

STUDENT WELLNESS STANDARD OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

ACCESS & ELIGIBILITY OF CLINICAL SERVICES AT STUDENT WELLNESS

1 Guideline Purpose:

The purpose of this guidance is to establish clear and consistent criteria for determining student eligibility for accessing Clinical Services at the University of Victoria. This guideline aims to ensure that eligible students have equitable access to wellness resources and supports while promoting responsible and efficient allocation of finite and critical resources.

2 Scope:

The guideline applies to eligible students seeking clinical services offered by Student Wellness.

3 Definitions:

“Approved Leave” means a leave of absence from a graduate degree program offered by the university after completion of a minimum of one term.

“Clinical Services” means direct and/or indirect holistic health and wellness supports offered by licensed Student Wellness practitioners, including but not limited to diagnosis, advice, treatment, education, case management, or other forms of intervention with respect to student wellbeing individually or in group settings.

“Graduation” means the date upon which a degree is granted or as otherwise defined by the university.

“Non-clinical services” means support in the form of resource information, education, health promotion programs, or screening that support a student’s holistic well-being and could be provided by students, SW campus or community partners, or Student Wellness practitioners.

“Request for Academic Concessions” means academic concessions offered by the university to students whose ability to complete course requirements is interrupted by unexpected and unavoidable circumstances or conflicting responsibilities. The process for requesting and granting academic concessions will be grounded in an assumption of good faith on the part of students, instructors, administrators, and staff, in the absence of compelling evidence to the contrary.

“Student” means a student enrolled in a programme of study at the University of Victoria delivered on its campus and which leads to the award of an undergraduate or graduate degree, and for greater certainty, does not include any such programs of study expressly excluded from this definition, if any, nor does it include certificate courses or non-credit courses offered through the University’s Division of Continuing Studies.

“Student Wellness ” means a key unit within the Wellness, Recreation, and Athletics department at the University of Victoria responsible for promoting and supporting the health and wellbeing of students. Student Wellness consists of clinical counselling, clinical health, multifaith programs, and health promotion and outreach.

“Student Wellness Centre (SWC)” means a physical location where eligible students can access clinical services offered through Student Wellness, including health, counseling, spiritual care, and other wellness programs. The SWC is located in the Health and Wellness building at the University of Victoria.

4 Eligibility Criteria: Subject to the following, all Students are eligible to receive clinical services offered through Student Wellness at the University of Victoria:

4.1 Approved Leave

Students who have received Approved Leave are eligible for the remainder of the Approved Leave. Student Wellness Practitioners can exercise discretion to offer care while a student’s leave application is under review. If the Approved Leave continues beyond a year, Student Wellness practitioners may choose to assist a student in finding alternate care options.

4.2 Request for Academic Concessions

Students who submit a Request for Academic Concession (i.e., RAC) for Withdrawal under Extenuating Circumstances may continue to receive care for the remainder of that term. Student Wellness Practitioners can exercise discretion to offer care while such a student’s RAC request is under review.

4.3 Pause and Degree Completion

Students who have already established care with Student Wellness, when anticipating taking a pause from their studies or prior to graduation, are encouraged to notify their practitioner to discuss and plan options for their care after they are no longer a student, including transitioning care out of Student Wellness. For pauses taken during the term, practitioners can offer care as a wrap-up or bridging appointment before the end of the current term. For graduating students, practitioners can offer care as a wrap-up or bridging appointment up to thirty (30) days following graduation.

4.4 Ineligibility Criteria

Student Wellness does not provide clinical services for:

- Alumni and former students;
- Continuing Studies students;
- UVic employees, including staff and faculty;
- Dependents or family members of UVic students.

Despite the foregoing, Student Wellness practitioners may provide a single urgent/same-day consultation or first aid care for individuals present on-site and in significant distress.

4.5 Student Wellness Clinician and Practitioner Discretion and Obligations

Nothing in these Guidelines is intended to fetter the discretion and obligations of clinicians and other licensed practitioners to provide Clinical Services in accordance with their professional obligations. In a situation when practitioners feel it necessary to continue providing care beyond the eligibility period set out in these Guidelines, that practitioner is encouraged to discuss resources and capacity with their clinical lead.

5 Access to Clinical Services

Student Wellness clinical services are provided primarily in person. Students unable to attend Student Wellness in person may continue to receive available remote support from SWC if appropriate and are encouraged to work with SW practitioners to determine the best option for ongoing support.

