

Pastoral Care Documents

Support for Students: Guidelines and FAQs for Staff:

The Student Support Advisors (SSA's) are the first point of contact for students and staff for many situations where a student requires support (refer to contact list at the end of this document).

It can be complicated to know what to do or who to inform if you identify a student in need of support, and so these guidelines and FAQs have been created. If you could please follow the guidelines where possible, it will help to solidify these support pathways. This will hopefully minimise the likelihood of multiple staff members having the same conversation with a student, students being unsure about whom to approach, students missing the deadline for an aegrotat, or privacy issues regarding sharing of students' personal information.

You may also find some useful information in the other Pastoral Care Documents in the wellbeing section of the MBChB portal

<https://wiki.auckland.ac.nz/display/MBChB/MBChB+Portal> (e.g., The *where to get HELP* Flow Charts; *Supporting Students in Distress*; *Student Support Guidelines/FAQs for Students* and the *CALM website*).

Polite Reminders:

- As well as following the guidelines below, please alert the relevant Student Support Advisor if there are any issues (academic, pastoral, or health) with a MAPAS, International or repeating student.
- Be aware about how much information about a student you share with other staff members (both electronically and verbally). Please do not use 'reply to all' with e-mail, and do not forward on an e-mail trail unless it contains crucial information for that particular person. Even in those rare occasions when it may be necessary to forward on the email trail, please edit it appropriately so that only the required, excerpted information is forwarded. Please ensure that any academic or professional staff who need to know about a student's personal circumstances have been reminded to protect the student's confidentiality.
- Please avoid any sort of 'diagnosis' of a student – outside of an emergency.
- In an emergency, please utilise appropriate resources, e.g. Crisis Team, Police etc.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

QU: I think that this student is struggling academically. What do I do?

- ANSWER: Talk with the student about it as early as possible. Depending on the underlying issue/problem, there may be some local resources you can use, and if you are based in an Out-of-Auckland site, then you/the student may wish to contact your local Academic Head or Manager. Also all students from the Medical Programme may themselves contact their Student Support

Advisor. Student Support Advisors have a triage, advice and referral role, and are aware of a range of support services. After talking with the student, they may decide for instance, to refer them to Learning Support Services, the Clinical Medical Education Fellows, the Health and Counselling service or GP. They can also ensure the Phase Director is aware of the student's situation and can offer additional assistance.

QU: What do I do if I noticed that a student on my ward appears to be unwell? (e.g. looking physically unwell, overly anxious during teaching, looking depressed/disengaged).

- A: First talk to the student privately and express your concerns. "*I noticed that... and I wondered if...*". If you are concerned that the student's health may be affecting their ability to do what is expected of them by the Medical Programme, then you may wish to tell the student this concern. Depending on the student's response, you may wish to suggest that they book in to see their local GP or counsellor (all details of these are provided in the 'where to get HELP' flow charts on the portal). Document your conversation in an email to their Phase Director. If the problem continues, then let the student know that you are still concerned, and that you will talk with a colleague. If you are not a University staff member, then please contact your attachment coordinator or site manager in the first instance, or your HOD. If you are a University staff member based in Auckland, please contact the Phase Director. If you are a University staff member based Out-of-Auckland, please contact your relevant clinical campus/site academic head or manager and notify the Phase Director. (NB: If the initial chat with the student does not result in the needed improvement, the Phase Director/Year Coordinator should be notified ASAP. At this point, it may well become a health-related FtP, which can be managed via them. If there is an ongoing health issue, then the Phase Director must please be informed, and they can then alert the Director of Student Affairs – DMSA, and relevant Student Support Advisor if appropriate.)

QU: What do I do if I notice that a student is psychologically very unwell, and I am concerned for their safety?

- ANSWER: Contact the local crisis team. Then if you are based in Auckland, please contact the Phase Director. If you are based Out-of-Auckland, please contact your relevant clinical campus/site academic head or manager, and contact the Phase Director (who will then alert the Director of Student Affairs – DMSA, and relevant Student Support Advisor if appropriate).

QU: What do I do if a student is unwell, and an assignment is due, or they are just about to undergo an assessment?

- ANSWER: Advise the student to get medical help from their provider (details in *where to get HELP*), and to contact the clinical supervisor/module convenor and the Medical Programme Directorate about seeking an extension. Also advise the student to look up the details about applying for an aegrotat (details in *where to get HELP*). **The student needs to apply for the aegrotat within 7 days of the assessment.**

QU: What do I do if a student has on-going family issues which are impacting on their ability to do their Medical Programme work?

