfare and Experience Manager or Student Experience Officer).

- If a referral to the Student Advice and Wellbeing team would be beneficial, try to persuade the student to self-refer, or obtain the student's consent to do so on their behalf.
- Students who are referred to the Student Advice and Wellbeing team will be seen by the Student Welfare and Experience Manager who is a professionally trained and qualified counsellor who will make a judgement on the most appropriate course of action for supporting the student.
- Recommendations may include attending a group session rather than access one-to-one counselling.
- Once an initial assessment has been made student cases are managed according to severity of need/risk. Some students may have to join a waiting list to see a Counsellor, but they will be always be offered/advised of alternative types of support whilst waiting.
- If the student does not provide consent, you can still discuss your concerns, provided you take care to avoid revealing the identity of the student, by ringing to speak to a member of the Student Advice and Wellbeing team on 0151 702 9593/9591.
- The student may not identify that they have a problem or may not want to acknowledge it. Whilst it may not be appropriate to insist upon such acknowledgement you should equally try to avoid humouring the student by pretending to agree that there is no problem when it is evident there is one.
- If the student is not ready to accept help or talk about what is troubling them, you must respect this. If it is not an emergency, it is important to give the student some time to think things over, so offer them the opportunity to come back and see you in the future.
- If you are still concerned about a student who has refused help, ring for further advice from a member of the Student Advice and Wellbeing (SAW) team. If you are unable to locate a member of the SAW team the students GP can be contacted, call 111 or in the case of emergency call 999.
- If you have safeguarding concerns about what a student has disclosed to you and think they are vulnerable and at risk, you should also raise a safeguarding concern using the [Freedom to Speak Up](#) portal. LSTM consider the types of safeguarding harm/abuse that can be experienced or perpetrated by vulnerable students to be:
  - Physical abuse
  - Domestic abuse/domestic violence
  - Sexual abuse
  - Psychological abuse
  - Financial or material abuse
  - Modern slavery
  - Discriminatory abuse
  - Organisational/institutional abuse
  - Neglect or acts of omission
  - Self-neglect

As far as possible, the confidentiality of all individuals involved in safeguarding concerns will be respected. However, there may be circumstances in which it is necessary to share information with third parties such as the police, health care professionals or social workers external to LSTM, or to a child's or vulnerable adult's

parents or guardians. Remember that **where there are concerns about the welfare or safety of a person under 18 years, information will have to be shared**. Any decision to share such information will be taken on a case by case basis by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Please refer to the [Safeguarding Student's Policy](#) for further information.

- 9.4** In terms of the types of support offered to students with mental health problems, the Student Welfare Officer deals with gathering relevant medical history, referral, and support related to the mental health problem itself and liaison with NHS services and with external support agencies. If a student has a long-standing mental health problem which is classed as a 'disability' as described by the Equality act 2010, you can also refer the student to the Student Experience Officer. The Student Experience Officer will clarify if the mental health problem can be classed as a disability and will address the implications of this within the teaching, learning and assessment context, and produce an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) outlining appropriate reasonable adjustments for the student

## **10. SAFEGUARDING**

- 10.1** LSTM is committed to providing a safe environment for students and to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm. Members of staff have a duty of care to pass on information to the relevant services within LSTM should they have any welfare or safeguarding concerns such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, dean of Education and the Student Advice and Wellbeing team.
- 10.2** If a member of LSTM staff is in any doubt as to whether a student will access appropriate support independently and you have concerns for the student, tell them that you are concerned for their safety and wellbeing and that you have a duty of care to safeguard vulnerable students. If you intend to share the information that they have disclosed to you, explain that you have a responsibility to pass the information on and state who you intend to share the information with. Ensure that you offer reassurance that information is shared on a need to know basis and that the student's safety and wellbeing are the primary focus.
- 10.3** Concerns for the welfare or conduct of a student can be raised using the Freedom to Speak Up reporting system on SharePoint or by emailing [safeguarding@lstmed.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@lstmed.ac.uk) or call 0151 705 3744 to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. All LSTM members of staff and students have access to both the Freedom to Speak Up system and email account as listed.

