If I call SHCS for help - what should I expect?

Yes. You can reach us by phone or email. Call SHCS (415.476.1281) and tell the staff person that you would like to consult with one of the mental health providers about a student.

You may contact your school's assigned Mental Health Liaison. This counselor will consult with you on your concerns and provide you with information about what SHCS can offer and how to best assist the student.

Postdocs are not eligible for SHCS service, but they may receive services at no cost from the Faculty Staff Assistance Program (FSAP).

There are several factors that contribute to a student connecting smoothly with a counselor outside SHCS. If you don't know where to start, the following suggestions may help:

- **Conduct an online screening**: Refer the student to the Interactive Stress & Depression Screening questionnaire for more information and a list of campus resources.
- **Offer informal support**: Sometimes it is hard to know what to say when speaking to a student for whom you have concerns. You might fear that if you bring up the topic, you will scare them off or embarrass them. But, giving the student room to talk and directing them to appropriate resources can be of great help.
- **Identify a counselor**: Visit the SHCS website to identify your school's assigned Mental Health Liaison. You may also contact SHCS and let us know the student needs further assistance with finding an outside counselor and we can provide you with more information.
- **Secure messaging through the SHCS EMR portal**: Secure messaging through the SHCS EMR portal is a good option to contact the counselor.
- **Contact FSAP**: Contact the Office of the Day for any questions related to FSAP. Postdocs also have health insurance that will provide for mental health counseling on an on-going basis if needed.

Remember, being supportive involves offering encouragement and hope. Sometimes people may not be ready to talk about their concerns, but offering your availability and letting them know you are there for them can be very helpful.

**Confidentiality**: Services at SHCS are confidential. However, in cases of imminent danger, students are required to sign a consent form that allows SHCS to discuss their case with anyone they believe is necessary to keep the student safe. This is an online screening tool which allows students to receive anonymous and personalized online support and feedback. Throughout this process, although some ultimately will choose to reveal their identity and seek additional services, those who choose not to will be supported and their privacy respected.

**Counseling records**: Counseling records are maintained separately from student's primary care records in the SHCS electronic medical record and the UCSF Medical Center EMR. All records are in completely separate EMRs and only SHCS staff has access to the SHCS EMR. Counseling records are protected under federal law and information cannot be released without the student’s written consent except in certain limited legal and ethical situations.

**Emergency**: If your concern for the student is so urgent it cannot wait until SHCS is open, you may need to call 911 or walk the student to the nearest emergency room. SHCS Health Consult line providers have information about where to refer students locally in the case of a true emergency.

**Anonymous services**: Yes. Students can reach out for support and remain anonymous. The student may complete the Interactive Stress & Depression Screening questionnaire for more information and a list of campus resources.

**SECURITY**: The See-Say-Do Guide can also help you locate resources and contact that counselor directly.

Let the student know that SHCS will help them find a counselor outside SHCS. If the first attempt didn’t work out, the counselor can provide recommendations or support. Secure messaging through the SHCS EMR portal is a good option to contact the counselor.

The staff person will direct your request to one of the mental health providers and they will get back to you as soon as possible.