

Duty of Care in Sport

Independent Report to Government

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Duty of Care Review

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Introduction

The most important element in sport is the people involved, whether they are taking part, volunteering, coaching or paid employees. The success of sport, in terms of helping people achieve their potential, making the most of existing talent, and attracting new people to sport relies on putting people – their safety, wellbeing and welfare – at the centre of what sport does.

However, recent media reports and anecdotal evidence from across a range of sports has led to questions about whether welfare and safety really are being given the priority they deserve. At a time of success for British sport in terms of medals, championships and profile, this raises challenging questions about whether the current balance between welfare and winning is right and what we are prepared to accept as a nation.

Following the publication of the government's sport strategy "Sporting Future", published in late 2015, I was delighted to be asked by the Minister of Sport to look into issues surrounding the so-called "Duty of Care" that sports have towards their participants. "Sporting Future" aims to encourage more people to become active, to strengthen the sporting workforce and create a more sustainable and diverse sector. I believe that the issues grouped under the term "Duty of Care" are fundamental to achieving these aims.

The UK is much admired around the world for sporting success and the system that exists beneath it. In recent years there has been an increased focus on participation in sport and physical activity, and how as a nation we become fitter and healthier. There is significant investment in sport in the UK, through public funding or private sector sponsorship, and there is a reasonable expectation that there should be a return on the investment, not only in terms of sporting achievement, but social benefit and in some cases financial return. Winning medals is, of course, really important, but should not be at the expense of the Duty of Care towards athletes, coaches and others involved in the system.

However, it feels timely for the sport sector to consider Duty of Care in its fullest sense. The sector is arguably under more scrutiny than ever before, with allegations of non-recent child sexual abuse in football, and accusations of a culture of bullying in some sports. Questions are being asked about the price being paid for success. It is clear that the drive for success and desire to win should not be at the cost of the individuals involved. Allegations about the past need to be thoroughly investigated, but the focus must also remain on those in the current system to ensure that they are protected and free from harm, bullying, harassment and discrimination. Although there are processes and safeguards in place, the right culture is still required to ensure they work. Sport cannot think of itself as special or different and able to behave outside what are considered acceptable behaviour patterns.

In carrying out this review I adopted a deliberately broad definition of "Duty of Care" – covering everything from personal safety and injury, to mental health issues, to the support given to people at the elite level. I looked across as broad a range of sports and levels of participation as possible, and whilst not claiming to be comprehensive or forensic in the level of detail, I have tried to make the main messages and recommendations as relevant to as many sports and levels as possible. My hope is that the process of conducting this review, along with the recommendations contained in this report, will help to further raise the profile of Duty of Care and provide a starting point for further discussion, agreement and industry wide adoption of improved standards. I appreciate that some of my recommendations will have resource implications. I am aware that there is no new public money available to implement them and that organisations will have to prioritise. I have sought

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throughout the report to be proportionate and to consider in particular the burden placed on volunteer sport.

I am indebted to the many people who have helped with the review, not least those who sent in their views during the call for evidence process. I would also like to thank the members of the Independent Working Group, who have been invaluable in sharing their insight and professional opinions and expertise, those who took part in focus groups and everyone who has taken the time to contribute their thoughts during the course of the review.

Tanni Grey-Thompson

Terminology

In this report, “sport” refers largely to sporting activities where an organisation is involved, and/or there is supervision, coaching or competition. The report does not focus on sporting activities conducted by individuals in an independent context (for example, an individual going out for a run on their own).

“Athlete” or “sports person” refers to anyone taking part in, training for or competing in sport.

“Participant” includes athletes and sports people, but also people working or volunteering in sport.

“Grassroots sport” means community-based sporting activities.

“Elite sport” means the highest level in a sport, mainly used to refer to professional sport or sports funded to compete in the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The terminology used in this report is intended to be as inclusive as possible, reflecting the fact that many issues are common across all levels of sport.

Priority Recommendations

1. A Sports Ombudsman

The government should create a Sports Ombudsman (or Sports Duty of Care Quality Commission). This organisation should have powers to hold national governing bodies (NGBs) to account for the Duty of Care they provide to all athletes, coaching staff and support staff, providing independent assurance and accountability to address many of the issues covered by this review.

2. Measurement

The government should measure Duty of Care via an independent benchmark survey giving equal voice to all stakeholders in the system. The results of the survey, which could act as the basis for the Duty of Care key performance indicator mentioned in the “Sporting Future” strategy, would allow government and others in the sport sector to monitor whether sport duty of care policies intended to improve standards are working, and inform future policies and investment decisions. The survey should give an indication of levels of trust in the provision and receipt of support in sport.

3. Named board member responsible for Duty of Care

All NGB boards should have a named Duty of Care Guardian. The Guardian should have an explicit responsibility and leadership role to engage with participants across the talent pathways and in community sport, and to provide assurance at board level. This assurance should be evidenced in a public statement from the Duty of Care Guardian in the NGB’s annual report. Duty of Care should be a mandatory condition of future funding and all funded sports bodies should demonstrably apply it.

4. Induction process

An induction process should be carried out for all participants entering elite levels of sport (and, where relevant, their families should also be included). The content will change depending on the level the individual is within the system but it should include the steps involved with entering the elite system, what can be expected while training and competing, and what to be aware of and prepare for regarding exiting the elite level. It could also include topics such as financial and pension advice, the role of agents, first aid training and information about medical issues such as sudden cardiac arrest and concussion, coaching qualifications, media training, behaviour of parents, and understanding exploitative relationships.

5. Exit survey for elite athletes

As participants leave formal programmes an independent exit interview should be conducted, the results of which would be taken account of in future funding discussions.

6. Duty of Care Charter

A Duty of Care Charter should be established by government, explicitly setting out how participants, coaches and support staff can expect to be treated and where they can go if they need advice, support and guidance. As part of this, participants who receive funding (in any part of the system) should be offered honorary contracts, which set out the roles and responsibilities of both the sport and the participant.

7. The British Athletes Commission (BAC)

Government should independently fund the BAC to enable it to provide the best support to participants on talent pathways in Olympic and Paralympic sports. This will increase confidence in grievance and dispute resolution, reducing the need for escalation, saving time, money and emotion.

Theme 1: Education

Recommendations:

- Information should be made available to schools to help them support talented young athletes who are trying to balance education and being on a talent pathway.
- National governing bodies of sport (NGBs) and education institutions should encourage talented young athletes to be involved in other appropriate sporting activities for fun, and to give them open options if they do not join or continue on a talent pathway to elite sport
- NGBs to ensure collaborative discussions take place between young people on or close to joining a talent pathway with teachers, coaches and parents to plan arrangements for balancing sport participation and education with the best interests of the individual at the centre of everything.
- NGBs and education institutions (including colleges and universities) with participants on a talent pathway should have a Duty of Care Policy and should be accredited to show that they can support participants following a Dual Career route.
- NGBs and education institutions with participants on a talent pathway should have individuals trained in providing Dual Career support (for example Talented Athlete Lifestyle Support and Talented Athlete Support in Transitions and Education qualification and training) or engage the services of trained professionals to assist.
- Government should sustain the Advanced Apprenticeship in Sports Excellence (AASE) model, and strive for consistency of high-quality provision across all NGBs.
- Sports should measure and publish retention rates of those who have dropped off the talent pathway to see if, or how, they remain in sport. Retention rates should be more closely linked to funding models.

In this theme the review looked at how young sportspeople can be supported to help them balance education with their sporting activities.

The importance of finding a balance

In simple terms only a tiny proportion of sportspeople earn enough money from their sporting careers to mean that they do not need to find other work in 'retirement'. For the vast majority of athletes, skills and formal qualifications are needed to help them find alternative careers, either alongside their sporting activities or once their sporting days are over. Every young person should have the opportunity to develop their education alongside their sporting and other interests, to gain qualifications and enjoy a more well-rounded approach to life.

