

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Policy



Sai Tirupati University

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0		Issued for Implementation
Rev.	Date	Description
SAI TIRUPATI UNIVERSITY UDAIPUR		Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Policy



Sai Tirupati University , Udaipur (Rajasthan)

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Policy

1. Introduction

Sai Tirupati University is committed to providing a supportive, safe, and inclusive environment that nurtures the emotional, mental, and academic well-being of its students. As a multidisciplinary university with a strong focus on health sciences, STU recognizes mental health as an essential dimension of overall wellness. This policy is formulated to proactively address student mental health concerns, prevent suicides, and establish a structured support framework.

2. Objectives

- To promote awareness about mental health, emotional well-being, and suicide prevention.
- To establish proactive systems for early identification and intervention in cases of psychological distress.
- To ensure access to qualified mental health professionals and counselling services.
- To foster a stigma-free, empathetic campus culture.
- To develop a robust response and postvention mechanism for crisis situations.

3. Scope

This policy is applicable to all students, faculty members, and staff across all schools and departments of Sai Tirupati University, including Medical, Nursing, Pharmacy, Paramedical, Allied Health Sciences, Management, Computer Applications, Fashion Design, and Mass Communication. It encompasses mental health promotion, counselling services, suicide prevention, and emergency interventions.

4. Preventive Measures for Suicide

- Sensitization of faculty, hostel wardens, staff, and student leaders to recognize early warning signs.
- Establishment of trained student volunteers (Mental Health Ambassadors) to support peers.
- Alerts through attendance, academic decline, social withdrawal, or behavioural changes.
- Prominent visibility of the 24x7 national mental health helpline (KIRAN - 1800-599-0019) and university mental wellness contacts.
- Regular sessions, posters, webinars, and mental health week observances on suicide prevention.

5. Mental Health Support Systems

- Professional Counselling Services: Qualified psychologists available on campus or via empanelled agencies.
- Confidential Sessions: One-on-one and group counselling available on request.
- Mental Health Screening: Periodic assessments and surveys to identify students in need of help.
- Online Counselling: Virtual platforms for students in remote or clinical settings (e.g., internships, postings).
- Wellness Activities: Workshops on mindfulness, yoga, breathing techniques, resilience, and time management.

6. Crisis Management and Postvention

- **Crisis Response Cell (CRC):** Dedicated team trained to handle emergencies including attempted suicides and psychological breakdowns.
- **Emergency Protocol:** Defined action plan for handling crises in hostels, classrooms, clinics, or campuses.
- **Post-Crisis Support:** Psychological first aid, grief counselling, and peer debriefing for affected students and staff.
- **Incident Review:** Root cause analysis and reporting, maintaining confidentiality and sensitivity.

7. Implementation Mechanism



- **Nodal Officer (Mental Wellness):** Appointed by the Registrar to coordinate university-wide initiatives.
- **Mental Health Committee:** Constituted with representation from each school, including counsellors and student representatives.
- **Integration with Academic Calendar:** Scheduling of mental wellness programs aligned with exam stress periods, internships, and clinical duties.
- **Bridge Courses & Induction:** Inclusion of mental health modules in new student orientations and foundational programs.

8. Collaborations and Networking

- **Empanelled Experts:** MOUs with certified psychologists, psychiatrists, and mental health institutions.
- **Linkages with Hospitals:** Support from university-affiliated hospital psychiatrists and nursing staff for emergency cases.
- **NGO Partnerships:** Collaboration with NGOs working in mental health awareness and suicide prevention.

9. Confidentiality and Ethical Compliance

- **Strict Confidentiality:** All sessions, records, and interactions are private and protected.
- **Informed Consent:** No information shared without student consent, except in life-threatening situations.
- **Professional Ethics:** All mental health professionals to adhere to established national/international ethical codes.

10. Awareness, Education and Promotion

- **Mental Wellness Club – Manoshanti:** Active club promoting activities on emotional resilience and peer engagement.
- **Information Dissemination:** Use of university portal, email, WhatsApp groups, and social media for mental health awareness.
- **Observation Days:** World Mental Health Day, Suicide Prevention Day, and other global observances celebrated with activities.
- **Faculty & Staff Training:** Capacity building of teaching and non-teaching staff on mental health sensitivity.

