



CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN A CROSS-CULTURAL SETTING

International Student and Scholar Services

NAFSA

Association of
International Educators

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Mental Health Crisis of an International Student or Scholar

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An international student or scholar may develop mental health issues during their term abroad. It is critical that the adviser work in conjunction with the appropriate campus officials and hospital personnel to get the student or scholar the help and support needed. The international student and scholar services office can utilize this checklist to take the necessary academic and immigration action steps in response to a mental health crisis of a student or scholar.

For additional guidance and resources on ways to respond to the mental health crisis of an international student or scholar, in accordance with FERPA and HIPAA requirements, read “Mental Health Crisis of an International Student or Scholar” in *Crisis Management in a Cross-Cultural Setting*, which can be purchased online from the [NAFSA bookstore](#).

CONDENSED CHECKLIST

Precrisis Considerations:

- International student and scholar records in the international student and scholar services office should be complete and available via remote access at all times.
- Health insurance coverage information should be up-to-date, and include medical evacuation and repatriation.
- Be familiar with local psychiatric care hospital facilities.

Responding to the Mental Health Crisis of an International Student or Scholar:

- Follow university protocols and alert all necessary parties on campus.
- In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements, notify the student or scholar’s family or emergency contact.

- Create a log of events.
- Research background of the student or scholar.
- Visit student or scholar in the hospital.
- Be familiar with whether or not the hospital can provide professional interpreters.
- Work with the psychiatric social worker(s).
- Leadership or support from any program with which the student is affiliated is essential.
- Related student organization (if appropriate) should be informed within the confines of the FERPA.
- Be apprised of any academic actions.
- Take necessary immigration actions in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).