This "Dual Career" should be seen as enabling an individual to fulfil not just their sporting, education and social potential but also their future employment prospects. Education should be considered throughout the talent and performance pathways, and delivered in partnership with sports to ensure people have a chance to pursue educational goals in tandem with training and competing.

Agreeing and planning

This balancing of a Dual Career can be complex. Information should be made available to schools to help them support talented young athletes who are trying to balance education and being on a talent pathway. In many cases there will also be a need to bring various

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parties together to help the participant. The national governing body (NGB) of the relevant sport should ensure collaborative discussions take place between young people who are on or close to joining a talent pathway with teachers, coaches and parents to plan arrangements for balancing sport participation and education, with the best interests of athletes at the heart of these discussions. NGBs and educational institutions with talented athletes should use the services of Dual Career experts (such as those with Talented Athlete Lifestyle Support and Talented Athlete Support in Transitions and Education training) to help with this process. They should also have a Duty of Care Policy and be accredited to show they can support participants following a Dual Career route. The resulting plan should aim to optimise not just the athlete's sport and education but also their social and personal development.

Decision-making

It is important that all parties concerned are open and upfront in what they are hoping to achieve and what can be delivered to support this – this allows the athlete to make an informed choice. If sports prefer to guide participants to certain educational centres or courses then this should be made clear early on.

Dual Career is about taking on the responsibility to provide choice and enabling and empowering an individual to fulfil their potential. Athletes should not be attending or undertaking a course just so they receive funding for their sports development, or choosing a course just so they can stay on a sporting pathway. It may suit some participants to only think about life after sport once their career in sport is finished, but in these cases, the choice should be to delay, but not compromise, the individual's ability to achieve career fulfilment at the end of a sporting pathway.

Involvement in other sports

In some cases young people identified as talented are discouraged from taking part in other sports in order to ensure the individual concentrates on their chosen sport. However, if a young person leaves the talent pathway it is then much harder for them to re-integrate into taking part in other sports. As far as possible there should be an opportunity for young people to be involved in a range of sports in the school setting, not least for the personal development and enjoyment of the individual.

Apprenticeships

A number of contributors to the review also raised the Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (AASE) model, which has been successful in supporting sportspeople in professional, Olympic and Paralympic sports to study and train at the same time. Proposed changes to this model from April 2017 jeopardise its future. The government should sustain the AASE model or develop something that achieves the same outcomes.

Measurement

Sports should measure and publish retention rates of those who have dropped off the talent pathway whilst in education to see if, or how, they remain in sport. Retention rates should also be more closely linked to funding models.

Theme 2: Transition

Recommendations:

Entering top-level sport

- Organisations should carry out formal induction processes at regular intervals for every participant.
- The information covered must be continually available online, periodically restated and included in the participant's personal contract.
- Coaches within the programme (paid, volunteers, or personal coaches who are outside the system) should attend induction sessions so that they have a shared view and understanding of what is delivered.
- Parents, guardians or carers should attend induction sessions until the participant reaches the age of 18 and consideration must be given to how they are involved beyond this age.
- An independent review of the national classification system for disabled athletes should be commissioned.

Deselection, appeals and leaving top-level sport

- NGBs to develop good practice guidelines about methods of communication relating to selection and deselection. For all levels of the pathway this should also include being clear about what a participant has to do in order to return to any programme or squad system.
- Selection criteria and appeals processes must be easy to understand, accessible and transparent. Any changes notified to all participants in a timely manner
- Sports organisations should consider including an independent person on selection and appeals processes, as well as involving them in agreeing the selection process
- Organisations need to identify and clearly state whether a different procedure and appeals are necessary for removing someone from a pathway (and associated funding) in contrast with not selecting them for a major event but where their support will continue.
- It should be a condition of the Athlete Personal Award (APA), available to people on talent pathways in Olympic and Paralympic sports, as well as funding provided to the NGB, that attendance at career events is supported by the NGB wherever possible.
- Performance Directors and people running sports talent programmes should encourage the uptake of the Performance Lifestyle service by participants
- Independent exit interviews to be carried out when athletes leave the pathway (from talent to elite) for all UK Sport or Sport England funded sports. Results from the interviews should be fed back in to the funding models for that sport. Those organisations that are not publicly funded should consider how they can develop best practice and improve service provision.
- On leaving a sport, participants should be linked to the sport's welfare department (if available) to ensure the individual is provided with information about support and opportunities to retain contact with the sport.

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In this theme, the review looked at top-level and elite sport, and the support people receive as they transition through the system. The review focussed on the two main aspects of this journey – entering and leaving top-level sport.

Entering top-level sport

There can sometimes be an assumption that participants and their parents have a good knowledge of the sporting system and are aware of all the different steps that need to be taken to navigate through it and progress. Obviously, this isn't always the case. Many sports provide an induction process to give people entering a club, academy or other talent pathway a wealth of useful information about how the system operates and what support is available – this should be standard across the sector. The information provided during the induction process should be made available on a continual basis, kept up to date, and any substantial changes or additions communicated clearly. These induction processes are vital, should be offered to everyone entering a talent pathway and referenced in the participant's personal contract.

Coaching staff and members of the performance team should be part of this induction process to ensure a common understanding of important processes throughout the sport. For young sportspeople (and in some cases, those over the age of 18), the involvement of parents or guardians and, where appropriate, an existing personal coach in the induction process is essential, recognising the important support role they often play.

An important part of the induction process is making sure people are aware of where they can find help if they need it, including any welfare services the sport provides. Most issues should be able to be resolved inside the sport (with clear processes in place), but people need to have assurance that any concerns they may have will be handled appropriately. There should also be clear signposting to independent and confidential support services.

A number of respondents cited classification of disabled athletes as being a challenge, both as a barrier to entry and once they were participating in sport. As Paralympic classification is open to a relatively small section of disabled people those who fall outside the system must be given opportunities to participate. Many aspects of disabled people's lives are measured and classified through education and benefits support. Classification is another aspect of being tested. An independent review of the current system of classifying British athletes should be carried out and consideration given to whether it would be helpful to separately work in conjunction with the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Health.

Preparing for life beyond top-level sport

It can be difficult for sportspeople to consider life beyond sport when their most competitive days may still be ahead of them, and understandably many may not want to do this while their focus is on training and competing. There can also be a tendency to think that retirement might be after a long and successful career. The reality is that it is more likely to be a 16 year old who does not make it on to a talent pathway, or a 22 year old that gets injured or doesn't get selected, who might unexpectedly find themselves leaving sport. Athletes should be actively encouraged to consider and talk about their future plans, allowed time to do this and provided with information and support wherever possible about career options and skills development.

Rather than being a distraction for sportspeople, taking steps to organise life outside of sport - whether through career planning, help with financial management or training - can help to reduce concerns. There should be a continuing conversation about life after sport, starting at induction and continuing regularly through their career, including the considera-

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tion of career breaks. People should be challenged to think about “what if for some reason my career is over in six months?”, encouraged to take stock of where they are and to be pragmatic about the future.

Performance Lifestyle support, available to elite athletes in Olympic and Paralympic sports, help participants to balance their sporting and non-sporting life, and to think about life beyond sport. Performance Directors and people running sports talent programmes should encourage the uptake of the Performance Lifestyle service by participants, and ensure sports performance doesn't limit its role and influence.

It should be a condition of the Athlete Personal Award (APA), available to people on talent pathways in Olympic and Paralympic sports, as well as funding provided to the NGB, that attendance at career events is supported by the NGB wherever possible. NGBs should provide appropriate information on events to participants and they must reasonably re-lease athletes from training for these opportunities.

