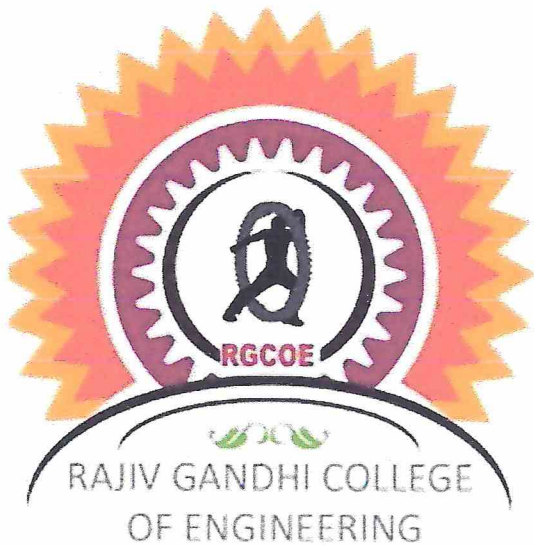




**POLICY FOR PROMOTION OF
MENTAL HEALTH & PREVENTION
OF STUDENT SUICIDE**

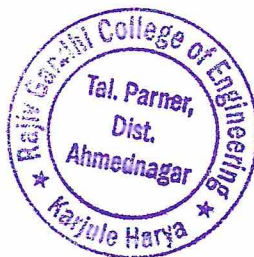
Rajiv Gandhi College of Engineering, Karjule Harya,
Tal. Parner, Dist. Ahilyanagar, Pin-414304.

VISION:

"To create emotionally safe, inclusive, and responsive campuses where every student and staff member feels valued, supported, and empowered to seek help without stigma or fear of judgment."

MISSION:

"To promote mental health awareness, provide peer support, and encourage healthy coping strategies through education, advocacy, and inclusive activities. We aim to foster a safe space for open dialogue, reduce stigma surrounding mental health issues, and connect students with resources that support their overall wellbeing and academic success."



Policy for Promotion of Mental Health & Prevention of Student Suicide

College: Rajiv Gandhi College of Engineering, Karjule Harya

Policy Document

Date of Preparation: 1/12/2025

Date of Revision: —

Policy Prepared By:

Dr. Krupal P. Pawar Certified Student Psychology Counsellor & Mental Health Nodal Officer

Policy Approved By:

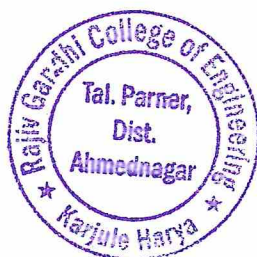
Dr. Rahulkumar S. Hingole

Principal, Rajiv Gandhi College of Engineering, Karjule Harya



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1. Background of the Policy

Suicide among young adults, particularly engineering students, is a critical public health concern in India. Engineering students face heightened academic pressure, competitive stress, fear of failure, socio-economic challenges, relationship difficulties, and significant transitions in identity and independence. The demanding nature of technical education, combined with high parental expectations and career uncertainties, creates a vulnerable environment for mental health challenges.

Educational institutions play a central role in promoting mental health, early identification of distress, and preventing self-harm. **Rajiv Gandhi College of Engineering, Karjule Harya**, is committed to creating a supportive and responsive ecosystem for student wellbeing.

This policy provides a comprehensive framework to build a stigma-free, compassionate, and proactive campus environment. The policy draws from the WHO Suicide Prevention Framework, UGC guidelines, AICTE directives, National Youth Mental Health strategies, and UMMEED draft guidelines of the Ministry of Education.

2. Vision, Mission, Objectives and Scope of the Policy

2a) Vision

To create emotionally safe, inclusive, and responsive campuses where every student and staff member feels valued, supported, and empowered to seek help without stigma or fear of judgment.

2b) Mission

To promote mental health awareness, provide peer support, and encourage healthy coping strategies through education, advocacy, and inclusive activities. We aim to foster a safe space for open dialogue, reduce stigma surrounding mental health issues, and connect students with resources that support their overall wellbeing and academic success.

