



## **A Visit to the UHS Inpatient Service for Alcohol-Related Reasons: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **If I am transported to UHS for alcohol-related reasons, what might I expect to happen?**

Your safety and health is of primary importance and UHS staff is here to provide students high quality care and support. The primary concern at the time of admission is to ensure that the student is medically stabilized. Under current guidelines, you will be brought to the UHS Inpatient Service on the building's 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. You will meet with members of the Inpatient Service nursing staff, who will check basic vital medical signs, escort you to a room, and will facilitate the admission process by collecting important information related to your alcohol use and monitoring your immediate health status. You will then meet with one of UHS's physicians who will review your medical condition and provide medical clearance to leave UHS. Based on your physician's level of concern you will, at the time of discharge, be asked to schedule an appointment to meet with a CPS clinician in the next few days. At that brief consultation the CPS clinician will discuss CPS support and counseling services, and make a recommendation to you about some sort of follow-up care as it is needed. Under certain circumstances, if it is medically or otherwise indicated, the student may be sent to the Emergency Room (ER) to obtain a higher level of medical care than UHS can provide.

### **What is the role of the Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) after I've been admitted to McCosh for alcohol-related reasons (usually intoxication)?**

Under current guidelines, you will be seen by members of the Inpatient Service nursing and medical team; that is, you will meet with a nurse and then a physician (a medical doctor). If your visit raises concerns regarding your well being (for example, you have had an alcohol-related incident that includes a high BAC (blood alcohol level), an ER visit, an injury, or is part of a concerning pattern of behavior that may compromise your health and well being) —then you will be asked to schedule an appointment to meet with a member of the Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Team (a CPS staff psychologist or clinical social worker) during the same week. The objective of the CPS staff clinician's meeting is to assess any possible alcohol-related risks and/or treatment needs. Ideally, this assessment is a collaborative effort with you to figure out how our services might be of use to you in minimizing the likelihood of a recurrence.

### **You mentioned this "Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Team at McCosh". What does it do and why should I care about it?**

The AOD Team is a group of clinicians (doctors, nurses, counselors) at UHS who specialize in assessing and treating student alcohol-related difficulties. The Team is there to support and help students as they grapple with the role of alcohol and other drugs in their lives. On a weekly basis, this Team meets and carefully reviews the circumstances of all admissions to the Inpatient Service at McCosh that involve alcohol (and/or other drugs). This Team also reviews any follow-up recommendations that were made by your physician and/or CPS clinician. Based on this and other information (e.g., questionnaires, interview, previous history, current circumstances), students are assigned a certain level of concern and this level of concern will determine the nature of recommended follow-up with UHS. For instance, if you did not follow-up with a member of the Team as recommended and the Team has serious concerns about your safety and well being, then the Team may enlist the assistance of your Residential College's Director of Student Life (DSL) to ensure further assessment or counseling. In making these decisions, we work very hard to thoughtfully balance our level of concern (based on the incident(s) that have come to our attention) and your right to privacy. If the Team decides that it is necessary to contact a DSL, then we will always notify you in advance and provide you with an opportunity to address the matter with CPS first.

**If I've been transported to UHS by the university's Department of Public Safety (DPS), does that mean that my Residential College Dean or Director of Student Life (DSL) will be informed of the incident that brought me here?**

Yes (though not by UHS). The Department of Public Safety publishes daily incident reports that contain alcohol-related transports to the local ER and UHS. These reports are distributed to a limited number of university officials, including Deans and Directors of Student Life (DSLs). So if a DPS officer was involved in your transport, then you can expect to hear from your DSL without *any* contact or notification from your doctors at McCosh/UHS—mainly as an acknowledgment of the incident and an expression of concern. DSLs may also refer you to see a member of the AOD Team. There are no disciplinary consequences for students who are brought to UHS for simply using excess alcohol or for the friends or fellow students who escort them to UHS.

**If you have used alcohol to excess and have been brought to UHS by a friend or have come to UHS on your own, will your Residential College Dean or Director of Student Life (DSL) be informed of the incident?**

Generally, no. If you are escorted to UHS by a friend or walk in by yourself, UHS will not disclose the reason for admission to your Dean or DSL. If, however, the AOD Team has serious concern for your well being and has exhausted all reasonable options to provide follow up care, contact may be made to elicit assistance from your DSL. Do note that there is a daily census that lists all students who are residing on the UHS Inpatient Services and this census is distributed to several university departments; reasons for admission are not specified.

**Will my parents be notified if I am admitted to UHS for alcohol-related reasons?**

UHS staff does not routinely inform parents of students' UHS admissions unless there are life threatening circumstances or serious safety concerns. However, your parents may hear from non-UHS parties. In particular, if you are taken to a local Emergency Room it is likely that your parents will receive a bill from the hospital pertaining to the visit. Please also consult the alcohol and other drugs violation policy of the University or talk to your DSL regarding parental notification under these circumstances by the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

**Who will have access to my records related to my admission to UHS for alcohol-related reasons?**

Your treating doctors, nurses, and clinicians have access to your records pertaining to your admission. At UHS, we specialize in integrated, collaborative health care, and this means that your health care providers are well-informed about your situation. Appropriately sharing clinical information about your condition is an important part of the provision of good health care. Your medical and psychological records are private and confidential. They may only be released to others, outside of UHS, with your written consent.

**If I am escorted to UHS for alcohol-related reasons, do I have the right to refuse treatment?**

If your condition does not represent a danger to yourself or to others in the community, then you may refuse treatment. Under most circumstances in which treatment at UHS is refused, you will receive follow-up contact from UHS, as it is important for your doctors to check in and see how you are doing. If your judgment appears impaired and blood alcohol level high, then we will enlist Public Safety to ensure that the environment is safe for students and staff. Public Safety will attempt to persuade you to return to UHS for a more complete evaluation.

**If you have any other questions or concerns that were not addressed above, please feel free to contact Anita Mclean, Ph.D., Psy.D., CPS Director (Telephone: 609-258-3285; e-mail: [amclean@princeton.edu](mailto:amclean@princeton.edu)).**