Deselection

Being removed from a talent pathway or being told you haven't made a team can be difficult for all involved. For the participant, it can be hard to accept that the immense amount of effort they (and their family and friends) have put in has not led to the expected or hoped for reward. But for the person delivering the news, it can also be difficult to face someone's disappointment and the resulting questions.

Handling deselection is an important process in terms of the immediate and longer-term impact on the individual. There are many anecdotal examples of instances where a discussion about deselection was handled poorly, with participants having been phoned at inappropriate times, been sent messages or found out through social media from those who are still on the programme, for instance.

Many coaches find themselves working in the sport because they are good at coaching, not necessarily because they have the 'people skills' necessary to handle difficult conversations such as deselection. The skills of coaches in this area should be looked at and their performance monitored through feedback in participant exit interviews. Appropriate training and good practice guidelines should be provided to those giving deselection conversations, covering aspects such as ensuring the participant is aware when it will be taking place, setting aside appropriate time to have the conversation, as well as enabling and signposting to appropriate external support. Rather than simply tell someone they have not met the required standard, organisations should reiterate the appeals procedure and explain the options the participant now has, for example competing at a different level or steps they could take to be in contention in future. For sports involving teams and larger numbers of people, it might not be possible to tell everyone individually that they have been not been selected for a game, squad or team - in these cases transparency of the selection process is key.

Appeals

The appeals process for all sports should be easily accessible at any time and easy to understand. Sports should regularly review appeals procedures with athlete representatives to ensure the views of athletes are taken into account.

Where issues do arise, these often concern whether the selection process was 'fair', and whether the athlete is getting their fair share of support. In many cases appeals processes allow a participant to appeal whether the decision making process was carried out in the correct way, not the decision itself. Where this is the case, the participant needs to under-

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stand the limits of what the appeals process can achieve and be given appropriate support.

There should also be a clearly defined and easily accessible process for athletes leaving a performance programme at any level. It should not be a surprise to those who leave a programme that they are doing so, or what their next steps could be.

Often appeals need to be lodged within a couple of days of a selection decision to allow time for consideration or re-selection before a training camp or competition. While in many cases running the selection process very close to the event may be preferable in terms of getting the 'best team' it does have consequences for individuals. Consideration should be given to extending the timescale for an appeal where possible. If a participant is surprised by non-selection it can be hard to find the relevant information and support to go through the process (especially at a higher level where the appeal process may be more complicated). Easy-to-access guidance should be available to help people understand how the system works and what they need to do.

The involvement of an independent representative from outside the sport – someone not connected to or funded by the organisation - in developing and carrying out the selection and appeals process can help provide assurance to athletes about the objectivity of the process. Ideally this should also be the case for internal reviews of processes. While it might help to have someone with an in-depth knowledge of the sport sitting on a panel, the chair should always be someone not connected or maintained by the organisation. In addition, any changes to selection policy must be clearly signposted and communicated to all relevant parties.

Exiting the Pathway

Leaving top-level sport can be a hard process for many people. Life as an elite or professional sports person is often by its very nature unbalanced, with long and unsociable hours spent training and huge impacts on lifestyle for the participant and their families. In the absence of any other career, athletes will have defined themselves as a professional sports person. It can take time to adjust when leaving. This is also true when leaving sport at other stages of the talent pathway, where there may not be as many options available to the individual and potentially less support. Many senior participants talked about their experience of transitioning out of elite sport and the challenges it brought.

The role of sports' national governing bodies (NGBs) and professional clubs in helping participants with career transition is complicated; unsurprisingly their primary focus is on sporting performance. However, there is a role for NGBs and clubs in helping sportspeople explore and develop their employment skill sets, by considering links with sponsors and corporate partners, providing work experience or employment opportunities. For some this will be whilst they are competing and for others this will be after their retirement.

On leaving a recognised programme in sport, as with many other professions, an independent exit interview should be carried out to understand how people feel about their experience in the sport, what could be done differently and to identify any issues that should be addressed. This interview should be administered by an independent body or players' association to ensure the sports person is able to be open and honest about their experience. The anonymised results should be fed back to the sport and funding body, and taken into consideration to help guide future adjustments.

A number of former participants reported that they would have appreciated more contact with their sport once their formal careers were over. This can sometimes be difficult to

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manage and is clearly not the responsibility of the performance team who are focused elsewhere. At a minimum, participants should be linked to the sport's welfare department (if available) to ensure the individual is provided with information about support and opportunities to retain contact with the sport. This may ease the transition for the individual and be useful for the long-term reputation of the sport.

Recently retired participants represent a valuable talent pool that sports organisations can use in many ways. Providing opportunities for people to volunteer within the sport or get involved in a paid role - whether in a sporting capacity, community engagement, as part of the support team or in a management or back-office role. There should also be some opportunities for imaginative thinking about whether the individual has anything to offer in a different sport.

There are some examples of countries that give retiring athletes pensions or a one-off performance bonus. It is unlikely at this time that pension contributions or bonuses would be considered by government for athletes who have been supported with public funds, and in any case this would realistically only benefit those who probably have more opportunity to earn money from outside the sport. However, education and advice about financial matters, such as savings, pensions, National Insurance contributions would be useful as part of the induction process.

Participants and coaches also need to be educated on active participation and de-training (the process of managing the physical adjustment away from full-time training) on retirement. There is a wealth of research on athlete transition on retirement that should be used and openly discussed.

Theme 3: Representation of the participant's voice

Recommendations:

- Creation of an Ombudsman (or Duty of Care Quality Commission) to provide third party assurance
- All sports' boards should have a guardian responsible for Duty of Care
- Organisations should consider athlete committees or representative bodies that have the ability to feed in views to a board member.
- Sports' national governing bodies to include an explanation of the values and meaning of Duty of Care during the board induction process
- All sports organisations should consider the participant's voice within their work and to have an independent process, very clearly and publicly available, for consultation and whistleblowing
- Government to strengthen the role of the British Athletes Commission (BAC) and look at options for providing direct financial support to increase its independence
- UK Sport and Sport England should consider having recently retired athlete representation on their boards or relevant subcommittees.

This area of the review looked at how the views of sportspeople are considered in decisions affecting them in sport.

The athlete's voice at board level

Participants are at the heart of sport, and it can be valuable to get their unique perspective on decisions and issues. The UK Sport and Sport England governance code sets out a range of conditions and guidelines for sports organisations in receipt of public funds and complements some of the areas of this review. The code stresses the importance of identifying, listening to and meaningfully considering the views of stakeholders, and athletes are obviously an important group that need to be considered in this context.

Sports should be free to decide the best method for doing this, whether through an athletes' panel, an athlete representative (the two are not mutually exclusive), survey or other method. Where athlete committees exist in Olympic or Paralympic sports, they should feed in to both their own sport's board and also the British Athletes Commission. Whatever method is adopted, it should be ongoing and assessed to ensure that the athlete voice is being genuinely listened to and represented. There should also be an independent process, clearly and publicly accessible, to consultation and whistleblowing.

There should be a non-executive board member in each NGB responsible for representing the athlete voice. (In a smaller or voluntary club this role could be carried out by a committee member, but clear terms of reference are required as well as careful selection of the incumbent.) Sports' national governing bodies should include an explanation of the values and meaning of Duty of Care during the board induction process.

UK Sport and Sport England should consider having recently retired athlete representation on their boards or relevant subcommittees.

Athlete involvement in board roles

Due to their unique perspectives, some participants may be able to play valuable roles on sports' boards themselves, usually (but not always) after their retirement. Individual sports

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organisations (and UK Sport and Sport England) have a role to play in identifying individuals with the required skills and potential to serve as board members, but they also have a responsibility to provide proper support, training and induction, as laid out in the UK Sport and Sport England governance code. Organisations should look at what committees and commissions athletes can sit on to help develop them personally and to ensure the sport benefits from their insight.

