

ADDITIONAL REFERRAL ASSISTANCE

If the referrals you were given don't work out, contact the CAPS staff person who provided them or our main office for help. **Your health insurance company** can provide a list of clinicians covered by your plan: Call the number on your insurance card or visit the website for assistance. You may also get referrals from your current medical doctor or therapist if you have one.

PERSONAL REFERRAL LIST

Below is a space for the names and numbers of the referrals provided by CAPS:

Note: CAPS can assist you in finding an appropriate clinician based on the clinician's self-report. CAPS does not endorse any referred-to clinician.

SELF-HELP RESOURCES

- **CAPS website (caps.ucsc.edu):** Self-help resources and info about our services
- **WellTrack (<http://caps.ucsc.edu/resources/welltrack.html>):** Self-help tools for anxiety, stress, depression—free with CAPS access code: UCSCCAPS

CRISIS RESOURCES

- **CAPS Crisis Services:** Professional counselors available to UCSC community 24/7 at (831) 459-2628
- **Emergency:** Call 911 (on campus, reaches UCSC police; off campus, reaches local police/emergency services)
- **Family Service Agency 24-hour crisis line:** (877) 663-5433 (ONE LIFE; toll free)
- **National Suicide Hotline:** (800) 784-2433 (SUICIDE)
- **Santa Cruz County Chapter, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):** (831) 427-8020 (information and support for people with mental illness and their loved ones)
- **Santa Cruz County Crisis Stabilization Program:** (831) 600-2801 (for psychiatric emergencies)
- **Santa Cruz County 24-hour mental health services:** (800) 925-2335 or (831) 454-4170 (for local mental health information, services, and non-life-threatening crises)
- **Women's Crisis Support/Defensa de Mujeres 24-hour sexual assault and domestic violence crisis line:** (888) 900-4232



Counseling & Psychological Services | UCSC

A GUIDE TO SEEKING PSYCHIATRY OFF CAMPUS



Information on finding psychiatry services, answers to common questions about the process, and additional resources

Counseling and Psychological Services
University of California, Santa Cruz
Student Health Center, 2nd Floor
(831) 459-2628
caps.ucsc.edu

You were probably given this brochure because off-campus psychiatry (medication services for a mental health concern) was recommended by CAPS or you are seeking off-campus services on your own. Many students feel intimidated by finding a medical provider off campus. This is understandable and a common concern. This brochure will help answer your questions and offer tips and resources to guide the process.

BENEFITS OF PSYCHIATRY

There are circumstances when a psychotropic medication—a drug prescribed for a mental health concern—is recommended, such as when a person has a condition like severe depression, bipolar disorder, or a psychotic disorder. While medication does not “cure” the problem, it can alleviate or greatly reduce symptoms that impair functioning and decrease quality of life. In many cases, therapy in combination with medication allows for better results than medication alone.

CONCERNS ABOUT MEDICATION

People have varying levels of comfort with the idea of medication. Common concerns include:

- Belief that one should be able to function “on one’s own,” without medication or that taking medication means one is “weak” or “crazy”
- Concern that psychotropic medications are addictive, dangerous, or needed “forever”
- Family or cultural beliefs against medication or that view mental health issues as not “real”

These concerns, while not unusual, don’t have to prevent you from learning about all your options, including medication. CAPS or another clinician can talk to you about your concerns and provide information to help you make a decision.

HOW TO GET STARTED

You will probably have several possible psychiatrists to call. Some students prefer to call one at a time; others prefer to call a few before deciding which one to see for an appointment. *If you reach voicemail when*

calling, give your name, number, and reason for calling twice, especially from a cell phone, to make sure the message is clear.

A psychiatrist or their staff can answer questions before you make an appointment. It’s OK to tell a potential clinician you’re calling a few others and will get back to them if you decide to schedule an appointment.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Do you have openings? What is your availability (e.g., days/times)?
- Do you take my insurance? (CAPS refers you to clinicians listed as taking your insurance, but double check.)
- What is the cost per session? How do you handle payment?
- Do you provide therapy/counseling in addition to medication services?

FIRST APPOINTMENTS

Typically, in a first appointment, the clinician asks questions about your symptoms and history and talks with you about possible diagnoses and treatment plans. The clinician may ask for prior treatment records and may refer you to get labs/bloodwork done to rule out medical causes of your symptoms.

INSURANCE AND COSTS

With the **UCSC Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP)**, there is a \$20 copay per visit, and you need a referral form from CAPS or Student Health. (See ucop.edu/ucship for more info.) There will be a copay for any medications prescribed and labwork/bloodwork required by the clinician. With SHIP, you can get labwork done at Student Health and prescriptions at the UCSC Pharmacy, or you can go off campus for these services. Note that prescription copays are lower on campus than at an off-campus pharmacy.

If you have other insurance, contact the company to learn what your plan covers, your copay, and whether you need pre-

authorization or a referral before making a psychiatry appointment. Non-SHIP insurance plans only cover lab and pharmacy services off campus. If you have **Kaiser** insurance, all services (including labs and prescriptions) are *only covered at a Kaiser facility or pharmacy*. If you have **Medi-Cal**, local services may only be covered if your Medi-Cal plan is for Santa Cruz County. Call **Beacon Health** at (855) 765-9700 for local Medi-Cal info and referrals.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Why am I being referred off campus?** Due to high demand, CAPS is not able to provide ongoing psychiatry services to all students who request them. If you have private insurance, CAPS will often refer you to an off-campus provider who takes your plan. Kaiser insurance will not pay for any services or medicines outside of Kaiser.
- **What sorts of clinicians provide psychotropic medication?** Psychiatrists (medical doctors who specialize in mental health) and some advanced practice nurses can assess for and prescribe these medications. General/family practice clinicians can also prescribe medications for some mental health conditions.
- **What if I can’t afford off-campus psychiatry?** With insurance, the cost of off-campus services is generally low. However, if you can’t afford your insurance copay or don’t have insurance, CAPS will help you explore your options and resources.
- **What if I have trouble finding off-campus psychiatry?** If your referrals don’t work out, don’t get discouraged. If needed, return to CAPS or call us: We can provide additional referrals or provide more help with the process.