2c) Objectives

- ✓ Increase mental health literacy among students, faculty, and non-teaching staff.
- ✓ Promote a culture of empathy, resilience, and peer support across the campus.
- ✓ Establish clear protocols for early identification, reporting, crisis management, and referral.
- ✓ Prevent suicide and self-harm among students through systematic institutional measures.



- ✓ Strengthen institutional linkages with professional mental health services and wellness centers.
- ✓ Ensure confidentiality, dignity, and rights of students in distress.
- ✓ Create a balanced academic environment that prioritizes student wellbeing alongside academic excellence.
- ✓ Build capacity among faculty, staff, and students to recognize and respond to mental health concerns.

2d) Scope

This policy applies to all undergraduate students, postgraduate students, research scholars, faculty members, administrative staff, hostel residents, and all support service units within **Rajiv Gandhi College of Engineering, Karjule Harya.**

3. Guiding Principles

- **Every Individual Matters:** The dignity, rights, and emotional safety of every individual is non-negotiable.
- **Preventive Approach:** Proactive interventions for promoting wellbeing are as important as crisis response.
- **Confidentiality & Ethics:** Sensitive information must be handled with utmost care and professional ethics.
- **Non-punitive Response:** Individuals exhibiting self-harm behavior or mental distress must be supported, not penalized or stigmatized.
- **Accessibility & Equity:** Services must be available irrespective of gender, caste, socioeconomic status, ability, branch of study, year of study, or residence status.
- **Collaboration:** Mental health is a shared responsibility across faculty, administration, families, peers, and students.
- **Academic Flexibility:** Recognition that mental health challenges may impact academic performance, requiring compassionate accommodation.

The UMMEED Framework — Core Pillars

- **Understand:** Information on suicide, myths vs facts, risk and protective factors, warning signs specific to engineering students.
- **Motivate:** Students (and families) to seek help and engage with protective services and institutional supports without shame.
- **Manage:** Systems and processes for identification, reporting, immediate response (crisis management), referral and follow-up.
- **Empathise:** Building a non-judgmental, stigma-free institutional climate; training stakeholders in sensitive communication and psychological first aid.



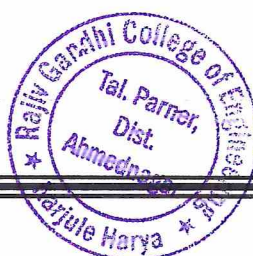
- **Empower:** Equipping students, teachers, and parents with skills (resilience, coping, help-seeking), mental health literacy, and access to services (internal or external).
- **Develop:** Long-term systemic changes: mental health policies, integration into institutional systems, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation.

4. Institutional Structures

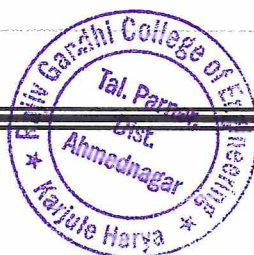
For the promotion of mental health among students and staff, Rajiv Gandhi College of Engineering will establish a dedicated **Mental Health and Wellness Cell**. If a counseling cell exists, it will be reconstituted as per UGC and Supreme Court Guidelines. The cell will be functional from the next academic semester and will serve as the primary body for mental health initiatives on campus.

5. Mental Health and Wellness Cell (Composition, Roles and Responsibilities)

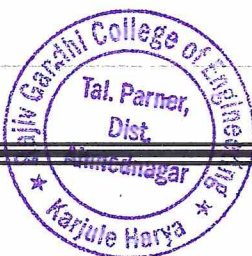
Sr. No.	Member	Designation	Role	Functions
1	Principal	Principal	Chairperson	• Oversee suicide prevention activities • Provide required infrastructure and instrumental support • Recruit Counsellor/Psychologist • Allocate budget for activities • Final approval authority for policy implementation
2	Senior Faculty - Psychology/Counseling Background	Vice Principal & IQAC Incharge	Nodal Officer	• Develop annual Action Plan • Establish formal linkage with mental health professionals • Maintain referral networks • Individual counselling & group counselling • Submit semester-wise reports to IQAC/regulatory bodies