11. Review and Evaluation

- **Feedback Mechanism:** Anonymous feedback collected post-counselling sessions and workshops.
- **Performance Indicators:** Number of sessions held, students served, awareness campaigns conducted, emergency responses.
- **Annual Review:** Policy reviewed annually by the Mental Health Committee and updated accordingly.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure effective implementation and monitoring of this policy, the following stakeholders have defined roles and responsibilities:

12.1 University Administration

- Ensure allocation of adequate budget and infrastructure for counselling and wellness services.
- Appoint a Nodal Officer for Mental Health and establish the Mental Health Committee.
- Approve and facilitate collaborations with external mental health professionals and organizations.
- Monitor policy implementation and ensure compliance with ethical and regulatory standards.
- Promote the inclusion of mental health awareness in institutional planning and governance.

12.2 Mental Health Committee (MHC)



- Plan, implement, and review the university's mental wellness initiatives.
- Coordinate awareness campaigns, training sessions, and wellness activities.
- Maintain confidentiality and ensure sensitive handling of all mental health-related matters.
- Monitor Early Warning System inputs and initiate appropriate interventions.
- Submit periodic reports to the IQAC/administration regarding mental health services and outcomes.

12.3 Nodal Officer (Mental Wellness)

- Serve as the primary point of contact for all mental health and suicide prevention activities.
- Liaise between students, counsellors, departments, and external service providers.
- Supervise the functioning of the Counselling Centre and maintain records.
- Escalate emergency cases to the Crisis Response Cell and follow up on interventions.

12.4 Faculty Members and Staff

- Attend mandatory sensitization/training programs on mental health and suicide prevention.
- Observe and report behavioural or emotional red flags through the Early Warning Mechanism.
- Provide academic and emotional support within professional boundaries.
- Encourage students to seek help and eliminate stigma associated with counselling.

12.5 Counsellors and Mental Health Professionals

- Provide professional, confidential, and empathetic counselling services to students.
- Conduct mental health assessments, therapy sessions, and group interventions.
- Refer students requiring specialized care to appropriate professionals or hospitals.
- Maintain accurate, confidential records and follow ethical standards of practice.

12.6 Students

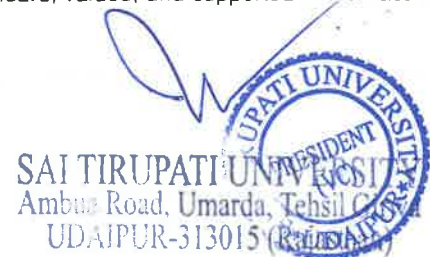
- Make responsible use of the counselling and wellness services provided by the university.
- Respect confidentiality and privacy of peers undergoing counselling.
- Actively participate in awareness programs, wellness workshops, and mental health events.
- Volunteer as Mental Health Ambassadors (where willing) to support peer-to-peer outreach.

12.7 Hostel Wardens and Student Welfare Staff

- Be vigilant and approachable for students showing signs of distress or isolation.
- Report crisis cases immediately to the Nodal Officer or Crisis Response Cell.
- Promote a culture of openness, inclusivity, and emotional support in hostels.

13. Conclusion

This policy reflects Sai Tirupati University's holistic approach towards higher education by prioritizing mental wellness and suicide prevention. Through inclusive awareness, professional counselling services, and crisis management protocols, STU strives to create a campus where every student feels heard, valued, and supported in their academic and personal journey.



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Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Support Initiatives at Pacific Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), Umarda, Udaipur, Rajasthan

Pacific Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), under Sai Tirupati University, Umarda, Udaipur, Rajasthan, has adopted a multi-layered, proactive, and inclusive approach to suicide prevention and mental health promotion. The Department of Psychiatry spearheads these initiatives, which integrate clinical, academic, and community-based strategies tailored for the diverse student population, faculty, and staff across its MBBS, Nursing, Physiotherapy, and allied health programs.

