

SOMETHING IS NOT QUITE RIGHT

Are you concerned about a student?

Is there a student you are concerned about? Are you worried about the changes you have observed with them lately but are not sure if there is a serious problem? Are you unsure about how to help?

Below are a range of behaviours that are likely indicators of a serious problem, as well as options for assistance for both you and the student you are concerned about.

Behaviours

- Significant withdrawal from family, friends and workmates.
- Deterioration in hygiene, sleep and eating habits.
- Uncharacteristic performance and/or attendance decline.
- Difficulty following conversations and remembering things.
- Talking about or writing things which don't make sense.
- Visible agitation, anxiety or depressed mood.
- Loss of variation in mood, emotionally 'flat' and expressionless.
- Incongruent emotional responses. (e.g. laughing when hearing something serious)
- Hearing voices and sounds no one else can hear.
- Believing, without reason, that others are plotting against, spying on or following them and have extreme fear of, or anger at, those people.
- Believing they are being harmed, or influenced to do things against their will-by television, internet, radio, aliens or the devil, for example.
- Believing they have special powers, for example that they are important religious leaders, politicians or scientists when this is not the case.
- Believing their thoughts are being interfered with or that they can influence the thoughts of others.
- Abusing drugs or alcohol.

How to get help

If the person is extremely disruptive, aggressive, uncooperative, or you think may be at risk of harming themselves or someone else call either;

- **The ACT Mental Health Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team on 1800 629 354**
- **Campus Security on 6201 2222 (ext. 2222 when calling from campus), or**
- **Police on 000**
- **Emergency Services**

In other situations you can

1. Encourage the student to book an appointment to see a Doctor or Counsellor at the Health and Counselling Service. The phone number to book an appointment is (02) 6201 2351
2. Call the Health and Counselling Service on 6201 2351, and ask to speak with a Doctor, Counsellor or Nurse for advice if you are unsure what to do.
3. Ring ahead for an appointment to see a professional at UC Health and Counselling.
4. Offer to go with the student to make or attend an appointment at the Health and Counselling Centre (very unwell people often appreciate and need extra support to access help).

In situations in which incidents or behaviours are potentially “critical incidents” (those which involve the death of a student, serious injury to or by a student, a threat to the life of a student, a threat by a student to the life of others or a major threat to property involving students) the Dean of Students, Michele Fleming must be contacted immediately on either 62015653 or 62015906.

Key Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

All university staff should respond to students with mental health difficulties in a non-discriminatory, non- stigmatising, respectful, private and positive manner.

All staff should be aware of their professional limitations and own personal safety. To access advice and support in relation to a student with mental health difficulties they should contact the University of Canberra Health and Counselling Centre. If the Health Centre is closed, or a staff member is not available, contact the Crisis Assessment Triage Team (CATT) on 1800 629 354.

If someone appears to be in immediate danger of seriously harming themselves or others, staff should call Security on 6201 2222 and Emergency Services on 000, and should refer to the University’s Critical Student Incident Management Procedures.

Under no circumstances should a member of staff accompany a student manifesting symptoms of serious disturbance off-campus, e.g. to Accident and Emergency Department of the local Hospital. The Police and or Crisis Assessment Triage Team often facilitate this process.