



## Action Plan - Mental Health and Elite Sport

### Introduction

Government's sport strategy 'Sporting Future', published in December 2015, not only recognised the impact that sport has on physical and mental health but also highlighted the importance of welfare and wellbeing in elite sport, recognising the sacrifices athletes make in striving for success.

Over the course of the last year, government has been looking at how sport can improve its offer of mental health support to elite sports people. The Minister for Sport hosted two roundtables on the topic in October 2017, one for athletes jointly chaired by the Minister for Care and Mental Health, and the other for sports and mental health organisations.

As a result, the action plan attached has been developed with mental health and sport organisations based on the key points raised in discussion, including clarity of support available, sharing of best practice across the sport sector and improved mental health education and training in sport. Government will continue to work collaboratively with the sport and mental health sectors to implement the action plan, building on the good work already done and continuing to break down the stigma around, and raise awareness of, mental health issues.

It is worth noting that although some of the actions can be implemented fairly quickly others will take some time to embed. We will establish and manage a small group to oversee progress in delivering the actions in the plan made up of representatives from organisations with actions listed. We will report on progress as part of the Sporting Future annual report to Parliament.

No.	Action	Outputs	Timing(s)	Owner
1.	To establish a high standard of mental health support in elite sport, by implementing a new mental health strategy. This strategy will promote good mental health and provide appropriate signposting and referral for mental health problems.	<p>A standard of requirements for supporting athlete and Athlete Support Personnel (ASP) mental health across elite sport.</p> <p>A psychologically underpinned performance environment which enables all to thrive at work. A mental health pathway which enacts the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendations on good mental health and also provides support for mental health problems.</p> <p>Further information provided to athletes and ASP on the role of sports and clinical psychologists in enhancing good mental health to ensure this is clear at team and individual level, and commitment to helping National Governing Bodies (NGBs) optimise how they deploy them.</p> <p>Training provided for Performance Directors, Coaches, NGB and Home Institute Staff on appropriate mental health awareness, how to identify signs of mental ill-health and promote positive mental wellbeing, including realising abilities, coping with normal life stresses,</p>	<p><b>August 2018</b></p> <p><b>Long-term – 2024 (for a fully sustainable and embedded system)</b></p> <p><b>December 2018</b></p> <p><b>December 2018</b></p>	<p><b>UK Sport</b> (supported by the British Athletes Commission (BAC), Institutes of Sport and Mind)</p>

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		<p>working productively and contributing to your community.</p> <p>National Lottery Funded athletes to visit mental health units to continue to break down the stigma around mental health.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing from June 2018</b></p>	
2.	<p>To ensure mental health support is available, and parity with physical health promoted, at every stage of the talent pathway.</p>	<p>Mental health to be part of Sport England's Talent Strategy, which will embed the general principles of positive experience, holistic athlete development and athlete health and welfare. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The education and support provided to talent leads within NGBs and other funded partners' lead staff.</li> <li>• Setting expectations and supporting positive action for NGBs and other partners.</li> </ul>	<p><b>October 2018</b></p> <p><b>Ongoing from Summer 2018</b></p> <p><b>Ongoing from Summer 2018</b></p>	<p><b>Sport England</b> (working with other key partners including SportsAid, The Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS), Commonwealth Games England (CGE) and NGBs)</p>
3.	<p>To ensure that the support provided by the Player Associations to their members continues to represent best practice. (Depending upon the resources available this may include a focus on ensuring that players' rights are respected; support and preparation</p>	<p>Best practice shared and developed between the Professional Player Associations, English Institute of Sport (EIS), Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS) and Scottish Institute of Sport (SIS) through regular meetings.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing (regular meetings at least twice a year with key stakeholders and Player Associations)</b></p>	<p><b>Professional Player Associations</b> (supported by The Professional Players' Federation (PPF))</p>

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	for life after sport; campaigns to both reduce stigma and promote awareness of the support available; free access to confidential and independent counselling and clinical support; and the provision of financial support in cases of hardship.)	<p>Benchmarking exercise of the support available for professional athletes from the Player Associations.</p> <p>Collaborative working with Mind and the Sport and Recreation Alliance (through the Mental Health Charter for Sport) to encourage greater support from the professional leagues and governing bodies for the mental wellbeing of athletes.</p>	<p><b>Internal document by end of 2018</b></p> <p><b>Ongoing (regular meetings at least four times a year)</b></p>	
4.	To integrate mental health support content into formal and informal learning opportunities for sport coaches and performance support staff at all levels.	<p>Showcase support for mental health support in coaching during Coaching Week</p> <p>Production of 'Mental Health Support Content for Coach Learning and Development' Guide (to be linked to Coaching Professional Standards)</p> <p>Development of e-learning course with Mind and Sport England</p> <p>Mental health support opportunities embedded into UK Coaching Resource Review</p> <p>Mental health support content included in review of any formal governing body qualifications</p>	<p><b>4<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> June 2018</b></p> <p><b>May 2018</b></p> <p><b>October 2018</b></p> <p><b>April 2018 – March 2019</b></p> <p><b>April 2018 – March 2019</b></p>	<b>UK Coaching</b>

No.	Action	Outputs	Timing(s)	Owner
		Review learning from implementing the action plan and provide recommendations beyond coaches	March 2019	
5.	To produce and disseminate specific sport related resources to support the implementation of the <i>Thriving at Work</i> recommendations across the sector. Ensuring employers can better support employees' (including athletes, coaches, volunteers, administrators and performance staff) mental health and wellbeing recognising the role of the team in success.	A tailored guide produced with sector specific guidance, case studies, resources and tools.	Summer 2018	Mind and the Sport and Recreation Alliance
6.	To encourage good practice to be shared across the sport sector.	An online resource bank of good practice produced to share with the sector and wider stakeholders.	September 2018	The Sport and Recreation Alliance