Support for Olympic and Paralympic sportspeople

Many professional sports have representative bodies to support participants, such as the Professional Footballers' Association and the Professional Cricketers' Association. These provide a range of services, advice and support to current and former players. Athletes competing in Olympic and Paralympic sports have access to the services of the BAC, established to provide athletes with advice, support and guidance over the course of their careers. Responses to the review also suggested that a higher profile for the BAC amongst athletes would be beneficial for both the sport and the athletes. The NGBs of relevant sports should actively promote the role of the BAC as it can actively support participants but also importantly help resolve many issues before they get to a confrontational stage. To do this effectively government should consider establishing a separate funding stream for the organisation to enable it to be truly independent.

Independent assurance of Duty of Care

Sports' national governing bodies should have a nominated guardian responsible for issues relating to Duty of Care.

To support the role of the BAC, professional players' associations and to hold NGBs to account, consideration should be given to creating a Sports Ombudsman (or Duty of Care Quality Commission) to provide third party assurance. This should be separate from UK Sport (the organisation that allocates both elite funding and medal targets to NGBs) to ensure operational independence in upholding Duty of Care principles to all participants and to maintain public confidence that sport is conducted ethically.

Theme 4: Equality, diversity and inclusion

Recommendations:

- Sports' national governing bodies should record data of the number of Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people, disabled people, and women who work within sports, both in paid roles and as volunteers.
- Further work needs to be carried out on the rules and support around transgender participants.
- Proactive, tailored resources and referral pathways for specific groups (for example, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) should be available.
- An understanding of Duty of Care should be included in any leadership training in sport, in order to help and support a new diverse generation of leaders
- All staff who work on Olympic and Paralympic performance programmes should undergo disability equality training (not simply disability awareness training) as should all those who work on the talent pathway or elite programmes.
- Equality and diversity training, including unconscious bias training, should be mandatory in all of the new training pathways being developed by the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) and employers in the sport and physical activity sector and be a requirement for all NGB athlete-facing staff.
- Sporting organisations, schools and club teams should adopt zero tolerance for athletes, parents, fans, coaches and support staff who engage in discriminatory language and behaviour.
- Coaches, PE teachers and officials in direct contact with athletes should undergo mandatory training to enable them to best support athletes from different backgrounds, protected categories, personalities and cognitive abilities.
- Sporting bodies must be explicit that all forms of discrimination are equally distasteful and counter to the values of their sport.

This area of the review considered any specific aspects of Duty of Care with relevance to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I). This is a significant area of concern within the world of sport and it is important to ensure diversity of participation in sport from across society.

Discrimination and language

Sadly discrimination exists within sport, some of it in plain sight, and the culture of organisations needs to be monitored to ensure that it is positive. There need to be guarantees that participants will not be discriminated against. It is clear within society, as well as sport, that some kinds of discrimination have greater consequences than others. This "hierarchy of oppression" is damaging to values of equality. Sporting bodies must be clear that all forms of discrimination are equally distasteful and counter to the values of their sport.

NGBs and clubs have a responsibility to stamp out discriminatory behaviours, practices and cultures. Sporting organisations, schools and club teams should adopt zero tolerance for athletes, parents, fans, coaches and support staff who engage in discriminatory language and behaviour. It is crucial to understand the damage language and words can do to a person. In sport there are various levels of 'banter' which can go from mild to harsh, but for clarity it is not on the same scale as bullying. Banter is something that most teams

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engage in; bullying is not. Banter is a form of gentle ribbing by friends, colleagues and teammates; it is episodic (ie irregular), never intended to cause harm and, importantly, reciprocal. Bullying, by contrast, is subtly relentless, intentionally wounding and one-directional. Banter can never be used as an excuse for bullying behaviour and it is important to recognise that for some, banter is a route into bullying. Therefore boundaries need to be set and upheld. While there is greater understanding of this than previously, the system is far from perfect.

Awareness and training

No statement about ED&I has any impact if we ignore where people come from to play sport. Not only is there a paucity of children from lower socio-economic backgrounds in many sports at the elite level, but there is also a lack of BAME people, LGBT people, disabled people and women represented in most sports, especially at coaching level. There are many organisations working to champion ED&I in sport, but sports organisations and leaders in particular need to be better equipped to become more inclusive, and helped to move from positive intent to deliberate action on inclusion. Many will need external expertise to help them develop as inclusive leaders and to generate effective ED&I strategies based on good data and implemented with professionalism.

Ideally, an understanding of ED&I should be embedded throughout sporting organisations. An understanding of Duty of Care should be included in any leadership training in sport, in order to help and support a new diverse generation of leaders. Equality and diversity training, including unconscious bias training, should be mandatory in all of the new CIMSPA training pathways and be a requirement for all NGB athlete-facing staff. Proactive, tailored resources and referral pathways for specific groups (for example, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) should be available. Staff who work on Paralympic performance programmes should undergo disability equality training, not simply disability awareness training, and it should be extended to all those who work on talent pathway or elite programmes. Coaches, PE teachers and officials in direct contact with athletes should undergo mandatory training to enable them to best support athletes from different backgrounds, protected categories, personalities and cognitive abilities.

Diversity in sport organisations

While there is a much greater understanding that diversity on boards matters, there is still not enough diversity at board level, or indeed at other levels in sports organisations. There needs to be better assessment of the number of BAME people, women, LGBT people and disabled people who work within sport both in paid and unpaid roles, and serious consideration, not lip service, given to how this may be improved.

Transgender athletes

For transgender athletes the combination of various rules and guidance can cause confusion. Organisations must have appropriate rules and support to allow them to participate - Sport England's commitment to place equal emphasis on support for LGBT people should be welcomed and should continue. NGBs and organisations must have appropriate rules and support in place but also consider wider education internally and externally. Information about inclusion should be publicly available.

Theme 5: Safeguarding

Recommendations:

- It is essential that government clarifies departmental responsibilities and arrangements for safeguarding where policy or programmes are cross-departmental.
- Sports should collect data about safeguarding issues in a standardised way.
- Government should review the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to include sports coaches within the definition of “Positions of Trust”, in order to provide additional safeguards for 16 and 17 year olds.
- Government to consider introducing a Duty to Report in all sports organisations
- Government to ensure that a prevalence study, looking at the rates of abuse of children and adults in sport, is conducted to gather up to date information.
- The NSPCC’s Child Protection in Sport Unit should be provided with the appropriate resources to work with sports (both funded and non-funded) to provide clear guidance on safeguarding processes and responsibilities and help make those processes as effective as possible. The CPSU’s role should be highlighted to the wider public.
- Government to review the process of background checks for self-employed providers and those not falling under a recognised NGB, including how parents or participants could access relevant information about these checks
- Parents who employ private sports coaches for their children should be encouraged to make appropriate background checks
- All private providers, independent and state schools should have safeguarding policies in place and they should be publicly available
- Where talent pathway sports remove young people from the club structure (where safeguarding officers exist), signposting to safeguarding processes must be included in the induction progress.
- A national coach licensing scheme should be considered, with the creation of a register of licensed coaches.
- Government should clarify whether “appropriate and necessary robust pre-employment checks” for sports venue employers refers only to employees who work in regular “regulated activity” and whether lifeguarding is classed as “regulated activity”.
- All organisations should have their safeguarding policy clearly available on their website and in other materials, and clearly lay out the steps to be taken to make a complaint.
- Consideration should be given to an independent “adults at risk” unit with a similar mandate to the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit.
- Further work is required on how to provide information about doping within sport for young athletes.
- Government and sports organisations to consider how to better recognise the role of sports volunteers.

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This area of the review looked at what more could be done to strengthen sport's position in relation to the protection of young people and adults at all levels of sport. This is an area where the review looked at elite, professional and community sport.

