Campus Response to Student Behavioral Concerns: Three Levels of Care

Today’s Presenters
- Jeff Baker, Chief of Police & Public Safety
- Dr. Christine Reed Davis, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Dean of Students
- Jesh Humphrey, Vice Chancellor for Institutional Integrity and General Counsel
- Larry Gourdine, Associate Dean/Director of Student Assistance and Support Services
- Dr. Paula Keeton, Director of the Center for Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

Today’s Presentation
- Introduction of NinerCare
- Three tiers of interconnected care
- Resources utilized to assess behavior & provide support
- Legal and policy obligations
- Q&A
What is NinerCare?

- Campus network designed to bring together information in order to identify students of concern
- Allows UNC Charlotte staff to investigate and determine if an identified student poses a potential threat to self, others, or the larger UNC Charlotte community
- Helps to develop an objective, coordinated action plan to collect information, assist the needs of the student, and protect the University community
Tier 1: NinerCare Team

Composition of Team Members:

- Student Assistance and Support Services Office (Co-Chairs: Larry Gourdine and Katie Russo)
- Student Accountability & Conflict Resolution
- Title IX Office
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Housing and Residence Life
- Disability Services

PURPOSE

To meet weekly to review students of concern referrals to determine appropriate action and intervention as needed

BEHAVIOR OF CONCERN

Moderate risk to others AND Moderate-to-Severe risk to self
E.g.: Medical or mental health concerns; academic issues; housing/food insecurity; substance use; eating disorders; crisis situations

PLAN OF ACTION

Create an individualized action plan with the goal to mitigate risk of harm and to connect student to appropriate resources
Tier 2: Campus Behavioral Intervention Team (CBIT)

Composition of Team Members:
- Dean of Students or designee (Chair: James Lorello)
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Police and Public Safety
- Housing and Residence Life
- Disability Services
- Student Assistance and Support Services
- Graduate School
- Student Accountability & Conflict Resolution
- Legal Affairs (as counsel)
- Other University community members deemed relevant

PURPOSE
- Assesses concerning student behavior involving potential severe threat to self, others, broader campus community
- Engaged when previous attempts to mitigate a concerning student behavior persists or escalates; OR
- Engaged when student behavior is severe and requires broader review and assessment
- CBIT can make a recommendation to enact the Involuntary Protective Withdrawal (IPW) Policy
- If the IPW Policy is not recommended, CBIT will review/amend the actions plan or establish a behavioral contract for the student of concern

BEHAVIOR OF CONCERN
- Severe risk of harm to self and/or others
  - EX: Communicating threats to others; severe disruption to community; significant medical or mental health concerns

PLAN OF ACTION
- Review NinerCare Team action plan and determine if plan needs to be amended or continued to support the student
- Determine if a behavioral contract is necessary to mitigate the risk
- Recommends whether to enact the Involuntary Protection Withdrawal (IPW) policy

Role of CAPS staff in Niner Care and CBIT
- Serve as mental health consultant to the team
  - Help with understanding diagnoses and other psychological phenomena
- Suggest options for responding
  - Treatment for students of concern
  - Care and concern meetings
- Maintain ethical standards for treatment records
  - Do not disclose confidential information unless “imminent danger” standard is met or student gives written permission to do so.
  - Record information in CAPS records
  - If applicable, current CAPS clinician is informed for follow up
- What we cannot do
  - Predict the future
  - Guarantee outcomes
Tier 3: Threat Assessment Team (TAT)

Composition of Team Members:

- Police and Public Safety (Co-Chair: Jeff Baker)
- Dean of Students (Co-Chair: Christine Reed Davis)
- Counseling and Psychological Services
- Student Assistance and Support Services
- Student Accountability & Conflict Resolution
- Legal Affairs (as counsel)
- Other University community members deemed relevant

PURPOSE

- To further review and assess CBIT cases where the Involuntary Protective Withdrawal (IPW) Policy has been recommended
- TAT determines whether or not to enact the IPW Policy

CONCERNING BEHAVIOR

- Imminent risk of harm to self, others, or the broader campus community with intent to protect the student or campus community
- EX: Homicidal threats or actions, credible reports of weapons, significant repetitive harm to self

Plan of Action

- Involuntary Protection Withdrawal (IPW) policy enacted
- Further collection of information
- Communication with student regarding steps of IPW process

Structured Professional Judgement Guides (SPJs)

- Based on empirical knowledge & professional practice/experiences
- Assist in identification of key factors
- Risk screening and risk assessment
- Indirect vs. direct risk
- Not a substitute for judgement, experience, or collaboration of campus professionals
- Multiple SPJ guides utilized in practice:
  - NaBITA threat assessment tool
  - WAVR-21
  - State BETA Team Assessment
University Policy 406: Code of Student Responsibility
- Due process requirements
- Applicable to ALL students equally regardless of disability status

Legal Considerations
- FERPA
- Clinician-Client Confidentiality
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504

Intersection of Care and Policy/Legal Obligations


Involuntary Protective Withdrawal
- "A significant risk to the health or safety of others [or actual risk to their own safety]"
- University Policy 408: Student Involuntary Protective Withdrawal Policy
  - Emergency Interim Protective Withdrawal
  - Evaluation by mental health professional
  - Behavioral agreement
  - Hearing
  - Readmission
  - Self-harm situations
In Closing

- UNC Charlotte approaches behavioral concerns through a tiered system of care and interactions/interventions;
- Engaging cross-divisional partners is important in communicating and addressing behavioral concerns;
- Providing the campus community with consistent information about varying levels of concern and how/where to refer is key;
- Structured Professional Judgement guides are helpful references to assist in decision-making;
- Addressing behavioral concerns involves balancing care with legal and policy mandates.