**Maganbhai Adenwala Mahagujarat University Mental Health Policy**

**Preamble**

Maganbhai Adenwala Mahagujarat University (MAMU) is committed to fostering a vibrant and supportive academic ecosystem. We recognize that the mental health of our students is as critical as their physical health and academic performance. This policy, rooted in the principles of **UMEED**, **MANODARPAN**, and the **National Suicide Prevention Strategy**, is specifically designed for our university, which combines traditional Indian health systems like Ayurveda with modern medical education. Our approach is holistic, compassionate, and aims to empower our students to not only succeed academically but also to thrive personally and professionally.

**1. MAM University's Plan: A Holistic Approach for the students**

Our implementation of the UMEED framework will be uniquely tailored to our identity as a health sciences university.

* **U - Understand Student Needs:** We will conduct a mandatory, anonymous, online mental health screening for all incoming students during the orientation period. This will help us to understand baseline mental health needs and identify at-risk students, ensuring early intervention.
* **M - Motivate Positive Behaviour:** We will leverage the expertise of our own students and faculty from the Faculties of Nursing and Ayurveda to create a peer-led mental health ambassador program. These student ambassadors will be trained in basic counselling, active listening, and mental health first aid, acting as a bridge between the student body and professional counselling services.
* **M - Manage Crises Effectively:** A dedicated **MAM University Mental Health and Wellness Cell (MAMU-MWC)** will be established. This cell will include:
	+ A professional psychologist/counsellor.
	+ A senior faculty member as the Nodal Officer.
	+ One representative from each faculty (Ayurveda, Nursing, etc.).
	+ A representative from Students
	+ A dedicated, confidential helpline number for students, accessible 24/7.
* **E - Empathize and De-stigmatize:** We will hold regular, compulsory workshops for all faculty and staff. These sessions will be led by our own mental health experts and will focus on recognizing signs of distress, creating a non-judgmental environment, and guiding students to the correct resources.
* **E - Empower Students:** We will integrate wellness modules into the curriculum of all our programs. For example, for Ayurveda and Nursing students, these modules will focus on self-care, stress management, and emotional regulation, recognizing that they are in high-stress fields. For other students, these will be offered as co-curricular activities.
* **D - Develop a Holistic System:** Our wellness initiatives will integrate traditional and modern practices. This includes regular yoga and meditation sessions led by experts from our Ayurveda faculty, alongside modern workshops on topics like cognitive-behavioural techniques (CBT) and mindfulness.

**2. MAMU's MANODARPAN: Leveraging Our Strengths**

Our psychosocial support system will be enhanced by the unique resources available at our university.

* **Integrated Medical and Psychological Support:** The university's existing medical facilities—Sheth H.J. Mahagujarat Hospital and P.D. Patel Ayurvedic Hospital—will be integrated into our mental health framework. Students seeking mental health support will be provided free consultations and referrals to psychiatrists or other specialists within this network.
* **Specialized Counselling for Health Science Students:** Recognizing the unique pressures faced by students in the medical field (e.g., academic rigor, clinical rotations, and emotional burnout), we will offer specialized counselling services and support groups tailored to their needs.
* **Digital Wellness Portal: 'Arogyam':** We will create a comprehensive digital portal named 'Arogyam' on the university website and app. This portal will serve as a one-stop-shop for all mental health resources, including:
	+ Contact information for the MAMU-MWC and the national helpline.
	+ Informative articles and videos on mental health topics.
	+ A confidential "ask a counsellor" feature.
	+ Links to external, verified resources.
* **Parental and Family Awareness:** We will conduct regular online and offline sessions for parents, particularly during admissions and academic breaks, to educate them on how to support their child's mental health and recognize signs of distress.

**3. MAM University's National Suicide Prevention Strategy: A Compassionate Response**

In line with the national strategy, our protocol will be proactive and deeply compassionate.

* **Immediate Action Protocol (IAP):** We will establish a clear, documented protocol for all faculty and staff to follow when they encounter a student at immediate risk of suicide. This IAP will outline steps for de-escalation, immediate reporting to the MAMU-MWC, and professional intervention.
* **Confidentiality and Privacy:** A strict confidentiality policy will be enforced for all mental health services. Student information will not be shared with faculty, parents, or other students without their explicit consent, except in cases where a student poses a direct threat to themselves or others.
* **Post-Crisis Support:** After a mental health crisis or suicide attempt, the MAMU-MWC will ensure the student receives continuous follow-up care. A support team, including a counsellor and a faculty mentor, will be assigned to assist the student's re-integration into the academic environment.
* **Suicide Postvention Protocol:** In the tragic event of a student death by suicide, the university will follow a pre-planned postvention protocol. This will focus on providing immediate grief counselling to students and faculty, preventing "copycat" incidents, and communicating respectfully with the university community while protecting the privacy of the deceased and their family.

This policy will be a living document, reviewed annually by the MAMU-MWC to ensure it meets the evolving needs of our student body and remains aligned with the highest standards of mental health care in India.