## **11. PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID**

- 11.1** Psychological First Aid may simply be defined as a supportive and compassionate presence designed to do three things:

- Stabilize (prevent the stress from worsening).
- Mitigate (de-escalate and dampen) acute distress.
- Facilitate access to continued supportive care, if necessary.

**11.2** Psychological First Aid **does not** entail diagnosis or treatment. Nevertheless, like physical first aid, it requires basic training to be effective and reduce the risk of inadvertently making things worse.

**11.3** LSTM is committed to providing training and development to members of staff to ensure that they are appropriately equipped to offer basic level support and signposting and referral information as appropriate.

**11.4** The Student Welfare and Experience Manager provides consultation, advice and support to staff who have concerns for the wellbeing of a student. Concerns may also be raised using the Freedom to Speak Up reporting system on SharePoint. All LSTM staff and students have access to this system.

## **12. SUICIDE PREVENTION**

**12.1** At least 95 university students took their own lives in England and Wales in 2016/17 and suicide is the biggest cause of death in young adults. Only 1 in 3 adults who die by suicide is known to mental health services (UUK, 2018)

**12.2** Male students are more than twice as likely to take their own lives than females. However, more women than men have been found to self-harm.

**12.2** Preventing suicide is everybody's business (World Health Organization (WHO), 2014).

There are several factors that can be experienced by our students that may increase mental distress and the risk of suicide, including:

- Financial worries
- Life transitions (such as moving to a new area)
- Academic worries related to success or failure, or workload of assessments
- Social and cultural pressures
- The internet and social media
- Alcohol and drug misuse
- Self-harming behaviours
- Health and psychological factors, (such as sleep disturbance, perfectionism, mood instability and physical illness)
- People with experience of trauma and abuse
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning (LGBTQ+) young people exhibit more suicidal behaviour than those who do not identify as LGBTQ+.

**12.3** Suicidal thoughts should never be treated as attention-seeking.

**12.4** Asking whether someone is feeling suicidal does not create or increase risk. It may have the opposite effect.

**12.5** LSTM is striving towards positive mental health by:

- Maintaining and promoting the health and wellbeing of our staff and students through a variety of internal activities and support services (including the Student Advice and Wellbeing team and Registry)
- Raising awareness of suicide risks
- Providing support to those who need it and signpost them to relevant services
- Encouraging staff and students to speak up if they have concerns about anyone in difficulties or distress
- Providing training to staff and students on mental well-being, psychological first aid and suicide prevention

### **13. HANDLING CRISIS INCIDENTS**

- 13.1** It is important to be clear that not everyone who experiences mental health difficulties presents a risk to themselves or others. However, there may be occasions when a student requires immediate attention due to threats of harm towards themselves or others.
- 13.2** Whilst rare, there will be incidents where a student's behaviour gives cause for concern. Such instances may include a student making plans to end their life or harm themselves in some way, when a student is extremely agitated and cannot be calmed or when a student is incoherent or rambling in their speech. Occasionally, you may believe the student is a danger to others, either because they are verbally threatening others or actions and emotions such as extreme anger, threatening non-verbal behaviour suggests they maybe a threat to others.
- 13.3** Where possible the students General Practitioner (GP) should be contacted for consultation. The GP will be aware of the student's medical history and will know if a care package is already in place. GP's often offer extended surgeries and it is beneficial to try to call the student's GP prior to taking further action.
- 13.4** Where there are immediate concerns about harm to the student or others, or if in any doubt, the emergency services should be called on 999. Following a conversation with the relevant emergency services, if an ambulance has been arranged or the police are going to attend, security should be informed on 3187/0151 705 3187. For out of hours concerns the same procedure should be followed and security should be informed on either 3187 or 07776 046307.
- 13.5** Where concerns are less immediate and there is time to consider the most appropriate intervention the Student Welfare and Experience Manager can be contacted for consultation and assistance and their absence; you could contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead on 0151 705 3744.
- 13.6** Crisis incidents out of hours should be referred to emergency services, and/or Accident and Emergency.

## **14. WHAT IS AN EMERGENCY SITUATION?**

**14.1** It is not always easy to determine what constitutes an emergency, but situations where you may need to invoke emergency procedures include:

- the student's behaviour is posing an immediate risk, to themselves or to others
- there is a risk of the student completing suicide
- the student's behaviour is sufficiently out of the ordinary that the matter cannot wait until the next day (e.g. severe agitation, disorientation, incoherence).

