



Loma Linda University School of Medicine Confidential Advisors for Medical Students Principles

Objective

The position of Confidential Advisor for Medical Students (CAMS) was developed to promote a positive educational learning environment for the School of Medicine (SM). The CAMS will serve as an independent, impartial, informal, and confidential resource for students with concerns related to the educational environment.

Background

While the associate and assistant dean for student affairs, as well as other SM associate and assistant deans provide many types of support for students, they have administrative as well as supportive roles. For this reason, their responsibilities require them at times to address issues related to students' lapses in judgment and in misconduct, including failures to comply with policies and procedures and meet academic expectations. Because of these dual roles they cannot promise confidentiality in the way a therapist or confidential advisor can. The CAMS, therefore is intended to provide an added resource for students if they wish to discuss concerns in a confidential manner with an experienced and trusted faculty member.

CAMS Roles and Procedures

1. Provide a safe and confidential opportunity for concerns to be heard
2. Assist in identifying options and providing resources to manage and resolve concerns
3. Educate about SM and Loma Linda University (LLU) policies and procedures
4. Refer and recommend students to appropriate formal processes and resources
5. Facilitate communication between conflicting parties.
6. With the student's permission, may report incidences to one of the SM deans listed in the SM mistreatment policy in the SM section of the Student Handbook who can initiate action if needed.
7. Share observations and recommendations about SM operations, systems, policies and processes as well as trends and concerns that it would be beneficial for the SM to be aware of.

CAMS Appointment

1. At least two CAMS in differing specialties will be appointed who understand the educational requirements and expectations for students as well as the academic structure, function and responsibilities of the medical school. The CAMS cannot be a Clerkship or Course Director, Dean, Residency Program Director, Department Chair or anyone who might have a role in the evaluation or promotion of students.
2. The CAMS will be appointed by the SM Dean or her/his designee subject to the dean's approval. The CAMS will serve a term of two years and may be re-appointed for an unlimited number of additional terms.
3. CAMS will be oriented to their role by the SM Student Affairs Office and the Dean of the SOM.

Contact CAMS:

1. Contact information will be available on the SOM Student Affairs website and through information provided at various orientation programs.
2. Contact the SOM Student Affairs Office with questions.
3. No records will be kept of CAMS Referrals

CAMS Guiding Principles

Confidential

1. CAMS will maintain the privacy of the identity of students, residents, fellows, and faculty, as well as the content of their conversations. The only exceptions to this confidentiality are those legally required of health providers including, but not limited to, imminent risk of serious harm to self or others or where there is no reasonable option other than disclosure. Whether serious risk of harm exists is a determination to be made by the CAMS.
2. With the student's permission, the CAMS may contact individuals within the institution whose help is necessary to resolve a problem including the SM Dean's office.
3. CAMS do not keep records containing personal identifiable information.
4. CAMS do not make reports to the School of Medicine or GME Office, although they may inform regarding areas of concern and opportunities for improvement.

Neutral

1. CAMS help ensure that due process is adhered to.
2. As students hold positions of lesser authority within organizations, CAMS may serve as an advocate or resource. For example, CAMS may offer feedback, information, advice, and/or referrals. Such service is intended to provide education, give students a sense of empowerment, reduce stress, frustration, and a sense of helplessness
3. The CAMS may accompany and support a student, at the student's request, to any academic or disciplinary committee where decisions about possible suspension or dismissal may be made.
4. CAMS will be free of any adverse consequences from providing support and resources for a student. It is not appropriate for other faculty or administrators to intimidate CAMS. Such behavior will be reported to the Dean of the SOM.

Independent

1. CAMS have no authority to make decisions on behalf of a program, the SM or the institution.
2. CAMS provide support, assistance, education, referrals and feedback.

Informal

1. CAMS engage informally with students. They will not retain written records.
2. No physician-patient or other formal relationship is created.

CAMS Services

1. Students may seek guidance on matters related to: academic issues, experiences of mistreatment, discrimination, or harassment, disciplinary matters, interpersonal conflicts, or concerns about the learning environment in the classroom or in clinical settings.
2. CAMS may help identify options for resolution of conflict, clarify policies and procedures, provide resources for referrals to formal channels for investigation, make referrals.

Services Not Provided:

1. CAMS will not perform formal investigations or offer opinions on administrative decisions.
2. Notices to CAMS does NOT constitute notice to the SOM Deans office or Loma Linda University Health.
3. CAMS service are not meant to supplement nor replace current grievance and complaint reporting and resolution mechanism,
4. CAMS does not keep official University records