SPORTS TRAINER PRACTICES IN A COVIDSAFE AUSTRALIA

Sports Trainers play a pivotal role in the health and safety of participants in all levels of sport, particularly at a community level. In community sport settings, an Accredited Sports Trainer may be the highest trained individual available to attend to onsite athlete health and wellbeing and as such, may also be suitable to play the role of a COVID-19 safety officer. Suitable engagement of Accredited Sports Trainers will be essential in the safe return to sport in our current environment. To successfully perform the role of Sports Trainer in a COVIDSAFE Australia, it is recommended that the following approach be considered:

All Australian Sports Trainers are advised to follow a simple 4-step process (plan, prepare, respond, recover) while working in a COVID-19 environment. This is to ensure the safety of all athletes, support staff and community members.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING
- Trainers education
- Officials, staff, coaches and athlete education
- Keep up to date with COVID-19 including local public health guidelines and transmission rates

PERSONAL INFECTION CONTROL
- ‘Stay away policies’ — if unwell, do not attend
- Hand washing and personal hygiene activities
- Access to hand sanitisation stands
- Practice social distancing

PROTOCOLS TO SUPPORT INFECTION CONTROL
- Cleaning of facilities (as per Government guidelines)
- Rules and procedures regarding arrival, departure, and access to indoor facilities

RESOURCES
- Cleaning supplies and equipment
- Hand sanitisation resources
- Safety waste disposal procedures
PREPARE

FACILITIES
First Aid Room
Limit access to essential people only. Always maintain an acceptable social distance between athletes and support staff.
Couch
Thoroughly clean between each athlete.
Surfaces
Clean before, during and after training. Ensure thorough cleaning between each use.
Treatment Space
If there is no room available ensure to set up in a designated and isolated area. This should include a marked or roped off section on the side-lines.
Hand Hygiene
Hand washing and sanitiser must always be available.
Waiting Areas
Waiting areas should be available as required and allow for physical separation of all athletes and support staff.

EQUIPMENT
First Aid Kits
First Aid kits always adequately stocked and managed hygienically.
Stretchers
Stretchers cleaned before and after use according to appropriate infection control guidelines.
Neck Braces
Neck braces cleaned before and after use according to appropriate infection control guidelines.

HYGIENE
Hand Hygiene
Appropriate hand washing, and hand sanitisation should be available to all including athletes, coaches and staff.
Waste Disposal
Appropriate waste disposal procedures must be established.
Facility Rules
Rules and procedures regarding arrival, departure, and access to indoor facilities.

HYDRATION SAFETY
Personal water bottles, or single use cups. There must not be sharing of water bottles. Minimising handling of water bottles, except by athlete.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT
Used during treatment of unwell athletes or where high-risk exposure such as airway management.
Used according to local public health guidelines where close contact cannot be avoided.
Gloves
Gloves available for use where appropriate especially if contact with unwell athlete.
Face Masks
Masks easily accessible for at risk situations.
Eye Protection
Eye protection recommended for close contact assessment and treatment of for contact with unwell athlete.
Outcome clothing
Change after each session, bag and wash if potential exposure to infected athlete.

RECORD KEEPING FOR ATTENDANCE
Record treatments as per established protocols. Recommend all athletes and staff the use of COVIDSafe App. Ensure training attendance is recorded according to recommendations.
PROTOCOLS FOR TRAINING
Arrival procedures arranged according to plan for training to minimize mixing between different training groups.
Location according to return to sport guidelines to ensure appropriate separation between training groups.
Departure procedures arranged according to plan for training to minimize mixing between different training groups.

MANAGEMENT UNWELL PARTICIPANTS
Establish process for notification of illness prior to training (e.g. athlete/parent call designated person prior to training).
Notification process at training (e.g. if someone becomes unwell during training, athlete should notify a designated person).
Designated person/sports trainer should isolate athlete, apply mask, and arrange transport for them to be picked up.

PERSONAL DISTANCING
Policy to maintain appropriate social distancing wherever safe/possible, including waiting and treatment areas.
Limit access to indoor treatment areas.
Designated and restricted outdoor treatment areas (e.g. sidelines).

MASSAGE
Consider necessity of treatment.
Limit duration.
Consider masks for therapist and athlete.
Appropriate hygiene and cleaning.
Masks for trainers and players used according to local public health guidelines.

APPROACH TO THE INJURED PLAYER
Assess danger.
Assess threat to life and respond with "DRSABCD".
Perform initial injury assessment (STOP)
Verbal and visual assessment at safe distance where possible.
Instruct player to self-test.
Avoid/minimize contact where safe and possible (e.g. instruct player to palpate self).
Remove from play where indicated.
Perform detailed injury assessment (TOTAPS)
Minimize contact and maintain physical distancing where safe and possible.
Assess active movement and skills by observation at distance.
Transport/refer as required.
Maintain physical distancing where safe.

INJURY, BLOOD, AND WOUND MANAGEMENT
Usual blood/wound precautions including use of gloves and other PPE.
Use player to apply pressure.
Use of ice
Single use disposable bags should be used for containing and applying ice. Ensure appropriate disposal after use.
Blood and wound management should be performed according to established guidelines.

RECORD KEEPING FOR ATTENDANCE
Record treatments.
Recommend the use of COVIDSafe App

HEAD/FACIAL INJURY MANAGEMENT
Sports trainer is likely to be in close contact when assessing athlete and hence vulnerable to droplet spread.
Protective eye wear for trainer.
Mask for trainer and injured player where practical.
Prioritize lifesaving measures ahead of COVID risk.
Injury management of head/facial injuries should be performed according to established guidelines.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
Check for responsiveness, do not open airway or have face close to athlete’s mouth/nose.
Wear appropriate PPE as available including eyewear, mask, gloves.
Clear and maintain airway.
Consider rescue breath in infant/child.
Commence CPR Compression.
Defibrillation as soon as possible (even prior to donning PPE).
Handwashing, cleaning, and econtamination after resuscitation.
RECOVER

CLEANING
Ensure thorough cleaning of all treatment areas and shared equipment using detergent and disinfectant (chlorine-based bleach solution or >70% alcohol).

REPORTING
Appropriately collect all athlete data, contact information and treatment notes.

REVIEW
Consider issues with operation of a safe training/playing environment. Report to club/sport personnel and/or COVIDsafe officer.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Return to sport checklist
COVID-19 infection control training
Australian Resuscitation Council
Management of adult cardiac arrest in the COVID-19 era
Cleaning and disinfection principles for health and residential care facilities
COVID-19 safety coordinator