**14.2** In extreme circumstances where there is an imminent danger to the student concerned or to others, the most appropriate action is to contact Security who will then contact the appropriate emergency services. Accident and Emergency Departments have Crisis Assessment Teams who can make initial assessments of a person's mental state, prescribe medication where relevant or arrange for in-patient treatment. They will also liaise with the student's GP. If in doubt get call emergency services on 999. Security should be informed on 3186/0151 705 3187 or 07776 046307 if out of hours.

**14.3** If the student has taken some action towards harming themselves, e.g. taken an overdose, give the emergency services information about the nature of the self-harm if possible, e.g. which drug(s) have been taken.

**14.4** If it is an emergency, it is advisable to contact emergency services as soon as possible. The Student Welfare Officer should also be informed so that appropriate follow up can be offered.

## **15. WHEN HELP IS NEEDED URGENTLY**

**15.1** If you are concerned about a student's mental health, but you do not feel that their behaviour constitutes an emergency, you can:

- Recommend that the student contacts their GP, who will be able to consider the appropriateness of medication and can access further medical or psychiatric support.
- Recommend that the student contacts the Student Welfare and Experience Manager. If you in any doubt regarding the student contacting the Student Welfare and Experience Manager themselves ask for their consent to forward their contact details to the Student Welfare and Experience Manager in order for him/her to follow up directly with the student.
- Contact the Student Welfare and Experience Manager for guidance and support. The Student Welfare and Experience Manager can offer members of staff a debriefing session should they feel that they have been affected in any way by the issues raised by the student.



## **16. ADMISSION AND INDUCTION**

- 16.1** At application, or as soon as possible thereafter, prospective students with specific needs, including mental health difficulties, are encouraged to disclose this information and are advised that they can discuss specific needs with the Student Experience Officer. Any disability or health issue will not disadvantage the application. LSTM also hosts both face to face and virtual open days throughout the year. This is a good opportunity for prospective students to enquire as to what support LSTM can offer its students.
- 16.2** Students who disclose a mental health disability upon application or subsequently will be offered the opportunity of attending an initial meeting with a member of the Student Advice and Wellbeing team to discuss any academic or personal support needs. LSTM has strict guidelines on confidentiality and complies with the Data Protection Act (2018), General Data Protection Regulation, Freedom of Information legislation, Equal Opportunities Policy and the Equality Act (2010). No information given by the student to the Student Advice and Wellbeing team or to other LSTM staff will be disclosed to any person outside the LSTM unless permission has been granted by the student, unless in circumstances where the student is vulnerable or at risk of harm.
- 16.3** Once registered, all students are invited to attend a series induction of events during the first week of semester 1. Specific issues such as mental health and disability will be covered during this first week and will detail what support is available.
- 16.4** If a student discloses a long-term mental health difficulty they will be offered an appointment with a member of the Student Advice and Wellbeing team where they will be able to obtain information and guidance regarding applying for appropriate funding such as Disabled Students Allowance (DSA: the need for obtaining medical evidence; outline the availability of support provision both internally and in the community and how to obtain a needs assessment. Further advice for both staff and students can also be obtained from the Student Advice and Wellbeing team regarding risk assessments, fitness to practice and accessing relevant training.

## **17. STUDYING AWAY FROM LSTM**

- 17.1** Students may study away from LSTM in order to undertake field work and for their final research project. It is the responsibility of Student Experience and Welfare Manager in consultation with the Occupational Health Team and the relevant Director of Studies and/or research project supervisor for assessing the risks involved, including those related to a pre-existing mental health condition for which plans can then be made.
- 17.2** Students who are planning to study away from LSTM will be offered the opportunity of meeting with the Student Welfare and Experience Manager to discuss any concerns that they may have regarding having access to appropriate support,

obtaining medication that is aimed at supporting their mental health and to who they may contact should they feel that their mental wellbeing is deteriorating whilst overseas. The Student Experience and Welfare Manager can discuss the range of online support options that are available to students and to highlight appropriate psycho educational material that is featured on the student intranet.

