THE CARE TEAM
OUR MISSION

“Create solutions for healthier communities by assisting in protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the students and members of the UNT Health Science Center community.”

FOSTER STUDENT SUCCESS

The CARE Team provides a comprehensive response to students whose behavior is disruptive to themselves or the educational environment, or may be in violation of the UNT Health Science Center Student Code of Conduct & Discipline.

When a student’s behavior appears distressed and/or goes beyond the normal classroom disturbances, you can contact the CARE Team for assistance. The team will evaluate the circumstances and determine the appropriate plan of action for the student.

The CARE Team is one of several resources available to the campus community to assist in supporting students of concern.

Other offices with similar purposes include the Office of Student Affairs, Center for Academic Performance, and the UNT Health Science Center Police Department.
OVERVIEW

UNTHSC cares about its students’ success, not only academically, but emotionally and physically as well. Because of that commitment, we provide services across campus that respond to our students’ unique needs. But sometimes, students do not ask for help when they need it. The UNTHSC CARE Team receives referrals and supports students experiencing personal, emotional, or medical concerns and is made up of representatives from various departments on campus so that a well-rounded, holistic support system is in place. The CARE Team serves as a centralized reporting source for any campus community member (students, faculty, staff, students, parents, etc.) who is concerned about a student and would like assistance.

Through the creation of a collaborative interdisciplinary team, the University will provide a caring, confidential program of identification, intervention and response in order to provide students with the greatest chance for success and the university community with the greatest level of protection.

We created this information to accomplish the following:

• Educate you about the CARE Team and how it works.
• Provide you with information and tips about how to deal with incidents you may encounter.
• Provide additional resources on our campus and in our community.

If you have any questions or concerns about the CARE Team, contact the CARE Team at (817) 735-2740 or CARETeam@unthsc.edu. If you would like to report an incident or notify the CARE Team about a student of concern, utilize the CARE Team reporting form www.unthsc.edu/studentofconcern.
Who to Refer

As a friend, parent, or member of the faculty or staff, you see students on a regular basis and play an incredibly important role in identifying students who might need help. If you notice that a student is exhibiting any of the following academic, physical or emotional indicators, or you just have a “gut-feeling” that something is wrong, make a referral to the CARE Team.

Academic Indicators

- Excessive procrastination and poorly prepared work, especially if this is not typical of the student’s performance.
- Missing assignments or exams.
- Multiple absences or excessive tardiness.
- Decline in interest or enthusiasm.
- Inability to follow instructions or tasks, despite attempts to clarify/encourage.
- Repeated requests for special consideration (e.g. deadline extensions).
- Dependence on professor/tutor that is beyond what is usual for a student needing assistance in your class.

Emotional Indicators

- Extreme or prolonged display of emotion (e.g., sadness, nervousness, fearfulness, etc.).
- Change in personality (e.g., more outgoing or more withdrawn than usual).
- Difficulty connecting with others.
- Difficulty dealing with a personal life event (e.g., death in family, relationship break-up).
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, isolation or worthlessness; including thoughts or mention of suicide, self-harm or reference to death and dying.
- Displays of irritability, anger, hostility.
- Mention of dealing with a mental health diagnosis, substance abuse, eating disorder, etc.
- Strange or bizarre behavior that is clearly inappropriate to the situation.

Physical Indicators

- Chronic fatigue or falling asleep at inappropriate times.
- Marked change in personal hygiene or appearance.
- Noticeable or dramatic change in energy level.
- Dramatic weight loss or weight gain.
- Impaired speech or confused, disjointed thoughts.
- Noticeable signs of self-harm on student.
What about FERPA?

Case management, although supportive and personal, is not the same as psychotherapy; therefore, confidentiality guidelines are different. The CARE Team operates within the confidentiality rules outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Without a FERPA release provided by the student, the CARE Team cannot share educational records with a parent, or anyone outside of the University, unless there is concern for the health and safety of the student.

FERPA permits communication about a student of concern under the following circumstances:

• UNTHSC may disclose personal identifiable information from an “educational record” to appropriate individuals in a health and safety emergency. Information may be released to emergency contacts, police or others, if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or others.
• Information can be shared with University personnel when there is a specific need to know.
• When sharing information with other staff or faculty, the CARE Team will only share information based on specific academic need to know and always works to respect the privacy of the student.

What can you do to help?

• Stay calm.
• Talk to the student in private if you feel comfortable and safe doing so.
• Express your concern in non-judgmental terms.
• Listen to the student and paraphrase what the student is saying.
• Identify options available to the student.
• Clarify the costs and benefits of each option while solution building from the student’s perspective.
• Respect the student’s value system.
• Ask if the student is considering suicide or self-harm.
• Make appropriate referrals.
• Help the student understand that action is necessary.
• Speak clearly and clarify expectations.
• Call the UNTHSC Police Department (on-campus) or 911 (off-campus) if there is an immediate risk of harm to self or others.
Responding to suicidal concerns

When a student makes any reference to suicide, threat of suicide, or attempt at suicide, a judgment should be made by a mental health professional about the seriousness of a possible suicidal thought or behavior. Suicide attempts are first and foremost a medical emergency.

If danger or suicidal behavior appears imminent:

1. Stay calm.
2. Call the UNTHSC Police Department (on-campus) or 911 (off-campus).
• To save a life, remember QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer).
• Question the person about suicide.
• Persuade the person to get help.
• Refer for help.

Who is a dangerous individual?

• An individual who makes threats of physical harm to you, others or themselves.
• An individual who behaves in a bizarre manner or exhibits unstable behavior patterns.
• An individual who appears to be intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance.
• An individual who exhibits a weapon.

Safety is an immediate concern.

Contact the UNTHSC Police Department (on-campus) or 911 (off campus).

To refer a student to the CARE team

To refer a student to the CARE Team, you can submit a student of concern report that includes the name of the student and a brief narrative of their behavior. If you are concerned about a student, but have not witnessed any distressing or disruptive behavior, please explain your concern in detail.

Once a CARE Team referral is received, the CARE Team will respond by gathering more information and reaching out to the student to offer support. The CARE Team response is dependent on the content of the referral and level of concern. The CARE Team meets regularly to discuss all referrals and works together to assess the level of concern for the student, identify opportunities to connect with the student, and provide holistic support services.

Be assured that the CARE Team exists to assist students and will handle all referrals professionally in an effort to best meet the needs of students and the UNTHSC community.

Student of Concern Report
www.unthsc.edu/studentofconcern
Email: CARETeam@unthsc.edu
Phone: (817) 735-2740
In the event of an emergency or situation that requires immediate intervention, please contact the UNTHSC Police Department (on-campus) or 911 (off-campus). The CARE Team plays a secondary role to all urgent circumstances and should be contacted only after initial notifications are made.

To submit a CARE Team referral, use the student of concern form at www.unthsc.edu/studentofconcern.

To contact the CARE Team directly, call (817) 735-2740 or email CARETeam@unthsc.edu.