

Case Study: Mental Health

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Mental Health Crisis (previous institution)

- Female student in Latin America (c. 2003)
 - On Saturday morning, took off all clothes and went for a swim in public fountain in center of the city
 - Home stay family drove by, saw her
 - Admitted to hospital, full-blown mental break down; stayed in hospital for several days
 - Flown home heavily medicated, needed to be accompanied by a nurse
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What was shared, what was not shared?

- Some details of the incident were shared internally in the Study Abroad office at the time, but once the student was home the information-sharing process stopped abruptly
 - Our study abroad director became close-lipped about what happened with the student
 - Our Counseling Center did not share information with study abroad advisors after student returned
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Study abroad staff had many questions

- Did we miss warning signs?
 - Did we need to adjust our procedures for screening students post-acceptance?
 - Did on-site staff handle the situation properly?
 - Could/should we have reacted differently?
 - What was the impact on the student? How well did she respond to treatment?
 - What was the financial fall-out?
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Other questions to consider

- Have other schools dealt with this?
 - Could we learn from their experiences?
 - What information is appropriate to share with colleagues in other offices or other programs?
 - How do we prepare future faculty leaders for this type of issue?
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