- 17.3** Masters students who intend to carry out field work overseas are required to fill out an Occupational Health screening questionnaire prior to their field work. In section 3 (health history) of the questionnaire students can mention/flag mental health concerns/history. Students are encouraged to disclose any concerns that they have for their mental welling and will be offered the opportunity of discussing concerns with the Student Welfare and Experience Manager.
- 17.4** Difficulties may emerge while a student is away from LSTM. As part of the risk assessment process, the relevant Director of Studies and/or research project supervisor specify the frequency of the contact they will maintain with their students, providing an opportunity for concerns to be identified. Part of the briefing for all students studying away from LSTM should include suitable contact details in the event of difficulties.
- 17.5** Students will be covered by LSTM's insurance and therefore will have access to the insurer's 24-hour helpline.
- 17.6** Whilst distance from Liverpool imposes some constraints; students studying away from LSTM are still entitled to access support from the Student Welfare Officer, who can offer a range of support mechanisms, including online support.
- 17.7** Fitness to study away from Liverpool is determined by the same processes used in LSTM.

## **18. INTERRUPTION OF STUDY**

- 18.1** If a student is suffering from a mental health difficulty that is significantly impacting on both their day to day living and on their ability to fully apply themselves to their academic studies, they may seek to take time out to become fit to study again. In such cases, students should use standard processes to request an interruption of studies. It should be noted that conditions may be made regarding fitness to return to study.
- 18.2** In a limited number of cases, the student's behaviour arising from their medical condition, may impact adversely on the wider student body and on staff. Fitness to Study procedures focus on managing this impact in the least restrictive way possible. This will usually involve discussions with the individual student concerned, regarding the negative effects of their behaviour on others. Staff involved in these discussions should have received appropriate training to ensure that they are competent and adequately equipped to have such discussions and are sensitive to issues related to mental illness.

- 18.3** A student's medical condition may be such that they are unable to meet the reasonable academic requirements of the course or programme; and the reasonable social and behavioural requirements of a student member without their physical, mental, emotional or psychological health or state having an unacceptable impact upon the health, safety and/or welfare of the student and/or other students or staff (not withstanding adjustments required by law and the support of LSTM and local medical services).
- 18.4** In such cases it may be necessary to request that the student suspend study for a period or to initiate the Fitness to Study procedures, through which suspension may be imposed. Reference should be made to procedures relating to the suspension of students on the grounds of ill health, and for managing their return to study.
- 18.5** Students who have suspended their studies continue to have access to the Student Advice and Wellbeing team who are able to offer support, signpost to appropriate community based mental health and support services and to assist students upon their return to studies. Counselling support which does not exceed an individuals' allocation of provision (6 sessions per academic year) is available however, specialist mental health interventions and other specialist services are not provided. In circumstances where a student's medical condition requires specialist intervention a referral to NHS and community-based services will be discussed, and in some cases, facilitated by the Student Welfare and Experience Manager.

## **19. ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS**

- 19.1** Students with a mental health disability may be eligible for reasonable adjustments in their summative assessments, as detailed in the Code of Practice on Student Support and Welfare (section 6). Students who require adjustments should be encouraged to make an application as soon as possible after starting.
- 19.2** Students who are not considered disabled, but whose examination performance is nevertheless affected by a short-term mental illness can submit evidence using the Mitigating Circumstances process, as detailed in the Student Handbook. This type of academic appeal should only be made in exceptional circumstances and is not for use by those who might more appropriately have made an application for reasonable adjustments.

## 20. CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

- 20.1** Mental health difficulties do not exclude students from the requirement to comply with LSTM's regulations on conduct and discipline.
- 20.2** In situations where a student's ability to participate in disciplinary procedures is affected by mental health difficulties, the situation will be approached with due sensitivity, ensuring that the student is fit to take part and is appropriately supported.
- 20.3** After a 3 months' time limit, if the student still is not fit to attend, the hearing will go ahead and the student be informed of the decision, they will then have the right of appeal as per the student disciplinary code