Sr. No.	Member	Designation	Role	Functions
				• Coordinate with AICTE and other regulatory bodies
3	Professional Counsellor/Psychologist	Full-time/Part-time Professional	Coordinator	• Conduct risk assessments • Individual counselling & group counselling • Coordinate crisis responses • Provide Psychological First Aid • Design intervention programs
4	Counsellor/Psychologist (if additional staff available)	Professional Staff	Member, Secretary	• Conduct screening of students for early identification • Conduct individual and group sessions • Conduct training programs for students and staff • Risk assessment for suicide • Referral to mental health professionals • Maintain documentation ensuring confidentiality • Provide records to nodal officer and principal when required
5	Faculty Representative	Computer Engineering Department	Member	• Conduct risk assessments • Walk-in emotional support services • Departmental liaison
6	Faculty Representative	Electronics & Telecommunication Department	Member	• Conduct risk assessments • Walk-in emotional support services



Sr. No.	Member	Designation	Role	Functions
				• Stress & time-management workshops
7	Faculty Representative	Mechanical Engineering Department	Member	• Conduct risk assessments • Walk-in emotional support services • Departmental liaison
8	Faculty Representative	Electrical Engineering Department	Member	• Conduct risk assessments • Walk-in emotional support services • Departmental liaison
9	Physical Education Department Representative	Sports & Physical Education	Member	• Conduct risk assessments • Walk-in emotional support services • Wellbeing workshops • Promote physical activity for mental health
10	Girls Hostel Warden	Hostel Administration	Member	• Conduct risk assessments in hostel • Walk-in emotional support services • Monitor vulnerable students • Crisis response in hostel
11	Boys Hostel Warden	Hostel Administration	Member	• Conduct risk assessments in hostel • Walk-in emotional support services • Monitor vulnerable students • Crisis response in hostel
12	Student Representatives (2 students)	Various Years/Branches	Members	• Promote help-seeking culture • Support peers



Sr. No.	Member	Designation	Role	Functions
				• Avoid spreading misinformation • Bridge between students and administration
13	Administrative Officer	Administration	Member	• Administrative support • Facilitate logistics and coordination • Walk-in emotional support services
14	Training & Placement Officer	T&P Department	Member	• Address placement-related stress • Career counseling support • Conduct risk assessments

6. Guidelines for Designing and Implementing Action Plans

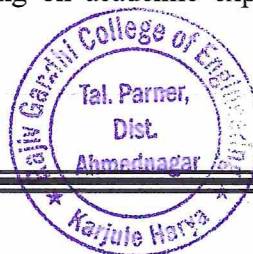
Suicide in engineering institutions is an emerging public health concern. Rajiv Gandhi College of Engineering is committed to the cognitive, emotional, and social development of its students and staff. The institution will work toward improving academic performance and retention, reducing dropouts, building a healthier campus climate, reducing stigma surrounding mental illness, and preparing the institution to deal with psychological crises.

To achieve these goals, the institute will establish a framework for early identification of at-risk individuals, ensuring timely availability of interventions and enhancing psychological immunity to academic and psychosocial stressors. Suicide prevention strategies are an essential aspect of this action plan.

Each year, a comprehensive multilayer action plan will be prepared by the Mental Health and Wellness Cell to ensure equality and accessibility for all students and staff. The action plan will include:

(a) Sensitization Programme

i. Mandatory Orientation: Conduct orientation for all newly admitted students, preferably with guardians, focusing on academic expectations, mental health, and



emotional wellbeing. Special emphasis on the transition to engineering education and available support systems.

ii. Early Warning Sign Boards: Display warning sign boards with contact details at prominent places within campus, hostels, laboratories, libraries, and on the college website. Include 24/7 helpline numbers.

iii. Anonymous Question Box: Encourage students to ask questions anonymously about issues causing emotional and psychological distress. Address concerns periodically (every 15 days) in small groups or open meetings.

iv. Mental Health Quiz: Conduct online quiz annually at the beginning of the academic year or during World Mental Health Week to assess awareness and provide education.

v. Competitions on Mental Health Themes: Organize poster making, panel discussions, resource fairs, essay competitions, elocution, and slogan competitions focused on mental health awareness.

vi. Movie Screening and Discussion: Screen movies based on psychological themes, followed by discussions to address myths, create awareness, and provide scientific information.

vii. Interactions with Mental Health Professionals: Invite professionals to conduct talks, webinars, and interactive sessions on stress management, exam anxiety, and coping strategies.

viii. Social Media Campaigns: Utilize digital platforms to disseminate mental health information and normalize help-seeking behavior.

