Policy: Student Services	**Applicability:** PA Sciences Program Students
Policy Owner: PA Sciences Program	**Approved By:** Dean, School of Graduate Studies
Effective Date: August 18, 2021	**Last Reviewed:** August 5, 2026
Next Review: August 5, 2027	**Contact:** (615)321-2933

PURPOSE: To establish procedures for timely access and referral to personal, health, and academic support services that promote student well-being and progression throughout the didactic and clinical phases of the Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences Program, while respecting student privacy and maintaining appropriate faculty and staff roles.

POLICY: The Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences (MMC PAS) Program provides students with timely access to and referral to services that address personal issues that may affect their progress in the program. These issues may include mental or physical health concerns, stress, adjustment difficulties, substance use, family or interpersonal concerns, disability-related needs, and financial or other personal circumstances. Students may also be referred for academic support when it would help them continue to make progress.

This policy applies during the didactic and clinical phases, including when students are assigned to clinical sites. The program publishes the policy on its webpage, makes it available through student materials, and reviews it during orientation. Students may contact support services directly without first notifying the program or obtaining a referral.

Available Services

Counseling Center — 615-327-6915. Counseling Services is located on the third floor of the Cal-Turner Family Center for Student Education. Students may call to request an appointment, and walk-ins are welcome during business hours. The Counseling Center assists with concerns such as stress, adjustment, interpersonal difficulties, examination anxiety, and substance use. It may refer students to outside agencies or health care providers when appropriate, including community psychiatrists for medication evaluation.

Urgent Assistance

For a psychological emergency during business hours, students should request immediate assistance from the Counseling Center. After hours, they may call **615-327-6915** to reach an on-call counselor. Students should call **911** when immediate medical or police assistance is required. Students at clinical sites may use these same contact procedures; the program also assists them in identifying local services when needed. Urgent concerns are directed to crisis or emergency services immediately, rather than handled through a routine appointment or referral.

Center for Academic Success and Achievement (CASA) — 615-327-6500. Located in D.T. Rolfe Hall, CASA oversees the Collaborative Learning Program, which provides tutoring, facilitates educational skills sessions, and offers workshops and programs on a range of

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holistic educational topics. Students may contact CASA directly for support or may be referred by program faculty or staff.

For needs outside these services, the program directs students to the appropriate institutional service or helps identify an accessible community resource. A student may be connected with more than one service when appropriate.

PROCEDURE:

Faculty and Staff Referral Procedure

1. **Identify and discuss the concern.** The Academic Advisor or Course Director meets with the student promptly, describes the specific concern as it relates to participation or progress in the program, and determines whether immediate assistance is needed. Faculty and staff do not diagnose, counsel, or treat students.
2. **Connect the student with an appropriate service.** The Academic Advisor or Course Director provides contact information for the relevant service, which may include the Counseling Center, CASA, another institutional office, or an outside resource. With the student's agreement, the faculty or staff member may help make the initial contact. When a student is at a clinical site, the program assists in identifying an accessible service at that location if needed.
3. **Document the program's actions.** The Academic Advisor or Course Director records the date, the observed concern as it relates to program participation or progress, the resource offered, any assistance with making contact, and any program follow-up needed. The record does not include a diagnosis, counseling notes, or information shared with a treating provider.
4. **Follow up on access.** The Academic Advisor or Course Director will follow up, within a timeframe appropriate to the concern, to determine whether the student was able to contact a service. If access is delayed, the program helps identify another available resource. Follow-up addresses access and program needs without requesting confidential treatment information.

Records maintained by counseling, medical, or other service providers are separate from program academic records and are not requested by program faculty or staff as part of this referral procedure. The program reviews how students are informed of available services and how referrals are handled to assess whether these procedures provide timely access and are applied consistently.