Mental Health Team and Infrastructure

PIMS is supported by a robust mental health workforce comprising **7 consultant psychiatrists, 1 senior resident, 6 junior residents, and 2 experienced clinical psychologists—Dr. Indrapal Salvi and Dr. Tejender Nath. Additionally, two trained student counselors, Ms. Anchal Dhabai and Ms. Charu Paliwal.** They provide ongoing psychological support to students.

The Department of Psychiatry is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities including Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) **Neuromodulation and advanced EEG-Neurofeedback services**, which are unique offerings in the region. These are used not only for clinical interventions but also for stress management and performance enhancement in students and staff.

Student Counselling Services and Helpline

PIMS has an operational *Student Counselling Service (SCS)* that provides confidential, empathetic, and structured support to students experiencing academic, emotional, interpersonal, or mental health-related challenges. The service is accessible through both in-person consultations and a 24x7 dedicated mental health **helpline number** (9587890118/9413732273), prominently displayed across campus facilities.

Early Identification and Screening Protocols

Recognizing the importance of early detection, all first-year students across undergraduate and postgraduate programs undergo psychological screening during their orientation phase. This includes evaluation for prior psychiatric history, adjustment difficulties, depressive and anxiety symptoms, or family stressors. Based on the outcomes, students are guided to appropriate interventions, including counselling, peer support, or clinical management as needed.

Sensitization and Capacity Building Programs

The Department of Psychiatry conducts regular mental health awareness and suicide prevention programs under the leadership of **Prof. Praveen Khairkar, MD, and Dr. Archish Khivasara, MD**, Assistant Professor. These sessions cover early warning signs of psychological distress, suicide risk, stress management techniques, and help-seeking behaviors. Target audiences include MBBS, Nursing, and Physiotherapy students, as well as interns, residents, and faculty members.

Multiple orientation programs and mental health sensitization workshops have been held in July 2024, November 2024 and April 2025 to foster a culture of openness and psychological safety on campus. Specific modules include training students in emotional regulation, handling academic stress, and seeking help without stigma.



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Observance of Mental Health Awareness Events

To foster a culture of mental health literacy and reduce stigma, PIMS actively organizes and celebrates major mental health observance days and awareness campaigns throughout the academic year. A dedicated **Mental Health Week**, spanning seven days, is celebrated annually and includes interactive workshops, poster exhibitions, student competitions, expert talks, and open mic sessions focused on stress management, resilience building, and suicide prevention. Special emphasis is given to **World Suicide Prevention Day**, **World Schizophrenia Day**, and **World Mental Health Day**, where awareness drives, outreach activities, and faculty-student interactive forums are conducted to enhance recognition of mental health issues among the campus community. These initiatives not only educate but also empower students and staff to seek timely help, support peers, and actively participate in creating a mentally healthy academic environment. These events are coordinated by the Department of Psychiatry in collaboration with student welfare and cultural committees, ensuring wide participation and engagement.

Training of Psychiatry Residents and Faculty Involvement

The MD Psychiatry residents at PIMS are trained in collaboration with **NIMHANS, Bengaluru**, one of India's premier mental health institutions. This enhances their competencies in suicide risk assessment, crisis intervention, and therapeutic communication, which they apply both in clinical settings and student support systems.

Additionally, faculty across the departments are sensitized to identify and respond to mental health concerns in students. Faculty advisors work closely with the counselling team to facilitate timely referral and support.

Peer Support and Community Engagement

A peer support framework is in development where trained senior students will provide basic psychological first aid and emotional support to their juniors. This is aligned with global best practices to reduce stigma and increase access to care.

The Department also collaborates with community psychiatry initiatives and observes key mental health awareness days to promote mental well-being and suicide prevention beyond the institution.

Commitment to Ongoing Mental Health Support

PIMS remains committed to fostering a psychologically safe environment, where mental health is treated with the same urgency and respect as physical health. With integrated clinical services, proactive screening, dedicated counselling teams, advanced neurotechnological interventions, and a trained faculty and student body, the institution stands as a regional model for holistic mental health promotion and suicide prevention in medical education settings.

Approved by
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