Guidelines and responsibilities

Recently reported cases of alleged non-recent child sexual abuse in football are, while shocking, perhaps not totally surprising, given investigations into other areas of society. It is essential that a full investigation of allegations of non-recent abuse is carried out and the appropriate support offered to those affected.

However, looking ahead, everything possible must be done to ensure that the current system is as strong as possible and that any loopholes are closed. Safeguarding policies in England relating to children are now relatively well-developed, with the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) a useful resource for parents and sports organisations and NGBs. Childline has also recently extended its resources into this area. In light of the importance of this area, the CPSU should be provided with the appropriate resources to work with sports (both funded and non-funded) to provide clear guidance on safeguarding processes and responsibilities to make them more impactful and appropriate funding provided for it. Their role should also be highlighted to the wider public.

Safeguarding is, however, a complex area to navigate and greater clarity about required standards and good practice would help organisations of all sizes understand what they must have in place. This should also have a positive impact on helping participants and parents understand what they should do to prevent issues and report concerns. All organisations, including private providers, independent and state schools, should have their safeguarding policy clearly available on their website and referenced in other materials, and clearly lay out the steps to be taken to make a complaint. Information about safeguarding should be part of any induction for those joining talent pathways. A further step that would help the sector make sense of the current landscape would be to clarify responsibilities across government for safeguarding.

The importance of safeguarding measures is paramount, and yet a lack of resources at the organisational level sometimes means that welfare and safeguarding leads sometimes have to fit in their duties alongside other roles. It can be a lonely job and the role can often lack clout within an organisation. More support is needed in this area. Consideration should be given by NGBs about how they could work together to provide more comprehensive round-the-clock support.

At the grassroots level, safeguarding will normally be the responsibility of volunteers. The government and sport organisations should consider how they give these volunteers some recognition of the important work that they do, for example through additional time in lieu for continuing professional development (CPD), or even tax incentives. Government could encourage employers to recognise the benefit of volunteering in sport and community work and support staff appropriately.

Data

Current data about the prevalence of abuse in sport is old and requires updating - a new prevalence study on the rates of abuse should be carried out.

Data about safeguarding issues should be collected in a standardised way. The systems would allow the appropriate body to track the incident formally and investigate fully. It would also allow trend analysis to be carried out which could highlight hot spots for chil-

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dren and adults. The collation of data should be ongoing and would allow sharing of information between sports.

Mandatory reporting

It should be recognised that organisations that work with children and vulnerable adults can attract individuals who will seek to exploit and abuse them - there is a need for continual vigilance. The government should therefore consider extending a Duty to Report to all sports organisations. This would mean that if a person knows, or has suspicion of, any abuse taking place, they must report it to the relevant body for action to be taken.

Background checks and “positions of trust”

More work is needed around checking whether self-employed individuals have the appropriate qualifications and security checks to work in sport. This also applies to providers of sport falling outside of the traditional national governing body structures. Parents should take responsibility to check that if they employ private coaches (or anyone else in similar positions) they have the appropriate background checks in place. To assist with this, a national coach licensing scheme should be considered, with the creation of a register of licensed coaches.

Lifeguards often supervise children in swimming pools but, outside of dedicated classes and sessions targeted at children, this supervision is not consistent and often falls outside the remit of “regulated activity”, the definition used by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to determine who is eligible for the most stringent background checks. The definition of regulated activity for the sport sector should be clarified, particularly with relation to lifeguarding.

In addition, the definition of “position of trust” should be reviewed with regard to sports coaches. At the moment, teachers fall within this definition, which places restrictions on the relationship they can have with people under 18 years of age under their tutelage. Sports coaches should be subject to these same restrictions.

Adults

In sport, the balance of power lies in the hands of those who run the programmes. They have a responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of participants. Athletes and professional sportspeople often work under intense pressure in close relationships with their personal coaches and support teams, and safeguarding issues can arise. While, rightly, there is a reluctance to say that every adult who competes in sport is vulnerable, when someone is in a team or on a pathway vulnerability inevitably increases, as so much is taken out of their control.

For adults in sport, safeguarding support is not as well developed as in the area for young people up to the age of 18. Further work in this area is required, particularly around young people transitioning into the 18-25 year age group and for disabled participants, who tend to be more at risk. Consideration should be given to establishing an advisory body specifically aimed at adult safeguarding in sport that can support individuals, clubs and NGBs to develop their processes and educational resources.

Culture

Contributors to the review reported that it was often difficult to challenge the programmes that they were in, and hard to know where to go if they want to make a complaint about behaviour. It was also clear that people did not want to be seen to be causing trouble or jeopardise their sporting career, and felt they had little power to bring about change. Many reported that bullying behaviour could at least sometimes be the ‘norm’ in sport, and that

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they felt that they just had to “get on with it”. This suggests that in some areas the culture is not the positive one that it should be. It is vital that participants know where they can go to make a complaint or blow the whistle on poor behaviour. Without second and, critically, third party assurance, the ability to make substantial change is limited.

Government recently announced the intention to require all schools in England to teach sex and relationship education – this is a welcome step to addressing societal and individual attitudes towards exploitative relationships.

While a concentration on qualifications is important it should be noted that being qualified to teach a technical skill does not always mean having the appropriate skills to work with athletes (of any age) in sport. Having the responsibility for safeguarding participants’ emotional, psychological and physical well-being means that those individuals require continuous professional development in these areas. There should be a greater focus on behaviours and keeping up to date with relevant information.

Doping and use of dietary supplements

Doping within sport is also a child protection issue for young athletes but one aspect that gets little attention. Sports should identify high-risk athletes and situations and proactively work with UK Anti-Doping to educate these groups including parents and coaches at all levels.

The number of dietary supplements available on the market that are promoted as performance improving is increasing. Education is required for participants about what is useful and safe, along with information about nutritional support and supplementation. This education will often be available for athletes in the national squad, but should be implemented lower down the pathway and could include an introduction to the testing system and rules (for example introducing them to the UKAD website and other related materials).

Theme 6: Mental welfare

Recommendations:

- Introduce sector standard mental health training for coaches and physical activity professionals (which can have aspects of sports specificity where required).
- NGBs to include mental health issues in the content of coaching and other sport-related courses which filter down to clubs.
- Staff, coaches and athletes to receive mental health awareness training and support, which should be included as part of induction processes as well.
- Government to promote and resource the Sport and Recreation Alliance's "Mental Health Charter for Sport and Recreation" so that it can support NGBs in addressing mental health issues.
- NGBs to strengthen links with NHS mental health teams, mental health charities and community groups. Links should also be considered through UK Sport and Sport England.
- NGBs and sports clubs should provide clear signposting to confidential support services outside of the sport (for participants, coaches and performance staff).
- Consideration should be given by government to supporting Mind and Rethink (as the NSPCC is supported to work on child protection).
- Government should support the development of a toolkit to help deliver and evaluate the impact of projects on mental health and wellbeing.
- Designated safeguarding staff must be enabled to work more closely with performance pathway staff in a confidential manner. Participants need to be clear that this confidentiality will be maintained.
- All NGBs to implement the Business in the Community/Public Health England Toolkit for Employers on Mental Health by 2020, followed by an audit of implementation in 2020.

In this area of the review, issues relating to the prevention, identification and management of mental health issues in sportspeople were considered.

Awareness and resources

There have been positive steps taken in recent years to raise the profile of mental health, not just in sport but in society more widely. Being both physically active and playing sport can have a very positive impact on mental health. It can improve a participant's mood or concentration, self-confidence, sleeping habits, resilience, and help them make friends. On the other hand, the routine element of elite sport, where the regime is one of continuous training, performance and selection, brings significant mental resilience challenges for both participants and coaches.

