

Emergency Support Function (ESF) 8a – Mental Health

Coordinating Department

Wellness Center – Counseling Services

Supporting Departments

Department of Public Safety, Office of the Dean of Students, Trauma Health and Hazards Center, Disabilities Services, Wellness Center – Health Services

Supporting Outside Agencies

Mental Health Resources for Critical Incidents, Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response (a division of Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment), Aspen Pointe, network of licensed community mental health providers.

Section I: Function Activation

Scope

The scope of this annex is to describe the general preparedness and response roles and capabilities of UCCS mental health assets and external support organizations and individuals in the event of an emergency involving mental health concerns or a large scale community crisis involving members of the campus community.

Concept of Operations

A. General

1. In an incident, a request for advice or assistance concerning mental health may be originated by the Incident Commander (IC) or, if activated, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Campus assets may be supplemented or overseen by additional support requested by either UCCS or a government agency.
2. All mental health assets will coordinate response activities with the EOC or Incident Command Post (ICP) as directed, and the EOC or ICP will have authority of final decision in all matters pertaining to the incident. A mental health representative may be requested to respond to the EOC or ICP.

B. Specific

1. Response

- a) The Wellness Center – Counseling Services currently (2016) has a staff of seven full-time staff psychologists, and eight to twelve part-time clinical trainees at any given time. As such, the staff is near or at their maximum patient load during the conduct of routine business and their capacity to handle additional critical incidence-related work load may be limited.

- b) In the event of an emergency or incident requiring mental health assets during the response phase, the Wellness Center – Counseling Services will shift its focus to include incident needs assessment, coordination of available internal and external mental health services, and appropriate referrals, in addition to patient care.
- c) Depending on the nature and the magnitude of the incident, Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response may take the lead for response; in which case Wellness Center – Counseling Services will take on primarily a service coordination and support role, to help assist their operations.
- d) An incident or emergency will more than likely affect faculty and staff in addition to the students the Wellness Center – Counseling Services serves. The Wellness Center – Counseling Services cannot counsel non-students for long term; however, they may provide an initial emergency/crisis intervention and referral to the University of Colorado’s Employee Assistance Program, and other relevant community services and resources.

2. Recovery

- a) The Wellness Center – Counseling Services role in post-incident recovery is envisioned to primarily entail providing post-trauma treatment for students as much as resources allow and follow-up monitoring of patient care and referrals to internal and external agencies and mental health care providers.
- b) Follow-up monitoring can only be accomplished only if the patient gives the referring provider permission to disclose their records to the Wellness Center – Counseling Services. Records will be maintained by the providers giving services to the patient.
- c) The Wellness Center – Counseling Services can provide training and information to students, faculty and staff to allow them to be alert to possible mental health issues following an emergency or significant incident.

Section II: Pre-Event Coordination and Planning Responsibilities

Coordinating Department

Wellness Center – Counseling Services

A. Mitigation

- 1. Respond to routine mental health counseling requirements on campus to avert future mental-health related issues that may pose a risk for safety of individuals in the UCCS community.

2. Provide emergency interventions and consultations based on self-referrals, student peer referrals, requests from the Student Response Team (SRT) and other departments/individuals with significant student contact.
3. Educate the campus community in mental health crisis prevention, recognition, and available resources.

B. Preparedness

1. Participate as a core member of the SRT.
2. Participate in campus emergency preparedness activities, including but not limited to: the Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee (EPAC), Floor Emergency Coordinator trainings, etc.
3. Maintain an ability to provide on-call counseling, intervention, or referral services as requested.

Supporting Departments

Department of Public Safety

- A. Help establish an environment where necessary on-campus services can be safely provided
- B. Assist in securing and transportation of individuals who may pose a safety risk to themselves or others
- C. Contribute to the campus coordination of services and procedures as they may overlap with the duties and responsibilities of the Department of Public Safety

Dean of Students Office

- A. Assist in the needs assessment and coordination of services within the response phase, by providing relevant academic and/or student conduct related information for individuals
- B. Contribute to the campus coordination of services and procedures as they may overlap with the duties and responsibilities of the Dean of Students office

Trauma Health and Hazards Center

- A. Partner with Wellness Center – Counseling Services to ensure a comprehensive needs assessment, coordination of services and provide additional clinical staff to support emergency/crisis intervention operations.

Disabilities Services

- A. Advise on special populations needs in the event of an emergency or incident on campus.
- B. Provide resources to those with mental health disabilities in coordination with the Wellness Center – Counseling Services.

Wellness Center – Health Services

- A. Refer those medical patients possibly requiring counseling to the Wellness Center – Counseling Services.

Supporting Outside Agencies and Facilities

Mental Health Resources for Critical Incidents

- A. Provide mental health care as delineated in the City of Colorado Springs Emergency Operations Plan in coordination with the Wellness Center – Counseling Services.

Aspen Pointe

- A. Provide mental health care as delineated in the City of Colorado Springs Emergency Operations Plan in coordination with the Wellness Center – Counseling Services.

Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response

- A. Provide mental health care as delineated by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Plan in coordination with the Wellness Center – Counseling Services.

Network of Licensed Community Mental Health Providers

- A. Function as a referral resource should the demand of services surpasses the resources available to respond through the other internal and external departments/agencies.