(b) Preventive Strategies

i. Safe Academic Environment:

- Encourage inclusive behavior in student-student, student-teacher, and student-administration interactions
- Support services (SC/ST Cell, Equal Opportunity Cell, Anti-Ragging Committee, Student Development Committee) will ensure campus is free from bullying, harassment, discrimination, and toxic competitiveness
- Train faculty and students in compassionate communication and interpersonal skills
- Maintain flexible assignment deadlines in genuine distress cases
- Provide remedial options in a positive and supportive manner
- Allow students to rest or seek counseling during extreme distress



- Periodic counseling throughout the course duration by peers, faculty, and professional counselors

ii. Safe Hostel Environment:

- Train wardens in observing distress signs
- Restrict access to high-risk means (unsecured rooftops, harmful substances)
- Conduct regular informal check-ins to identify at-risk students
- Display emergency contact boards prominently in hostels
- Create common spaces for social interaction and support
- Establish buddy systems for first-year hostel residents

iii. Team-Based Academic Activities:

- Promote group projects, group discussions, team quiz competitions
- Create cooperative and collaborative learning environments
- Encourage students to overcome inhibitions and apprehensions
- Develop confidence, empathy, and self-esteem through teamwork

iv. Physical Fitness and Nutrition Programs:

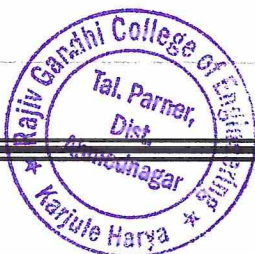
- Incorporate physical fitness activities as part of academic life
- Provide facilities for indoor and outdoor gyms, yoga centers, jogging and cycling pathways
- Offer workshops and mandatory classes on yoga through NSS, Sports Department, and external agencies
- Conduct expert lectures on balanced diet and healthy eating practices
- Develop policy to reduce availability of junk food and promote nutritious options in campus

v. Buddy and Mentor System:

- Assign senior students as buddies to small groups of newly admitted students
- Pair with faculty mentors from different departments to enrich life skills
- Regular mentor-mentee meetings to monitor academic and emotional wellbeing

vi. Young Minds Club:

- Form a group of trained peer volunteers
- Train in identifying early warning signs
- Provide emotional and social support through non-judgmental listening
- Encourage help-seeking behavior
- Promote inclusivity in hostels and classrooms
- Refer individuals to mentors or counselors when needed



vii. Effective and Speedy Grievance Redressal Mechanism:

- Establish three-tiered grievance redressal system: Department, Institute, and Third Party (University/Parent Organization)
- Form institutional grievance redressal committee with three independent academicians with no conflicts of interest
- Meet aggrieved students through face-to-face or video conferencing
- Handle issues with compassion rather than strict adherence to rules
- Timeline for disposal: Maximum 21 days (Department: 7 days, Institute: 7 days, Third Party: 7 days)
- Maintain records of all orders and resolutions

(c) Early Identification and Early Interventions

i. At-Risk Individual Identification:

- Utilize mentor-teachers and student-mentors to identify at-risk individuals
- Monitor poor performance in coursework, poor attendance, minimal participation in activities
- Note reduced interaction with peers, skipping meals regularly, behavioral changes

ii. Mental Health Survey and Wellbeing Audit:

- Conduct assessment at the beginning of every academic year
- Assess psychological distress and emotional stability
- Voluntary participation with confidential data handling
- Maintain secure records

iii. Peer/Tele Counselling:

- Train mentors, peers, and wardens to identify distressed individuals
- Provide immediate emotional and social support through active listening
- Use non-judgmental approach
- Refer distressed individuals to counseling cell
- Encourage online counseling through government and NGO platforms in emergencies

iv. Psychological First Aid:

- Provide psychological first aid by trained mentors, peers, and wardens
- Immediate support in emergency situations before professional help arrives

d) Capacity Building Programs



i. Staff Training:

