

# IDENTIFYING AND RESPONDING TO STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

Use this tool to determine whether a student is in distress and next steps for CRITICAL EMERGENCY, POTENTIALLY URGENT, or NON-URGENT situations.

## STAY CONNECTED

No immediate action is required. Monitor the situation.

NO

## IS THE STUDENT IN DISTRESS?

- Have they reported significant problems or stressors to you?
- Have you noticed signs of distress?
  - increased levels of anxiety, irritability, or sadness,
  - declining classroom attendance or participation, decreased quality of academic work,
  - concerning changes in personal hygiene or appearance,
  - significant behaviour or mood changes.
- Have others expressed concerns to you about this student?

## DETERMINE THE TYPE OF SITUATION

YES

### CRITICAL EMERGENCY

#### THEIR BEHAVIOUR IS:

- threatening to harm themselves or others,
- highly disruptive,
- incoherent or uncontrollable,
- directly or indirectly referencing suicide.

### CRITICAL EMERGENCY ACTIONS:

- On-campus: call 519-888-4911.
- Off-campus: call 911.
- Inform someone in your department and request a debrief if needed.

### POTENTIALLY URGENT

#### THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR:

- you have not heard from the student despite numerous check-ins,
- concerning changes in personal hygiene or appearance,
- significant behaviour or mood changes.

### POTENTIALLY URGENT ACTIONS:

- Schedule a support and consultation meeting with the Campus Wellness, counselling services team at 519-888-4096.
- If you are unable to call, please email [counselling@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:counselling@uwaterloo.ca).

### NON-URGENT

### NON-URGENT ACTIONS:

- Listen, show concern, and be non-judgmental.
- Ask questions to determine which information or referral would be helpful.
- If the student is unwilling to accept a referral respect the decision, and encourage them to stay in contact with you.
- Provide Campus Wellness contact information: call 519-888-4096 - press 1 for health services and 2 for counselling services.

### DURING YOUR SCHEDULED CONSULTATION, THE FOLLOWING MAY OCCUR:

- The counsellor will create a plan with you to support follow-up with the student, recognizing the confines of your role.
- The counsellor may contact the student directly in addition to your follow-up to further assess and provide resources and support.
- You may be directed to contact Special Constable Services at 519-888-4911 (if the student is on campus) or the Waterloo Regional Police Services non-emergency number at 519-653-7700 to share your first-hand information.

## AFTER HOURS SUPPORT

Call Special Constable Services at 519-888-4911 to be connected to IMPACT. Or refer students to Good2Talk, the 24/7 Post-Secondary Student Helpline, at 1-866-925-5454. Or call EmpowerMe, at 1-844-437-3247.

