

Proposed Mental Health Bill of Rights and Responsibilities  
For Graduate Students of Vanderbilt University

1. Vanderbilt University sees the mental health of its students as a priority and undertakes to protect student access to quality, affordable, professional, and comprehensive mental health care.
2. Vanderbilt University is committed to combat stigma surrounding mental health, to provide an environment of mental health care that is inviting and inclusive for all students, and to proactively encourage and guide students to be good stewards of their mental health.
3. In caring for the mental health of all of its students, Vanderbilt University commits to consider and support the unique needs of its students, including but not limited to: students of color, international students, LGBTQI students, students with disabilities, military veterans, students who are first-generation college students, survivors of trauma, and students from underrepresented religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.
4. Vanderbilt University commits to protecting the privacy of its graduate students with regards to their mental health care and to providing maximum information and transparency for students regarding their privacy rights, including protection for treatment records.
5. Vanderbilt University undertakes to provide mental health services to its graduate students in accordance with the following guidelines:
  - a. An individual Care Coordinator shall be designated as the primary point of contact for each student upon intake into the Vanderbilt Student Care Network. The Care Coordinator shall assist the student in understanding, navigating, and accessing the resources within the network, and shall support the referral of the student to a provider outside of the primary Student Care Network, hereby referred to as an “outside provider.”
  - b. For non-urgent mental health concerns, students shall have a right to their choice of an in-person or phone assessment by a qualified mental health trained clinician within a reasonable time after contacting the Vanderbilt Student Care Network. For urgent concerns during normal operating hours and during nights and weekends, students shall have access to an on-call provider for assessment; the on-call provider may refer the student to emergency services if the student’s condition necessitates immediate attention, or may initiate scheduling of an assessment within a reasonable time. A “reasonable time” shall be determined on an individual basis by a qualified mental health trained clinician.
  - c. Individual services shall be accessible to every graduate student at no more than nominal cost until a mental health clinical review panel determines that a standard of care is reached, or that such standard of care would be better facilitated by an outside provider in accordance with 5 (d).

- d. The Student Care Network shall not terminate services without first providing due notice, and shall continue providing care until the commencement of treatment with an outside provider. A readily available list of outside providers who accept the graduate student insurance option shall be maintained by the Student Care Network. Student inability to pay out-of-pocket expenses, ease of access to off-campus services, specific student identities (see item 3), and other personal student needs associated with referral to an outside provider shall be considered during the clinical review process.
        - e. The Student Care Network shall strive to create a mental health care plan that meets the needs of the student and shall engage in a collaborative referral process with the student to secure appropriate services outside the primary Student Care Network. The student shall also have the ability to request a secondary review of their mental health care plan with members of the clinical review panel or another Student Care Network provider. This request should be facilitated by the student's Care Coordinator.
6. Vanderbilt University shall consider the coverage for mental health care, including, but not limited to, therapy, medication, emergency services, surgery, in-patient mental health treatment, and substance abuse treatment, in selecting a graduate student health insurance option. Vanderbilt University shall consider the fiscal limitations of its graduate students in selecting student insurance options.
7. Vanderbilt University shall strive to provide mental health care within an evidence-based framework, and to ensure that each graduate student shall have the opportunity to:
  - a. Remain apprised of the structure, policies, and practices of mental health care services for graduate students by Vanderbilt University, through elected liaisons in the Graduate Student Council;
  - b. Provide input to Vanderbilt University regarding the structure, policies, and practices of mental health services for graduate students, through elected liaisons in the Graduate Student Council;
  - c. Consider and comment on any proposed changes to the structure, policies, and practices of mental health services for graduate students, through a mechanism determined by the Graduate Student Council, and to have their comments entered into the record and duly considered before proposed changes may be adopted;
  - d. Receive detailed, transparent notice of changes following their adoption and prior to their implementation; and
  - e. Access metrics and actuarial data regarding mental health care provided by Vanderbilt to its students, or underlying all decisions to alter or discontinue mental health services.
8. Graduate students desiring mental health services should proactively contact a Care Coordinator. Vanderbilt University cannot provide care for cases of which it is unaware.

9. Graduate students shall have a responsibility to notify Vanderbilt University of serious and imminent concerns regarding the mental health of their colleagues, students, and other members of the Vanderbilt community.
10. Graduate students within the Vanderbilt network of care shall have the following responsibilities:
  - a. To consent to be treated and to accept the privacy policy for care;
  - b. To provide accurate information regarding medical history, medications, symptoms, and other matters relating to their mental and physical health;
  - c. To proactively communicate expectations, needs, questions, and concerns;
  - d. To make a good faith effort to keep appointments, to be on time for appointments, and to communicate if conflicts emerge;
  - e. To abide by facility rules and act in a manner that is respectful to other patients, staff, and facility property; and
  - f. To actively participate in decisions regarding their mental health care.
  - g. To inform the Student Care Network when their mental health care plan no longer meets their individual needs.
11. Graduate students within the Vanderbilt network of care are encouraged to do the following:
  - a. To follow treatment and care plans;
  - b. To report any concerns or changes in condition to their health care provider;
  - c. To alert staff to any privacy concerns; and
  - d. To consider consequences before refusing treatment.