The Sport and Recreation Alliance worked with the charity Mind and a raft of sporting organisations to produce the Mental Health Charter for Sport and Recreation - a way of driving action in this area and sharing guidance about mental health issues, and for sporting organisations to publicly show their support. However, much more can be done. Sporting organisations need to acknowledge this issue more formally and continue to engage with the mental health agenda to ensure potential issues are identified early and that people are aware of the help available to them. All NGBs should implement the Business in the

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Community/Public Health England Toolkit for Employers on Mental Health by 2020, followed up by an audit of implementation in 2020. Government should promote and resource the Mental Health Charter for Sport and Recreation so that it can support NGBs in addressing mental health issues, and should also consider supporting Mind and Rethink in the same way as the NSPCC is supported to work on child protection. Government should also support the development of a toolkit to help deliver and evaluate the impact of projects on mental health and wellbeing.

Patches of excellent practice in support and treatment exist, but there are huge areas where service is poor. Minorities, young people and men are all served poorly and suffer disproportionately for it. The question needs to be asked: 'What more can sport do?'. Awareness of mental health issues - the signs to look for and how to help - should be embedded throughout sports at all levels, including specific content in inductions for participants and their families, and training for coaches and staff where provided. Standard mental health training for coaches and physical activity professionals (which can have aspects of sports specificity where required) should be introduced.

Mental health and wellbeing is a major concern in British performance sport and should be treated accordingly. Organisations should foster an environment where people feel able to discuss issues or are aware of where they can go to get help, both within and outside the sport if they need help on a confidential basis. Coaches through the education system should become more aware of mental health issues and consideration should be given to including the recognition of such issues and appropriate signposting in coaching courses. Designated safeguarding staff must be enabled to work more closely with performance pathway staff in a confidential manner, and participants need to be clear that this confidentiality will be maintained.

A wealth of resources is available to clubs wanting to do more in the area of mental health - UK Sport, Sport England, national charities and local mental health organisations all have information, useful tips and myth-busters they can share. Sports can also investigate the links they can make with their local NHS mental health services, for both the community's benefit and the benefit of their players and athletes. Participants who have experienced mental health issues can also play an important role in sharing their experiences with others at appropriate times.

LGBT athletes

Significantly more needs to be done to understand the mental health challenges that can face gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender athletes. A particular emphasis should be placed on gay male athletes given the potentially high volumes of individuals who are operating 'in the closet' in sport in order to be accepted. The mental health aspects of the toxic masculine culture often found within men's sport do not provide a safe environment for individuals to be themselves.

Athletes on a high performance pathway

For those on a high performance pathway life is often unbalanced (both for coaches and participants). The rigour of training and being put under the pressure of achieving targets can affect some more than others. Mental resilience is not something that all participants and coaches automatically have and this should be developed with the same consideration that physical resilience is built. Transitioning out of elite level sport can be difficult and traumatic for some (sometimes just the length of notice does not give much time to be prepared). When high performance coaches are removed from programmes it is often done with immediate effect. That can have an effect on the programme and the athletes left as much as the individual.

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Leaving sport can be profoundly difficult for those whose identity has been very closely linked to their sport. It can also have a detrimental effect on friends and family and those who have supported the individual through their career. Managing expectations about the talent pathway through sport is vital to ensuring balance is returned to a person when they are no longer in the formal part of their sport (see the Transition theme of this report for more detail.)

Theme 7: Safety, injury and medical issues

Recommendations:

- Develop a standard first aid course specifically for sport.
- NGBs to provide and promote online access to basic first aid guidance (which should include CPR and concussion protocols).
- Consideration should be given to the development of a training module including content about Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) symptoms.
- NGBs to work together on improving awareness of cardiac screening at community sport level. Consideration should be given to producing online materials and also inclusion in coaching courses or participant inductions.
- Government to support the circulation to schools of the guidelines produced by the Forum on Concussion in Sport and Physical Education, led by the Sport and Recreation Alliance. Training on concussion awareness should be available for all teachers.
- Sports to provide guidance to clubs with understanding their health and safety obligations.
- Government to consider the feasibility of a national register for fatalities and serious sporting injuries.
- NGBs should publish in their annual report the number of athletes leaving the talent pathway due to health or injury issues.
- NGBs that instruct doctors or medical experts to review concussion protocols should ensure that they are regularly checked to ensure tests remain accurate and are not easily subverted by those wishing to return to sport or field of play early.
- All sports (even those who may not be readily thought susceptible to concussion) need to be aware of concussion protocols and work together to ensure they have something in place and communicate with other organisations.
- All contact sports to consider pre-season concussion awareness courses.
- Consideration should be given to the separation of medical services within a sport's performance department to give a clear line of demarcation to ensure that medical advice cannot be compromised.
- Government should consider how different government departments and agencies can work together on concussion and other medical issues
- Government should consider the potential for an insurance scheme that all sports buy in to that covers catastrophic injury.
- All new sports facilities funded by government grants through should provide an automatic emergency defibrillator (AED), which is on site available to the building project team workforce and then passed on where applicable as a publicly accessible AED.
- Government to consider setting up a scheme to help the purchase of AEDs for sports clubs.

The review considered how the likelihood of injury can be lessened and whether improvements can be made to how sporting injuries are treated in the short and long term. The re-

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view also considered underlying medical conditions that may be caused or exacerbated by sport.

Responsibilities

Safety and physical wellbeing is an area where many improvements and innovations have been seen over recent years, and yet risk will always be a part of a number of sports. In some cases it can be part of the fundamental attraction to that sport in the first place.

Whatever the level of facilities and resources, taking steps to ensure the safety of people playing, supporting, officiating and watching sport is fundamental. This responsibility is not just for clubs or organisers - individuals also have a responsibility to look after themselves, be aware of risks and limit the potential for accidents, injury and long term damage.

Sports also have a duty to respect the advice and guidance of medical experts, and put safety and athlete welfare above all other concerns. Participants should be encouraged to be honest and open about illness or injury, and not be unfairly disadvantaged for doing so. Sporting organisations should encourage people to think about safety and injury, innovate and challenge existing practices, and speak up if there are concerns. It may vary depending on the type of sport and level of competition, but participants should be able to report concerns to someone in the organisation who is in a position to provide support and escalate concerns to a senior level as appropriate. Government should also consider how different government departments and agencies can work together on sporting medical issues.

Sharing of information

Sharing information about someone's medical history between members of a sporting organisation can be useful in agreeing a course of treatment, but needs to be handled sensitively, appropriately and in line with professional guidelines. There need to be clear lines of communication through the organisation and participants need to feel that they can trust the system to handle their issues.

Medical psychological confidentiality must be maintained at all levels. Just because NGBs or organisations facilitate treatments does not mean they should have preferred access to non-acute, non-relevant data. Some participants have contracts that waive certain rights on confidentiality and these should be scrutinised for ethical as well as legal propriety. It is essential that an athlete understands how their medical information will be used. Disclosure must be consensual unless the health professional sees a danger to the athlete or those around them, and even then disclosure should be only as much as required to maintain safety for all.

Consideration should therefore be given to a separation within a performance team of the medical and safeguarding staff and place them under the assurance regime of the Duty of Care Guardian, as opposed to performance coaches. This would provide a clear line of demarcation and separation of potentially conflicting advice.

First aid

It may not always be possible to have dedicated medical expertise on hand but it should still be possible to have a basic level of awareness among those on the scene about what immediate action to take, whether that be calling for further assistance or administering basic first aid. Sports need to ensure participants, and the paid and non-paid workforce, have an understanding of risks and what to do in the immediate event of an incident. This training should be easy to access and tailored to the audience, as some sports already do with short online first aid courses tailored to their sport. Consideration should be given to

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working with organisations like the Red Cross and St John's Ambulance to ensure training is appropriate and up to date.

For those requiring more in-depth knowledge, a more formal and detailed training course is appropriate. However, the lack of standard first aid training specifically for sport was raised during the course of the review. This needs to be addressed by the development of a standard course. Coaches, who cover first aid and medical issues in their training, would benefit from continual professional development in this area, to ensure their skills and knowledge remain up to date.