- Encourage faculty participation in Refresher Courses, STCs, STPs, FDPs on counseling, mentoring, mental health, and wellbeing
- Conduct training on four dimensions of mentorship: physical, cognitive, emotional, and social
- Build capacity to respond to emotional and psychological needs
- Focus on distress identification, emotional wellbeing, crisis management, psychological first aid, problem-solving skills, and resilience building
- Sensitize faculty about diverse social, cultural, linguistic, and economical backgrounds

ii. Student Training:

- Train students in managing exam anxiety and academic stress
- Teach emotional regulation, interpersonal skills, conflict management, and time management
- Conduct life-skills training programs
- Provide workshops on study techniques and effective learning strategies
- Offer career guidance and placement preparation support

e) Networking and Referral Services

i. Signing MoUs:

- Sign MoUs with mental health professionals, psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, and wellness centers
- Establish partnerships for preventive, promotive, and early intervention services
- Arrange specialized psychiatric/psychotherapy sessions
- Provide dedicated pharmacological or other medical interventions as required
- Invite resource persons for interactions and training programs
- Negotiate concessional rates for institutional students and staff

ii. Referral Services:

- Based on risk assessment and distress levels, refer individuals to mental health professionals
- Establish referral network with nearby government facilities
- Maintain connections with private practitioners when necessary
- Create referral directory with contact information and specializations
- Follow up on referred cases to ensure continuity of care

7. Identification of Distressed Individuals



Peers, mentors, and wardens will be trained to identify individuals experiencing the following signs:

Academic Indicators:

- Significant decline in academic performance
- Irregular attendance or frequent absences
- Incomplete or missed assignments
- Loss of interest in studies or career goals

Behavioral Changes:

- Drastic behavioral changes or mood swings
- Sudden withdrawal or social isolation
- Avoiding friends, family, or usual activities
- Aggressive behavior or increased impulsivity

Physical Signs:

- Sleep disturbances (insomnia or excessive sleeping)
- Appetite changes (eating too much or too little)
- Neglect of personal hygiene
- Unexplained physical complaints

Emotional Indicators:

- Expressions of hopelessness or worthlessness
- Statements indicating desire to die or self-harm
- Persistent sadness or crying
- Excessive guilt or self-blame
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities

High-Risk Behaviors:

- Substance misuse (alcohol, drugs)
- Self-harm marks or discussions about self-harm
- Giving away possessions
- Saying goodbye to people as if for the last time
- Researching methods of suicide

Information about these distress signs and available support systems will be displayed prominently throughout the campus. Students will be encouraged to accept and express their distress and seek professional help through mentors or college counselors/psychologists without fear of judgment or academic consequences.



8. Crisis Response Protocol, Reporting Pathway and SOP

After identification of a distressed individual, the peer, mentor, faculty, or warden will follow the pathway and SOP detailed in Annexure I. The protocol ensures:

- Immediate safety assessment
- Appropriate level of intervention based on risk
- Clear communication channels
- Timely referral to professional services
- Documentation and follow-up
- Family notification when necessary

9. Postvention

Following a suicide attempt or completed suicide, the institution will implement postvention strategies to support the campus community and prevent contagion:

Immediate Response:

- Avoid sensational messaging, blame, or detailed descriptions of method
- Provide immediate counseling to friends, roommates, and close contacts
- Offer support to faculty and staff members affected by the incident
- Activate crisis response team

Communication:

- Issue carefully worded statements respecting privacy and dignity
- Provide media guidelines to avoid harmful reporting
- Educate community about responsible discussion of suicide

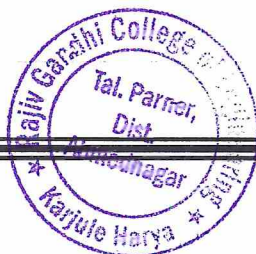
Support Services:

- Ensure staff wellbeing support and debriefing sessions
- Monitor vulnerable students for at least 6 months post-incident
- Offer group counseling sessions for affected communities
- Provide ongoing individual counseling as needed

Institutional Review:

- Review institutional procedures and identify gaps
- Conduct safe memorial practices without glorification
- Learn from the incident to strengthen prevention efforts
- Update protocols based on lessons learned

Long-term Monitoring:



- Maintain heightened awareness during anniversaries or triggering events
- Continue support for affected individuals
- Evaluate effectiveness of postvention strategies

10. Confidentiality & Data Protection

Students in distress will be assured that they can share their concerns without hesitation or fear of judgment. Their information will be kept confidential and will not be shared with anyone except with their written consent.

