



# SPORT NORTHERN IRELAND CONCUSSION FORUM

TUESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2015

## SUMMARY NOTES

### ATTENDEE LIST

Representatives	Governing Body / Organisation
Professor Phil Glasgow	Sport Northern Ireland Sports Institute
Chris McNicholl	Sport Northern Ireland Sports Institute
Peter McCabe	Sport Northern Ireland Sports Institute
Shaun Ogle	Sport Northern Ireland Sports Institute
Dr Mike Webb	Ulster Rugby
Rosie Rea	Ulster Hockey
Gareth McAvoy	Taekwondo Association Northern Ireland
Dr Sean Donnelly	Irish Amateur Boxing Association
Gary Mallon	GAA Ulster Council
Dr Sarah Quinn	NHS
Dr Antonia Lehane	Horse Sport Ireland
Matt McKnight	Canoe Association of Northern Ireland
Dr Michael McKenna	Irish Amateur Boxing Association
Robert Heyburn	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
Jonathan McMeekin	Ulster Hockey
Keith Morrison	Health and Safety Executive NI
Paula Murray	Department of Education
Dr McDermott	NHS

The first meeting of the Concussion Forum (in October 2015) focussed on discussion around the broad issues facing local sport with regard to concussion management, current needs and deficiencies in the area, and potential ideas for addressing these.

The second meeting in December 2015 saw attendees discuss, in more detail, specific ideas which they felt could make a difference.

Feedback received at the meeting from the broad sub-groups (Medical, Governance and Sports / Grassroots) has been summarised below:

<h2>MEDICAL / HEALTHCARE</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return-to-play guidelines are required for Northern Ireland, and these are needed as part of a broader 'care pathway' for concussion. This will help create a uniform approach.</li> <li>• This 'care pathway' will encompass guidance on:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assessment (including role of Doctor / GP)</li> <li>○ Management (including physical and cognitive rest)</li> <li>○ The potential need for specialist care if required</li> <li>○ Return-to-play / Return-to-learn</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There is a need for an information point which can be referred to by the medical sector (including A&amp;E staff)</li> <li>• A reporting system should be established as a way of ensuring that any concussion sustained is 'flagged up' to the key individuals who need to be informed (this may include parents, schools, coaches etc.).</li> <li>• Similarly it is important to encourage links between different teams the patient may a member of (e.g. different sports, or school &amp; club teams). Within the medical sector itself, resources such as information leaflets which could be provided to concussion patients after discharge could be useful, but key will be building awareness of any such resources among GPs, A&amp;E Staff.</li> <li>• It may be useful to identify regional GPs with a specialist interest in or experience of concussion, or signposting to medical assessment / testing options</li> </ul>
<h2>GOVERNANCE</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness of concussion needs to be increased at grassroots level, and this could be facilitated by:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Online resources / information</li> <li>○ Coach education and training (resources as mentioned above could help with this)</li> <li>○ Incorporating concussion management within Sport NI Clubmark programme</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Along with awareness building, it is important to address practices for the reporting of concussions in terms of:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Promoting reporting between different sports or teams the player is a member of</li> <li>○ Means of reporting concussion e.g. referees / officials reports, templates. These could be stored and accessed from a centralised location (i.e. a website).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Return-to-play protocols should be uniform across sports to help promote uptake and enforcement.</li> </ul>

## **SPORT / GRASSROOTS**

- Responsibilities should be clarified at club, Governing Body, administrative level with regard to provision of information on return-to-play protocols. These could be potentially be promoted by making them a requirement of the registration process for sports, specifically in the case of contact sports.
- There needs to be a consistent approach with regard to the information and protocols re concussion managements across sports which would be in line with other advice internationally.
- There needs to be an establishment of moral principles and imperative with regards to removal from play where a player sustains a concussion.