Health and safety

Health and safety regulations and guidelines can be daunting for organisers of sport events, especially at community level, to navigate. The sheer volume of guidance available can be counter-productive, hindering rather than aiding people as they try to understand what they need to do. Rather than create new guidelines the current ones relating to sport should be reviewed and where possible rationalised and simplified, to make them more accessible and easier to understand.

Catastrophic and long-term injuries

Contributors to the review process also felt that there were opportunities for greater research in the area of catastrophic sports injury, that is, the most serious injuries with long-term and life-changing impacts. While the numbers of these injuries are relatively low, when they do occur they have far reaching consequences. One area that should be investigated is whether there is scope for a national register of serious sporting injuries, with the data used to inform further research. The National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine should be consulted about the feasibility of such a register and their possible role in its establishment and maintenance. This could allow an open process of discussion and learning across sports to enable them to more quickly react to rule changes or guidelines that could help prevent future incidents. In addition, NGBs should publish the number of athletes leaving the talent pathway due to health or injury issues in their annual reports.

If serious incidents do occur, the circumstances need to be investigated in a "no blame" environment. This is the only way to fully understand issues and work out what steps can be taken to prevent similar incidents in the future.

Government should also consider the potential for an insurance scheme that all sports buy in to that covers catastrophic injury. It would potentially be helpful to have one scheme that could be tailored to each relevant sport in terms of scope of cover and limits of indemnity.

Long-term injuries can be difficult to manage, and sports often have to balance private provision with NHS treatment with effective use of resources and the impact on the individual of delays. As with many aspects of this review, keeping people - particularly the injured player or athlete - informed about the impact that their medical condition may have on their position in the sport is important, particularly if they are unable to take part for an extended period of time. Ideally, following an open discussion, there should be an appropriate level of contact between the individual and the sport to minimise the risk of them feeling isolated and developing mental health issues, and to aid in any eventual return to the sport.

Cardiac screening, defibrillators and Sudden Cardiac Arrest

The review considered the issue of cardiac screening for those taking part in sport. Many people taking part in sport at a professional or elite level will have access to cardiac screening, but the review considered whether there was benefit for grassroots sport or

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those who want to be physically active as well. Research has suggested that screening can help to reduce incidents, but the picture is complicated with some suggesting that screening is ineffective at identifying all those at risk, would be a barrier to those wanting to get more active and would be prohibitively expensive to conduct on a mass scale. Acknowledgement was given of the implications of the potentially high number of false positives for young people (being prevented from playing sport because they appear to have an issue) and the risk to them of not leading a healthy lifestyle (and thereby costing the NHS resources by being unhealthy). However, better awareness of cardiac health and more information about cardiac screening for individuals would enable people to understand the risks and decide for themselves whether they want to get screened.

All new sport facilities supported by government grants (for example through Sport England) should include the provision of an automatic emergency defibrillator (AED) on site, available to the building project team workforce and then remaining as a publicly accessible AED. Government should also consider setting up a scheme to help sports clubs purchase AEDs.

Consideration should be given to the development of a training module including content about Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) symptoms. This would include information on checking family history, understanding the difference between a heart attack and SCA, knowledge about the heart conditions that can lead to it, and having the basic hands-on cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) skills to deal with SCA.

Concussion and head injuries

Awareness of the impact of concussion and how it should be treated has improved over recent years. The work of the Sport and Recreation Alliance (SRA), along with a range of medical experts, has led to the development of concussion guidelines for the education sector - a valuable resource for all those organising and taking part in sport, particularly contact sports. This work should be distributed as widely as possible - through schools, clubs and campaigns. Training on concussion awareness should also be available for all teachers.

Sports should encourage elite level participants affected by concussion to take the appropriate amount of time to recover by protecting funding for an agreed period of time subject to periodic assessment. Tests for assessing concussion should be regularly reviewed to ensure they accurately assess impact and cannot be easily subverted by those wishing to return more quickly.

NGBs (whether or not they are contact sports) should take steps to further raise awareness about concussion, and it should be included as part of inductions (involving parents), through online resources, and as part of coaching and first aid training courses. Contact sports should consider pre-season concussion awareness courses.

It isn't just concussion itself that is the problem - it is the aggregated effect of regular impacts or subjecting the brain to extreme G forces, for instance, that also needs to be considered. Statistics show that recording the number of concussions would certainly be of benefit. In the short term it would be expected that there would be a significant increase as awareness and self-reporting increase, while in the long term, the trends may help sports better protect participants from harm.

Summary of Recommendations

Priority Recommendations

- The government should create a Sports Ombudsman (or Sports Duty of Care Quality Commission).
- The government should measure Duty of Care via an independent benchmark survey giving equal voice to all stakeholders in the system.
- All NGB boards should have a named Duty of Care Guardian.
- An induction process should be carried out for all participants entering elite levels of sport (and, where relevant, their families should also be included).
- As participants leave formal programmes an independent exit interview should be conducted, the results of which would be taken account of in future funding discussions.
- A Duty of Care Charter should be established by government. As part of this, participants who receive funding (in any part of the system) should be offered honorary contracts.
- Government should independently fund the British Athletes Commission.

Theme 1: Education

- Information should be made available to schools to help them support talented young athletes who are trying to balance education and being on a talent pathway.
- National governing bodies of sport (NGBs) and education institutions should encourage talented young athletes to be involved in other appropriate sporting activities for fun, and to give them open options if they do not join or continue on a talent pathway to elite sport.
- NGBs to ensure collaborative discussions take place between young people on or close to joining a talent pathway with teachers, coaches and parents to plan arrangements for balancing sport participation and education with the best interests of the individual at the centre of everything.
- NGBs and education institutions (including colleges and universities) with participants on a talent pathway should have a Duty of Care Policy and should be accredited to show that they can support participants following a Dual Career route.
- NGBs and education institutions with participants on a talent pathway should have individuals trained in providing Dual Career support (for example Talented Athlete Lifestyle Support and Talented Athlete Support in Transitions and Education qualification and training) or engage the services of trained professionals to assist.
- Government should sustain the Advanced Apprenticeship in Sports Excellence (AASE) model, and strive for consistency of high-quality provision across all NGBs.
- Sports should measure and publish retention rates of those who have dropped off the talent pathway to see if, or how, they remain in sport. Retention rates should be more closely linked to funding models.

Theme 2: Transition:

Entering top-level sport

- Organisations should carry out formal induction processes at regular intervals for every participant.
- The information covered must be continually available online, periodically restated and included in the participant's personal contract.
- Coaches within the programme (paid, volunteers, or personal coaches who are outside the system) should attend induction sessions so that they have a shared view and understanding of what is delivered.

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- Parents, guardians or carers should attend induction sessions until the participant reaches the age of 18 and consideration must be given to how they are involved beyond this age.
- An independent review of the national classification system for disabled athletes should be commissioned.

Deselection, appeals and leaving top-level sport

- NGBs to develop good practice guidelines about methods of communication relating to selection and deselection. For all levels of the pathway this should also include being clear about what a participant has to do in order to return to any programme or squad system.
- Selection criteria and appeals processes must be easy to understand, accessible and transparent. Any changes notified to all participants in a timely manner
- Sports organisations should consider including an independent person on selection and appeals processes, as well as involving them in agreeing the selection process
- Organisations need to identify and clearly state whether a different procedure and appeals are necessary for removing someone from a pathway (and associated funding) in contrast with not selecting them for a major event but where their support will continue.
- It should be a condition of the Athlete Personal Award (APA), available to people on talent pathways in Olympic and Paralympic sports, as well as funding provided to the NGB, that attendance at career events is supported by the NGB wherever possible.
- Performance Directors and people running sports talent programmes should encourage the uptake of the Performance Lifestyle service by participants
- Independent exit interviews to be carried out when athletes leave the pathway (from talent to elite) for all UK Sport or Sport England funded sports. Results from the interviews should be fed back in to the funding models for that sport. Those organisations that are not publicly funded should consider how they can develop best practice and improve service provision.
- On leaving a sport, participants should be linked to the sport's welfare department (if available) to ensure the individual is provided with information about support and opportunities to retain contact with the sport.

