Diverse Approaches to Supporting Student-Athlete Mental Health

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SSI Strategic Priorities

1. Concussion
2. Cardiac health
3. Doping & substance abuse
4. Mental health
5. Nutrition, sleep, & performance
6. Overuse injuries & periodization
7. Sexual violence prevention

➢ Athletics healthcare administration
➢ Data-driven decisions
ACHA-NCHA Data

- Data from ACHA--National College Health Assessment.
- Semi-annual survey of college students, current data span seven administrations from spring 2010 thru fall 2014; ≈148,000 non-student-athletes and 16,000 student-athletes in sample.
- Survey covers several mental and physical health topics, including:
  - Alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use
  - Sexual health
  - Weight, nutrition, and exercise
  - Mental health
  - Personal safety and violence
- Institutions have authority over sampling, survey method and time of administration.

American College Health Association. American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment, Spring 2010, Fall 2010, Spring 2011, Fall 2011, Fall 2012, Fall 2013, Fall 2014 ACHA-NCHA II, ACHA-NCHA IIb. Hanover, MD: American College Health Association; (2016-01-04).
### Depression and Anxiety (2008-14 NCHA-ACHA Data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>STUDENT-ATHLETES</th>
<th>NON-ATHLETES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever felt so depressed that it was difficult to function? (Yes, in last 12 months)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever felt overwhelming anxiety? (Yes, in last 12 months)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>57%</td>
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Mind, Body and Sport

- Personal narratives
- Experts on student-athlete depression, anxiety, eating disorders, substance abuse, gambling
- Stressors on student-athlete mental health: transitions, performance, injury, academic stress, coach relations
- Sexual assault, hazing bullying
- Cultural pressures: African-American student-athletes; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender student-athletes
- Roles & responsibilities of sports medicine staff
- Coaches’ needs and roles
- Models of service
- NCAA resources and policies – www.ncaa.org/mentalhealth
Mental Health Occurs on a Continuum

Resilience and thriving

Mental Health

Mental health disorders
Mental Health Best Practices

• To assure availability and accessibility of appropriate mental health care for all student-athletes, independent of institutional resources.

• To create and maintain an environment within the athletics department that destigmatizes and promotes help seeking.

• Developed with input from a range of stakeholder groups
Best Practices

1. Ensure that mental health care is provided by licensed practitioners qualified to provide mental health services.
2. Clarify and disseminate referral protocol.
3. Consider mental health screening in PPEs.
4. Create and maintain a health-promoting environment that supports mental well-being and resilience.
Best Practice #1

• Care should be provided by:
  – Clinical or counseling psychologists.
  – Psychiatrists.
  – Licensed clinical social workers.
  – Psychiatric mental health nurses.
  – Licensed mental health counselors.
  – Primary care physicians with core competencies to treat mental health disorders.
• *Include registered dietician in multidisciplinary team for eating disorders.
• Individual providing care should have cultural competency that addresses both societal diversity and the culture of sports.
Best Practice #2

• Athletic departments will have clear and communicated procedures for referring athletes to appropriate personnel:
  – Mental Health Emergency Action Management Plan
  – Routine Mental Health Referrals
Best Practice #3

• Implement mental health screening as part of annual pre-participation exams:
  – In consultation with licensed mental health professional
  – In conjunction with referral procedures
Best Practice #4

• Create a health promoting environment that promotes mental well-being and resilience, and that is supportive of help-seeking behaviors.

• Student-athletes, FARs and coaches should be educated about the importance of mental health, including how to manage mental health concerns.
In Summary

- Mental health is not apart from, but rather, a part of athlete health.
- Athletic environments can support help seeking and facilitate early identification, appropriate referral and care.
- Establishing protocols for care means more equitable care across sports and within institutions.
- Implementation of Best Practice is an important step towards ensuring a model of care for student-athlete mental health.
NCAA Wellness Resources

- APPLE Prevention Conferences
- CHOICES Alcohol Education Grants
- Mental Health Resources:
  - Mind, Body and Sport
  - Mental Health Best Practices
  - Web-base modules for Coaches, FARs, and Student-Athletes
- myPlaybook online curriculum
- Sexual Violence Prevention Tool Kit
- Step UP! Bystander Intervention Training

www.ncaa.org/mentalhealth

www.ncaa.org/ssi