## 21. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 21.1** LSTM recognises that students may not be fully aware of their difficulties or may find it hard to disclose a mental health condition, possibly because that difficulty affects their insight into their situation and their willingness to seek help. Reluctance to declare can also reflect anxieties about the response to a declaration including worry that it will affect their academic standing, fear that confidentiality will not be respected and fear of stigma.
- 21.2** LSTM is committed to creating an environment where all members of the community feel supported and encouraged to foster healthy wellbeing through mental health awareness raising and by responsive support services. Our aim is to reduce stigma so that students in difficulty feel encouraged to seek help from staff who process disclosures sensitively, professionally and share information on a need to know basis.
- 21.3** In cases where safeguarding concerns are identified, confidentiality may be breached in order to protect and support a child or vulnerable adult. As far as possible, the confidentiality of all individuals involved in safeguarding concerns will be respected. However, there may be circumstances in which it is necessary to share information with third parties such as the police, health care professionals or social workers external to LSTM, or to a child's or vulnerable adult's parents or guardians. Remember that **where there are concerns about the welfare or safety of a person under 18 years, information will have to be shared**. Any decision to share such information will be taken on a case by case basis by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## 22. REFERENCES

UK Government (2018) Data Protection Act (2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/data-protection>

UK Government (2010) Equality Act (2010)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

Universities UK (2015) Student Mental Wellbeing in Higher Education. 13 February 2015.

<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/student-mental-wellbeing-in-higher-education.aspx>

Universities UK and Papyrus (2018) Suicide Safer Universities. 5 September 2018.

<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/guidance-for-universities-on-preventing-student-suicides.aspx>

WHO (2014) Preventing Suicide: A global imperative.

[https://www.who.int/mental\\_health/suicide-prevention/world\\_report\\_2014/en/](https://www.who.int/mental_health/suicide-prevention/world_report_2014/en/)

## 23. APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Helpful resources

#### CRISIS AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

The following helplines provide emotional and crisis support for anyone affected by mental ill health:

**Samaritans**– Emotional support for people who are experiencing distress.

Phone: 116 123 (freephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

Web: [www.smaritans.org](http://www.smaritans.org)

**Saneline** - Mental health and emotional support for all including family, friends and carers.

Phone: 0300 304 7000 (Local call rates, 6pm-11pm, 7 days a week)

Web: [www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk)

**Liverpool Light**–Mental health crisis support

Phone: 07970 738 229

Address: Liverpool Light, 181 - 185 London Road, Liverpool. L3 8JG (Mon - Sun - 6pm - 1am)

**Accident & Emergency: The Royal Emergency Department**

Phone: 0151 706 2000

Address: Prescot Street, Liverpool, L7 8XP

#### SUICIDE PREVENTION

**Papyrus**- Suicide prevention charity that provides a dedicated suicide prevention hotline. HOPElineUK is available to anyone under the age of 35 or for those who are concerned about a young person.:

Phone: 0800 068 4141 (Freephone) Mon-Fri 10am-10pm, weekends 20m-10pm

Email: [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org)

Web: [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

**CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably)**– Charity which exists to prevent male suicide in the UK.

Phone: 0800 58 58 58

Email: [info@calmzone.net](mailto:info@calmzone.net)

Web: [www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

**Student Minds** – UK’s student mental health charity aimed to provide students with the skills, knowledge and confidence to talk about their mental health and to support peers.

Email: [info@studentminds.org.uk](mailto:info@studentminds.org.uk)

Web: [www.studentmionsds.org.uk](http://www.studentmionsds.org.uk)