Exceptions to Confidentiality:

- Emergencies involving imminent harm to self or others
- Legal requirements or court orders
- When necessary to coordinate care with other professionals (with student's knowledge)

Data Security:

- All mental health records will be kept in secure digital and physical formats
- Access limited to authorized personnel only
- Regular audits of data security measures
- Compliance with data protection regulations
- Secure disposal of records after retention period

Ethical Standards:

- Adherence to professional codes of conduct
- Informed consent procedures
- Clear communication about limits of confidentiality
- Respect for student autonomy and dignity

11. Monitoring & Evaluation

The work of the Mental Health and Wellness Cell will be evaluated annually based on the following metrics:

Utilization Metrics:

- Number of students accessing counseling services
- Number of walk-in consultations
- Number of referrals made and completed
- Participation rates in awareness programs



Outcome Indicators:

- Feedback from faculty, students, and hostel wardens
- Student satisfaction with mental health services
- Changes in help-seeking behavior
- Academic performance and retention rates

Process Evaluation:

- Review of crisis incidents and response effectiveness
- Quality assessment of training programs
- Timeliness of interventions
- Adequacy of resources and infrastructure

Policy Implementation:

- Compliance with established protocols
- Revision of protocols based on learning and feedback
- Identification of gaps and areas for improvement
- Benchmarking against best practices

Reporting: A comprehensive annual report shall be submitted to IQAC, College Development Committee, and regulatory bodies including AICTE and the University.

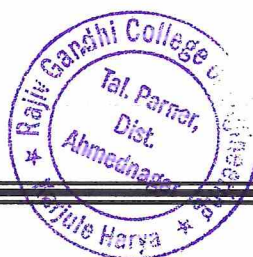
12. Policy Review Cycle

This policy must be reviewed every **2 years** or earlier if mandated by:

- Regulatory bodies (UGC, AICTE, University)
- Supreme Court directives
- Significant changes in campus environment or student needs
- Major incidents requiring policy revision
- Advances in mental health best practices

Review process will include:

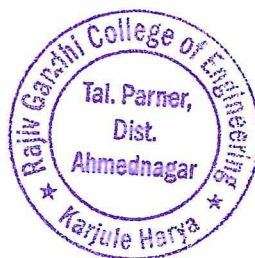
- Consultation with stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, mental health professionals)
- Analysis of implementation effectiveness
- Integration of new guidelines and research findings
- Updates to reflect changing needs and challenges



13. Conclusion

Rajiv Gandhi College of Engineering, Karjule Harya, recognizes that a campus must be a safe, compassionate, and empowering space where every student can thrive academically, emotionally, and socially. This policy provides an actionable framework to prevent suicide, reduce stigma, strengthen institutional capacity, and protect the emotional wellbeing of every student and staff member.

By implementing this comprehensive policy, the institution commits to creating an environment where mental health is prioritized, help-seeking is normalized, and every individual feels valued and supported. The success of this policy depends on the collective commitment of the entire campus community—students, faculty, staff, administration, and families—working together to build a culture of care, compassion, and resilience.



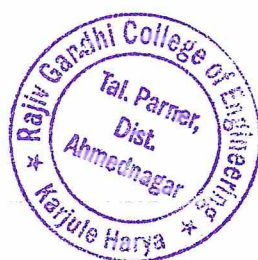
Annexure I: Crisis Response Protocol, Reporting Pathway and SOP

Crisis Response Flowchart



RISK ASSESSMENT:

- Level of intent
- Presence of plan
- Access to means
- Protective factors



Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Step 1: Identification

- Any peer, faculty member, warden, or staff notices distress signs
- Initial assessment of severity

Step 2: Immediate Response (For High-Risk Cases)

- Ensure student is not alone
- Remove access to potentially harmful means
- Contact counsellor/nodal officer immediately
- Provide psychological first aid
- Maintain calm and supportive presence

Step 3: Referral

- For moderate/severe cases, refer to Mental Health & Wellness Cell
- Provide relevant information without breaking confidentiality
- Use designated referral form

Step 4: Assessment

- Professional counsellor conducts comprehensive risk assessment
- Determine level of intervention required
- Document findings securely

