Athletes Connected
Developing and Evaluating a Model Program for Supporting the Mental Health of Student Athletes

Presentation at the NCAA Convention
National Harbor, MD
January 15, 2015
Presentation Outline

1. Program Overview
2. Research Findings
3. Next Steps
Program Overview
Multidisciplinary Team

School of Public Health: Daniel Eisenberg, PhD; Blake Wagner III, BA

School of Information: Sonia Doshi, Undergraduate Student

Depression Center: Nehal Agarwal, MSI; Trish Meyer, EdM; Stephanie Salazar, MPH, CHES

Athletics: Emily Brunemann, BA; Kally Fayhee, BA; Barb Hansen, LMSW; Will Heininger, BA; Adam Kern, BA

Film producer: Will Del Rosario, Cinematographer

Group facilitator: Adrienne Pisoni, LMSW
Program Components

1. Brief Videos
2. Team Presentations
3. Support Groups
Supporting the Mental Health of Student Athletes

Athletes Connected
Team Presentations
PRIDE PROHIBITS THEM FROM ASKING FOR HELP

Athletes Connected
Support Groups
Research Findings
Brief Videos

99% videos engaging and relevant

Randomized trial: promising preliminary results
Team Presentations

96% likely to use the information presented

40 student-athletes requested counseling appointments

63% mental health affected performance in last 4 weeks
Support Groups

92% expect to apply the lessons or coping skills

Quotes

“Everyone can have difficulties, and mental illnesses can be similar to physical ailments.”

“I learned that my sport doesn't define who I am.”

“I learned the importance of creating a balance of healthy and fun activities outside of school and athletics.”
Next Steps
Overall Vision

Athletes Connected aims to change the culture regarding the mental health and wellbeing of our student athletes at the University of Michigan, and beyond. Through a comprehensive approach involving student engagement, targeted interventions, and scientific research, we will equip student athletes with the evidence-based skills and support they need to increase their emotional health and be successful in athletics, academics, and all other aspects of their lives.
Program Goals

- Build on success: new videos; additional team presentations and trainings; and continuation/expansion of the support group intervention

- Research on link between emotional health, and athletic and academic performance

- Empowerment and engagement of student athletes

- Integration of well-being strategies and support into daily lives of student athletes
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