- ANSWER: First talk to the student privately and express your concerns. "*I noticed that... and I wondered if...*". If you are concerned that the student's family circumstances may be affecting their ability to do what is expected of them by the Medical Programme, then you may wish to tell the student that. Advise the student to consider submitting an Aegrotat or Compassionate Consideration. Document your conversation in an email to their Phase Director. If the problem continues, then let the student know that you are still concerned, and that you will talk with a colleague. If you are not a University staff member, then please contact your HOD. If you are a University staff member based in Auckland, please contact the Phase Director. If you are a University staff member based Out-of-Auckland, please contact your relevant clinical campus/site academic head or manager, and notify the Phase Director. If there is an ongoing family issue, then the Phase Director does need to be informed, and they will then alert the Director of Student Affairs and Student Support Advisor if appropriate. Ideally, the Phase Director should be informed before academic grades are affected so that assistance can be provided. However if the student's grades are affected, then the Phase Director needs to be informed, so they can speak to this at the Board of Examiners).

QU: *What do I do if a student has a family crisis or has ongoing family issues, and an assignment is due, or they are just about to undergo assessment?*

- ANSWER: Advise the student to contact the clinical supervisor/module convenor and the MPD. Also advise the student to look up the details about applying for Compassionate Consideration (C.C. - details in *where to get HELP on the portal*). The student needs to apply for C.C. within 7 days of the test.

QU: *What do I do if a student has a health issue or difficult family circumstance, but it is not affecting their ability to do their Medical Programme work?*

- ANSWER: If a student is achieving as expected academically and there is no academic issue or Fitness to Practice issue, then there is no need for the Phase Director or DMSA to be informed. You may wish to alert the student to local support services if you are aware of them – or advise them to contact their Student Support Advisor (SSA) who can advise them about additional support services.

QU: *What do I do if a student approaches me for support, and I am unsure about where to tell them to access help for that particular problem?*

- ANSWER: Either you or the student can contact their Student Support Advisor (SSA). The SSAs has a triage, advice and referral role, and are aware of a range of support services.

QU: *What do I do if a student tells me that they have been 'bullied' by another staff member?*

- ANSWER: Document the student's concerns carefully – outlining the specific behaviour that occurred, the dates, the people involved, and the action you took. Inform the student that there are complaints processes available to them if they wish, and document that you have said this. Talk to the Phase Director. If the student is adamant that they wish to remain anonymous, you may need to talk with the Phase Director about the situation whilst withholding the student's name.

If you are a DHB non-University staff member, please tell your HoD, who will talk to the Phase Director on your behalf.

QU: *This student has behaved unprofessionally or has failed to do what is expected of them. I am unsure if this is due to health, conduct or competence. What should I do?*

- ANSWER: Talk with the student about your concerns and file a Fitness to Practice report about their behaviour. This may be obtained from the Medical Programme Directorate (mpd@auckland.ac.nz). This will allow the Phase Director to talk with the student further, and explore the issues. It will also provide the Phase Director and the programme with a longitudinal view, if there is a pattern of repeat behaviour. Please note that Fitness to Practice reports can be filed for health-related issues; in other words, even if the situation was caused by a health concern, but it led to unprofessional behaviour, the FtP report should still be filed.

NB: DMSA ROLE:

Please note, the Directors of Medical Student Affairs (DMSA's) provide advocacy for students at the Board of Examiners and Fitness to Practice Committees. They are also made aware (by the Phase Directors, MAPAS Student Support Advisor, or FHMS Student Support Advisor) of any student who has ongoing health issues which are impacting/could impact on their ability to interact safely and professionally with patients or achieve academically. All students sign a health disclosure form at the start of each year, and they are required to confidentially provide the DMSA details about any such health conditions. The DMSAs also talk with all students yearly at orientation, with any students who wish to defer (apart from those deferring for BMedSc(Hons)), and will meet with students who are re-considering their career and thinking about leaving the Medical Programme, who want to talk confidentially with a doctor from the Medical Programme about this. They conduct re-entry interviews with students when they wish to re-join the programme; and sit on scholarship committees that provide assistance to students in financial hardship.

Unfortunately, the DMSAs do not have the capacity to be a first point of contact for students (for instance students who are feeling stressed) or for clinical staff or managers who have concerns about a student. If appropriate, students will be referred to the DMSA via Health and Counselling service, the Student Support Advisors, MAPAS, The Phase Directors, the Clinical Medical Education Fellows or the Board of Examiners.

Role	Person	Contact Details
Student Support Advisor for Domestic and International Students	Daniel Heke	(09) 923 7071 fmhssupport@auckland.ac.nz
Student Support Advisor for MAPAS Students (Phase 1)	Akanesi Moala	0800 20 20 99 option: 3 021 879 565 a.moala@auckland.ac.nz
Student Support Advisor for MAPAS Students (Phase 2 & 3)	Akanesi Moala	0800 20 20 99 option: 3 021 879 565 a.moala@auckland.ac.nz
Directors of Medical Student Affairs	Dr Emme Chacko Dr Ben Ling	Director.medstudentaffairs@auckland.ac.nz

Please note: MAPAS Student Support Advisors should be the first point of contact if you have any concerns (academic, pastoral, and health) regarding any MAPAS students.