UNIVERSITY WELLBEING CENTRE PROTOCOL

Applicability: Students and employees of NTU

Definitions:
1. **Clients** refer to students and employees of NTU.

2. **Student** refers to any person who is currently enrolled in a part-time or full-time programme of study at NTU.

3. **Employee** refers to a staff who is currently employed on a part-time or full-time basis by NTU.

4. **Counselling** refers to an interactive learning process of addressing students’ intimate concerns, issues or behaviours facilitated by a professionally-trained counsellor within a private and confidential setting.

5. The **Duty of Care** refers to the ethical framework and principles that govern professional counsellors’ conduct in the provision of reasonable standard of care to clients. The ethical framework and principles are spelt out by the Singapore Association for Counselling’s Code of Ethics (http://www.sac-counsel.org.sg/code-of-ethics/).

6. The **University Code of Conduct on Access to Confidential and Proprietary Information** stipulates that community members should treat such information with due respect for its sensitivity or confidentiality in compliance with all applicable laws and agreements and the University’s policies and principles on the use, protection and disclosure of such information.

7. **Limits to Confidentiality** refer to the exceptions that make it necessary for the Counsellor to disclose certain information. However, the scope of the disclosure is within the premise of Duty of Care and only allows disclosure of what is necessary.

8. The **Duty to Warn** is part of the ethical framework of Limits to Confidentiality which refer to the exceptions that make it necessary for the counsellor to disclose certain information. However, the scope of the disclosure is within the premise of Duty of Care, and only allows disclosure of what is necessary. Attention is drawn to Point 7 of Section B: Counselling Relationship from the Singapore Association for Counselling’s Code of Ethics (http://www.sac-counsel.org.sg/code-of-ethics/).

9. **At-Risk Behaviour** refers to behaviour or action that poses an imminent risk to personal safety, property, members of the University community or the community at large.
10. **Case Discussion** refers to a private meeting among relevant stakeholders (e.g. members of the University community or the client’s next-of-kin) to discuss an emergency or at-risk case within a confidential setting.

11. **Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA)** refers to the data protection law that comprises various rules governing the collection, use, disclosure and care of personal data. It recognises both the rights of individuals to protect their personal data, including rights of access and correction, and the needs of organisations to collect, use or disclose personal data for legitimate and reasonable purposes.

**Owner:** Head, University Wellbeing Centre

**Approved by:** Associate Provost (Student Life)
CPLO/ Registrar

**Issued:** 18 July 2016

**Last Updated:**

1. UWC provides professional counselling services at no charge to all students and employees of NTU.

2. Counselling services are usually provided to consenting clients, with the following exceptions:
   a. The client is referred by a member of the University community or relevant authority (e.g. enforcement agency) over concerns for the client’s wellbeing that may arise from psychological or disciplinary issue
   b. The client exhibits signs and symptoms that adversely affect the client’s physical or mental state of health, and immediate professional (including medical) care is needed

3. To ensure optimal use of manpower resources, UWC’s counselling services are not available to:
   a. Alumni or former employees of NTU
   b. Members of the public

4. To ensure appropriate use of counselling services, UWC’s counselling services do not extend to:
   a. Contacting a client without his/her prior consent as this contravene the PDPA
   b. Participating in an inquiry, investigation or disciplinary hearing
   c. Providing assessment of a client’s psychological state of health due to possible conflict of interest
   d. Supporting a client’s application, appeal or cause (e.g. housing or employment-related matters)
e. Intervening in a potentially risky situation where an aggressive or violent person may cause bodily harm to the UWC staff
f. Using counselling primarily as a form of discipline or punitive measure to change a person’s behaviour or belief

5. In accordance with the University Code of Conduct on Access to Confidential and Proprietary Information and the Personal Data Protection Act, a client’s counselling record or visit to the UWC is treated as confidential information. UWC shall not disclose such information, with the following exceptions:
   a. There is sufficient ground or assessment of at-risk behaviour
   b. There is possible liability of a civil and/or criminal offence if the information is not disclosed
   c. The information is needed to manage or intervene in a critical incident (e.g. a student is hospitalised) or an incident that involves criminal or disciplinary behaviour
   d. The information is needed by relevant authorities (e.g. the Board of Discipline or enforcement agency) that may be used as extenuating circumstances or to aid in an official investigation

6. In the above-mentioned exceptional cases, disclosure of information shall be within the parameters of ‘Duty of Care’, which allows disclosure only of what is necessary, and is subject to the approval of the Head, UWC.

7. UWC may exercise the ‘Duty to Warn’ if the client presents at-risk behaviour during the counselling session or meeting. The client shall be informed of the Limits to Confidentiality, where possible.

8. UWC may convene a case discussion with relevant members of the UWC counselling team and/or the University community and/or the stakeholders (e.g. client’s next-of-kin or caregiver) in order to better support a client in an emergency or at-risk situation.

9. UWC regards all manual and electronic versions of clients’ records, case files and notes, and statistical data with strict confidentiality, in accordance with the University Code of Conduct on Access to Confidential and Proprietary Information and the Personal Data Protection Act.

10. UWC reserves the right to refuse its services to faculty, staff, students or visitors who are physically or verbally abusive toward the staff of UWC or pose a safety risk.

For clarification on this protocol, please contact:

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<th>Name</th>
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