5.1 Accessibility and Accommodations

Student Wellness is committed to providing accessible services to students with disabilities in accordance with relevant laws and regulations. Student Wellness practitioners will work in collaboration with the University's Centre for Accessible Learning to provide appropriate support.

5.2 New Students Establishing Care

New students seeking to establish care with Student Wellness may book a medical appointment two months in advance of the start of the term they are registered in. Students may book a Counselling appointment one month in advance of the start of the term they are registered in.

5.3 Students with an Existing Primary Care Provider

Student Wellness endeavours to serve all eligible students, however, clinical resources within SW are finite. All students with access to an existing primary care provider are encouraged to continue that relationship and as much as possible seek follow up care for chronic conditions through their primary care physician. Such individuals are encouraged to reach out to Student Wellness for support for episodic illness (such as cough, sore throat, or injury) or care that supports delivery of care by external primary care providers while a student is attending the University of Victoria. Students with an existing primary care provider are encouraged to connect with their primary care provider prior to arrival in Victoria to ensure they can continue their relationship with their primary care providers while attending University of Victoria. If a student's primary care provider needs to collaborate or consult with Student Wellness, they can complete a referral form which is reviewed by the clinical health team. If a primary care provider has questions regarding any medical documentation requirements while a student is attending University of Victoria, Student Wellness can provide them with guidance.

6 Clinical Services Appointment

Eligible students can book an appointment to meet with a qualified and licensed clinical provider to support their holistic wellbeing. Students can book online, phone, and/or in-person. Check [UVic Student Wellness](#) for details.

6.1 Appointment Availability and Wait Times

Student Wellness acknowledges that there may be instances of unforeseen circumstances that may result in limited availability and/or extended wait times. In such case, Student Wellness will make reasonable efforts to communicate the situation to students and provide alternative options when available.

6.2 Appointment Prioritization

During periods of high demand and/or unforeseen circumstances, Student Wellness may implement prioritization of appointments to ensure students with urgent needs receive timely care.

6.3 Planned and Unplanned Closures

Student Wellness will remain closed on statutory holidays and between December 25 and January 1 of each year in accordance with university operations. The University of Victoria only interrupts regular operations under exceptional circumstances. In the event of an unplanned University Closure, Student Wellness will follow University Emergency Procedures and Guidelines and make reasonable efforts to communicate the situation to students and provide alternative options.

6.4 Referrals to Campus Partners

Student Wellness Practitioners may refer students to other student support services on campus to help navigate alternate choices for primary care in the community. Individual circumstances occurring outside of Student Wellness may result in those individuals being granted permission to access services elsewhere as a non-student (e.g., Residence move out date extension). Student Wellness practitioners while becoming aware of such permission are to consult with clinical leads regarding the possibility in extending care if needed.

6.5 Revoking or Restricting Access

The UVic community strives to maintain an atmosphere of respect and accountability on campus. Access to care at SW may be restricted or revoked for misconduct, health or safety reasons (such as abusive or inappropriate behavior toward staff or others within SW) as set out in relevant university policies. See UVic's website for more information, including:

- [“Discrimination and Harassment Policy”](#) listed under Equity and Human Rights Office;
- [Workplace bullying and harassment prevention](#), under Occupational Health, Safety and Environment Office;
- [Student conduct & policies](#), and
- other relevant policies regarding respect, health and safety on campus.

7 Personal Information and Confidentiality

The University of Victoria is committed to protecting the personal information in its custody and control. We collect only personal information that is directly related to, and needed for, operating our programs and activities. Employees, service providers, and volunteers must comply with applicable legislation and UVic's [Protection of Privacy Policy](#), procedures and guidelines, whenever third party personal information is entrusted to the university's care.

7.1 Information Sharing

Under the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(FIPPA\)](#), the university cannot release student personal or academic information without consent. Students can grant consent by setting up a proxy. In urgent circumstances when a student cannot provide consent, the university may disclose personal information as authorized by FIPPA. This may occur when there are compelling circumstances about the imminent health and safety to self and/or others at the university. This includes emergencies, extreme emotional distress, injury, interpersonal conflicts and other circumstances of this nature.

7.2 Information Sharing to Parents and Other Family Members

UVic policies to ensure confidentiality and protect student privacy. Concerned parents and other family members may want to get more information or speak to others at UVic on behalf of a student. Student Wellness cannot release personal information without explicit consent. Student Wellness encourages all students to speak with their support network to identify comfort and boundaries in sharing information.

8 Review and Revisions

This guideline will be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to ensure alignment with university policies and procedures, and evolving students' needs. Feedback from students and UVic employees will be solicited and considered during the revision process.