

Counsellor/Teacher FAQ in Managing Students on Drug

1. How do we know if a student is on drugs/using drugs?

There are tell-tale signs. For instance, changes in the physical, behavioural and psychological aspects of the youth. Here are some examples:

- Drop in performance/attendance at school
- Frequent tendency to get into trouble in school or outside of school
- Behaving secretive or suspiciously
- Unexplained need for more money or experiencing financial problems, often seeking to borrow money from friends/classmates, stealing from school/family
- Appear fearful, anxious, or paranoid for no apparent reason
- Often appear lethargic or 'spaced out', lack of motivation.
- Sudden/frequent anger outbursts, , mood swings or irritability
- Unexplained changes in personality or attitude, particularly a negative change
- Unusual hyperactivity, agitation, or giddiness for short periods of time

2. When we suspect a student is using drug, what should we do as a counsellor/teacher?

In such a situation, you should determine the physical/psychological state of the student first. Thereafter, establish your school protocol (inform parents/principal/MOE), before consulting anyone. If you are unsure of the existing protocol, it is advisable to inform the principle first and decide if the school should contact the parents. There are times when the school prefer to consult a private counselling firm or VWOs or FSC (Family Service Centre) to work out what is best for the student and the school.

3. How much are the charges for Acorn Quest Pte Ltd services? Is there subsidy from the government?

The charges are SGD\$150 per hour and SGD\$37.50 per subsequent 15mins. Acorn Quest is **not** a VWO (Volunteer Welfare Organization), Charity organization or NPO (Non-Profit). Hence, we are not subsidized by the government. If you come from low income family, do submit your payslip and breakdown of expenses for further assessment. Once assessment is successful, we will charge a nominal rate for 3 months before we re-assess your eligibility. Acorn Quest will be responsible in getting sponsors to support the counselling services for those who need it.

4. Can the family member/school counsellor/teacher sit in together with student for the consultation at National Addiction Management Service (NAMS)?

During the first session, it is encouraged for students to see the doctor or counsellor individually first. Thereafter, family members can request to speak to the doctor or counsellor. As for school counsellor/teacher, it will depend on school protocol. Doctors are obliged to speak to the school counsellor/teacher especially if it is a school referral to NAMS.

For Acorn Quest consultation/counselling sessions, family members can accompany the student. However, individual sessions with the students will be arranged. Family member/school counsellor/teacher can request to speak to counsellor. As we are bound by the PDPA Act and Counselling Code of Ethics, we will only share with the relevant stakeholders of the case with the client and the family's permission. Only helpful information will be revealed.

5. When school counsellor/teacher refer their students to Acorn Quest directly, would Acorn Quest report the school/students to Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB)?

Acorn Quest is not affiliated to CNB or any other government organization. Acorn Quest takes into consideration the best interest of the student and works with the school to help the student.

6. I am school counsellor/teacher. How do I refer someone to NAMS (National Addiction Management Service)?

You can email us to refer the student to Acorn Quest Pte Ltd at info.acornquest@gmail.com or call us at 8689 6410 to make an appointment for the student to see us for an assessment before we refer to NAMS for detox.

7. When school counsellor/teacher refer their students to NAMS directly, would they report the school/students to CNB?

NAMS is obligated to report/notify every client to CNB when they walk-in to NAMS (IMH).

8. As a school counsellor/teacher, can we send our students directly to NAMS and would they be arrested?

Yes, you can do direct walk-in to NAMS and their protocol is to notify/alert CNB when you do the walk-in.

9. What is the process like when Acorn Quest do a referral to NAMS? How long do we wait?

Once Acorn Quest received the referral letter, we will arrange for a session with the student to conduct initial assessment before we refer to NAMS. We would also facilitate and guide you through the entire process.

10. What is the process when we do direct walk-in to NAMS?

Arriving at NAMS, a registration is required. You will be referred to a doctor for consultation and followed by a Urine Test. If the test is positive and student is unstable, the doctor is likely to recommend for admission. If UT is positive and client is stable, doctor is likely to send the student home and review the case again in one/two week time. During the first visit, the waiting time is about 2-3hrs

11. How long is the detoxification process and what will happen during period?

The detoxification process takes about 2 weeks and this includes rehabilitation programme at the inpatient phase @ Serenity Centre. During these 2 weeks inpatient phase, it is vital for client to complete the detoxification process. For some clients, especially Heroin user, will undergo withdrawal symptoms while others could experience paranoia/hallucination.

12. How much is the charges for NAMS Services and what if student cannot pay?

You can call the Addictions Helpline at 6-RECOVER (6-7326837) for more information. If your student is admitted, the charges can utilize CPF to pay. If your student cannot afford to pay due to financial difficulty, you can seek IMH Medical Social Worker (MSW) for further assistance.