Step 5: Intervention

- Mild/Moderate: Individual or group counseling with follow-up
- Severe: Immediate emergency response and professional referral

Step 6: Family Communication

- In severe cases, inform parents/guardians sensitively
- Provide necessary information for support

Step 7: Documentation

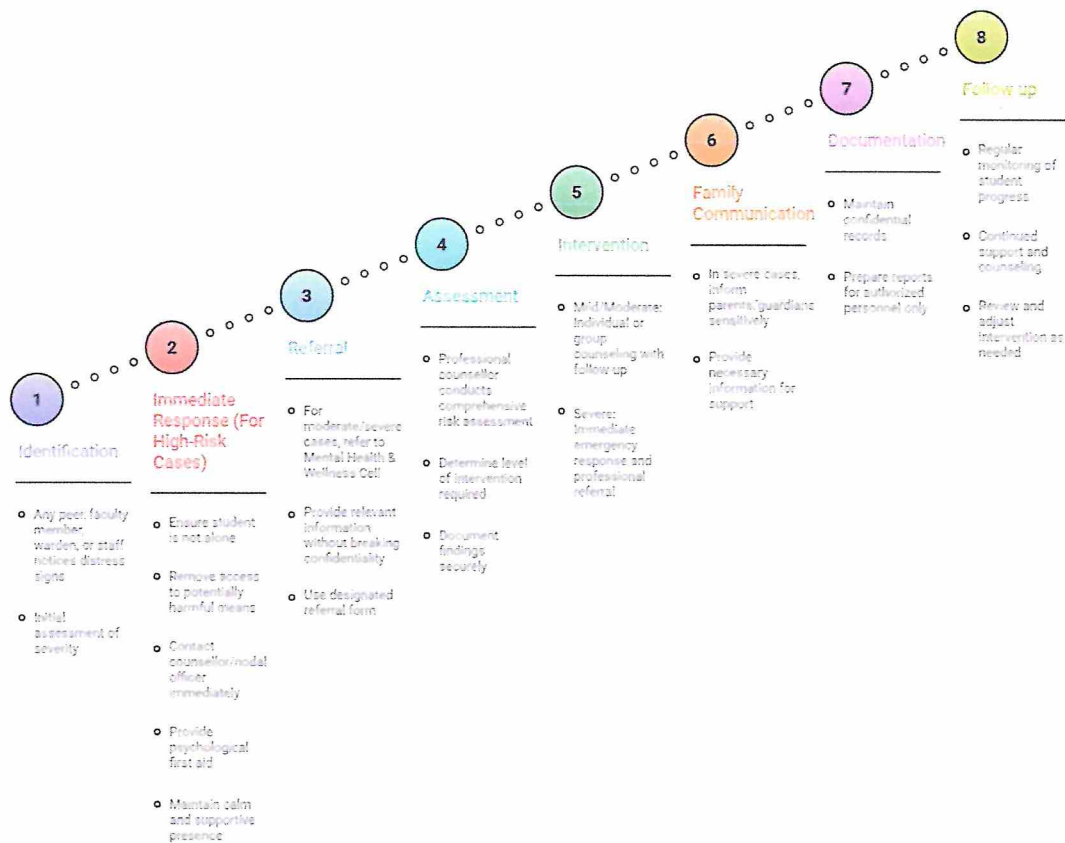
- Maintain confidential records
- Prepare reports for authorized personnel only

Step 8: Follow-up

- Regular monitoring of student progress
- Continued support and counseling
- Review and adjust intervention as needed



Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)



Emergency Contacts:

- Mental Health & Wellness Cell:** 9420830474
- Nodal Officer:** 9420830474
- Campus Medical Officer:** 9769638696
- Nearest Hospital:** Matoshri Ayurvedic College Hospital & Research Center, Karjule Harya.
- National Suicide Prevention Helpline:** 022 2754 6669.



This policy is effective from 01/12/2025 and supersedes all previous mental health policies.

Approved by:

R. S. Hingole
31/12/2025
Dr. R. S. Hingole
Principal,
Rajiv Gandhi College of Engineering, Karjule Harya
Rajiv Gandhi College of Engineering
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Pin-414304

Date: 01/12/2025