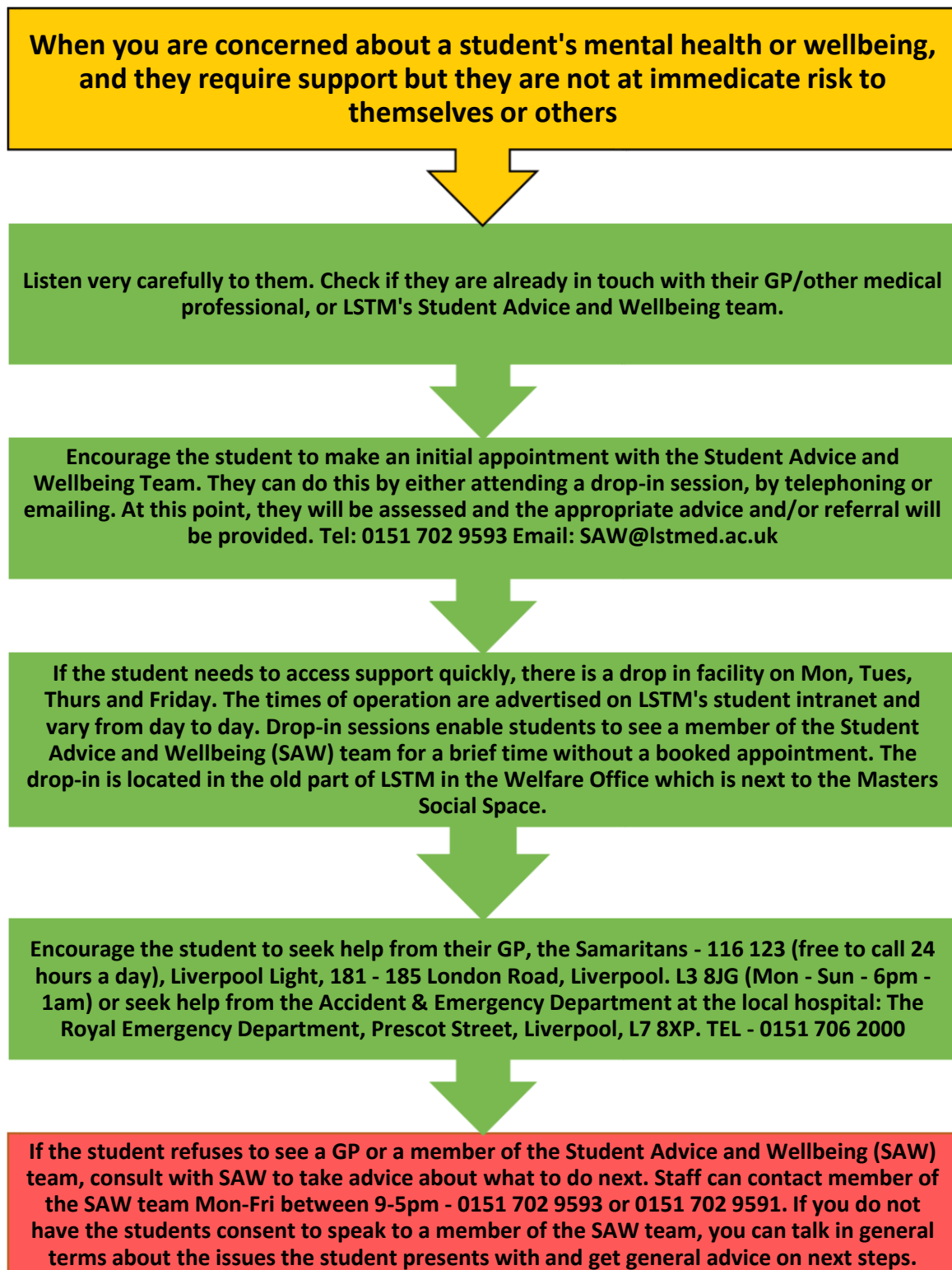
**Rethink Mental Illness**– Support, advice and information relating to mental illness.

Phone: 0121 522 7007

Email: [info@rethink.org](mailto:info@rethink.org)

Web: [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)

## Appendix 2: SUPPORTING STUDENTS EXPERIENCING MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES






### Appendix 3: URGENT OR CRISIS SITUATIONS

**If you become aware of a student who is at immediate risk of harming themselves or others, and - in your view - any delay would increase the risk.**



**If the risk is immediate, call emergency services on 999. Following this call, and once the correct emergency service has been identified (ambulance or police), inform security - 3187/ 0151 705 3177.  
For out of hours call 3187 or 07776 046307.**



**Wherever possible try and consult with The Student Welfare and Experience Manager to take advice about what to do - 0151 702 9593. If the Student Welfare and Experience Manager is not available the SAW team can be contacted - 0151 702 9591. If the incident occurs outside of working hours the Student Welfare and Experience Manager should be informed at the earliest opportunity to ensure appropriate follow up.**



**If you have referred someone to hospital let the Student Welfare and Experience Manager know as soon as possible as they will liaise with key contacts within LSTM, the hospital and NHS services on behalf of LSTM.**