



The Mental Health Continuum of Care and Related Legal Issues in The State University System of Florida

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Introduction

- **April 30, 2007 - The Gubernatorial Task Force for University Campus Safety.**
- **May 2007 - Survey of Public and Private Institutions in Florida.**
- **June 2007 - Mental Health Issues Subcommittee of the Student Affairs Committee.**
- **September 2007 - Follow-Up Survey of SUS Institutions.**



Summary of Relevant Federal and State Laws

- **FERPA**
 - Exceptions include the protection of health or safety of the student or others.
- **Florida FERPA Statute**
 - Provides the same general rights and protections, but differs in some aspects.
- **HIPAA**
 - Permits disclosure of protected health information if it would prevent or lessen the risk of a serious or imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public.
- **State Law**
 - Permits disclosure of information when a patient has made an actual threat to harm an identifiable victim or victims.



Current Practices

University Administrative Structures, Staffing, Training, and Resource Availability

- Administration.
- Student-to-Counselor Ratios.
- Urgent Cases and Non-Urgent Cases.
- Mental Health Training for Student and Professional Residential Housing Staff.
- Mental Health Training for Campus Law Enforcement Personnel, Faculty, & Student Affairs Staff.



Current Practices

Funding

- Institutions fund their health centers, personnel, and services primarily through different combinations of educational and general (E & G) funds and student health fees.
- The ability to increase student health fees is limited by a statutory fee cap.



Current Practices

Services/Programming

- Education and Prevention.
- Intervention.
- Treatment and Aftercare.



Current Practices

Communication and Information Sharing

- **Across Intra-Institutional Lines.**
 - Multidisciplinary behavioral and crisis management teams.
 - Merits of establishing a centralized reporting system.
- **Across Inter-Institutional Lines.**
 - Confidential information is provided only with signed release.
 - Limited ability to share information under FERPA.
- **Across Community Lines.**
 - Active referrals to community agencies where appropriate.
 - Confidential information is provided only with signed release.



Promising Practices

Some examples include:

- Multidisciplinary response teams and Behavior Consultation and Assessment Teams.
- Peer training programs such as Active Minds.
- Establishing a 24/7 hotline for assistance with mental health issues.
- Including Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for university police departments.
- Maintenance of emergency contact information for each student.



Recommendations

- Promising Practices.
- Multidisciplinary Behavioral Consultation and Crisis Management Teams and Centralized Reporting Systems.
- Funding and Fee Cap.
- Guidance Regarding the Sharing of Information From Education Records Across Institutions.
- Florida FERPA and Federal FERPA.