Theme 3: Representation

- Creation of an Ombudsman (or Duty of Care Quality Commission) to provide third party assurance
- All sports' boards should have a guardian responsible for Duty of Care
- Organisations should consider athlete committees or representative bodies that have the ability to feed in views to a board member.
- Sports' national governing bodies to include an explanation of the values and meaning of Duty of Care during the board induction process
- All sports organisations should consider the participant's voice within their work and to have an independent process, very clearly and publicly available, for consultation and whistleblowing
- Government to strengthen the role of the British Athletes Commission (BAC) and look at options for providing direct financial support to increase its independence
- UK Sport and Sport England should consider having recently retired athlete representation on their boards or relevant subcommittees.

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Theme 4: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- Sports' national governing bodies should record data of the number of Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people, disabled people, and women who work within sports, both in paid roles and as volunteers.
- Further work needs to be carried out on the rules and support around transgender participants.
- Proactive, tailored resources and referral pathways for specific groups (for example, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) should be available.
- An understanding of Duty of Care should be included in any leadership training in sport, in order to help and support a new diverse generation of leaders
- All staff who work on Olympic and Paralympic performance programmes should undergo disability equality training (not simply disability awareness training) as should all those who work on the talent pathway or elite programmes
- Equality and diversity training, including unconscious bias training, should be mandatory in all of the new training pathways being developed by the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) and employers in the sport and physical activity sector and be a requirement for all NGB athlete-facing staff.
- Sporting organisations, schools and club teams should adopt zero tolerance for athletes, parents, fans, coaches and support staff who engage in discriminatory language and behaviour.
- Coaches, PE teachers and officials in direct contact with athletes should undergo mandatory training to enable them to best support athletes from different backgrounds, protected categories, personalities and cognitive abilities.
- Sporting bodies must be explicit that all forms of discrimination are equally distasteful and counter to the values of their sport.

Theme 5: Safeguarding

- It is essential that government clarifies departmental responsibilities and arrangements for safeguarding where policy or programmes are cross-departmental.
- Sports should collect data about safeguarding issues in a standardised way.
- Government should review the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to include sports coaches within the definition of "Positions of Trust", in order to provide additional safeguards for 16 and 17 year olds.
- Government to consider introducing a Duty to Report in all sports organisations
- Government to ensure that a prevalence study, looking at the rates of abuse of children and adults in sport, is conducted to gather up to date information.
- The NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit should be provided with the appropriate resources to work with sports (both funded and non-funded) to provide clear guidance on safeguarding processes and responsibilities and help make those processes as effective as possible. The CPSU's role should be highlighted to the wider public.
- Government to review the process of background checks for self-employed providers and those not falling under a recognised NGB, including how parents or participants could access relevant information about these checks
- Parents who employ private sports coaches for their children should be encouraged to make appropriate background checks
- All private providers, independent and state schools should have safeguarding policies in place and they should be publicly available
- Where talent pathway sports remove young people from the club structure (where safeguarding officers exist), signposting to safeguarding processes must be included in the induction progress.

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- A national coach licensing scheme should be considered, with the creation of a register of licensed coaches.
- Government should clarify whether “appropriate and necessary robust pre-employment checks” for sports venue employers refers only to employees who work in regular “regulated activity” and whether lifeguarding is classed as “regulated activity”.
- All organisations should have their safeguarding policy clearly available on their website and in other materials, and clearly lay out the steps to be taken to make a complaint.
- Consideration should be given to an independent “adults at risk” unit with a similar mandate to the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit.
- Further work is required on how to provide information about doping within sport for young athletes.
- Government and sports organisations to consider how to better recognise the role of sports volunteers.

Theme 6: Mental welfare:

- Introduce sector standard mental health training for coaches and physical activity professionals (which can have aspects of sports specificity where required).
- NGBs to include mental health issues in the content of coaching and other sport-related courses which filter down to clubs.
- Staff, coaches and athletes to receive mental health awareness training and support, which should be included as part of induction processes as well.
- Government to promote and resource the Sport and Recreation Alliance’s “Mental Health Charter for Sport and Recreation” so that it can support NGBs in addressing mental health issues.
- NGBs to strengthen links with NHS mental health teams, mental health charities and community groups. Links should also be considered through UK Sport and Sport England.
- NGBs and sports clubs should provide clear signposting to confidential support services outside of the sport (for participants, coaches and performance staff).
- Consideration should be given by government to supporting Mind and Rethink (as the NSPCC is supported to work on child protection).
- Government should support the development of a toolkit to help deliver and evaluate the impact of projects on mental health and wellbeing.
- Designated safeguarding staff must be enabled to work more closely with performance pathway staff in a confidential manner. Participants need to be clear that this confidentiality will be maintained.
- All NGBs to implement the Business in the Community/Public Health England Toolkit for Employers on Mental Health by 2020, followed by an audit of implementation in 2020.

Theme 7: Safety, injury and medical issues:

- Develop a standard first aid course specifically for sport.
- NGBs to provide and promote online access to basic first aid guidance (which should include CPR and concussion protocols).
- Consideration should be given to the development of a training module including content about Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) symptoms.
- NGBs to work together on improving awareness of cardiac screening at community sport level. Consideration should be given to producing online materials and also inclusion in coaching courses or participant inductions.

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- Government to support the circulation to schools of the guidelines produced by the Forum on Concussion in Sport and Physical Education, led by the Sport and Recreation Alliance. Training on concussion awareness should be available for all teachers.
- Sports to provide guidance to clubs with understanding their health and safety obligations.
Government to consider the feasibility of a national register for fatalities and serious sporting injuries.
- NGBs should publish in their annual report the number of athletes leaving the talent pathway due to health or injury issues.
- NGBs that instruct doctors or medical experts to review concussion protocols should ensure that they are regularly checked to ensure tests remain accurate and are not easily subverted by those wishing to return to sport or field of play early.
- All sports (even those who may not be readily thought susceptible to concussion) need to be aware of concussion protocols and work together to ensure they have something in place and communicate with other organisations.
- All contact sports to consider pre-season concussion awareness courses.
- Consideration should be given to the separation of medical services within a sport's performance department to give a clear line of demarcation to ensure that medical advice cannot be compromised.
- Government should consider how different government departments and agencies can work together on concussion and other medical issues
- Government should consider the potential for an insurance scheme that all sports buy in to that covers catastrophic injury.
- All new sports facilities funded by government grants through should provide an automatic emergency defibrillator (AED), which is on site available to the building project team workforce and then passed on where applicable as a publicly accessible AED.
- Government to consider setting up a scheme to help the purchase of AEDs for sports clubs.

Annex A: Terms of Reference and Group Membership

Purpose - To make recommendations to government and its agencies on the establishment and content of a formal 'Duty of Care' to athletes and participants, in both elite and grassroots sport, with the aim of ensuring that as many people as possible can engage in sport and that they can do so in a safe way, with their career and life after their career supported. These recommendations may include matters relating to the following:

Elite sport

Supporting participants:

- education and support in specific sport-related areas, including anti-doping, anti-corruption, match-fixing
- safeguarding for children and adults (participants, employees and volunteers) including medical screening and education of employees/volunteers
- mental health support - both preventative and reactive, and building on the Mental Health Charter for Sport and Recreation
- support for those with issues with, for example, recreational drugs, gambling, alcohol or eating disorders
- formal education (especially for young participants)
- career guidance
- life skills (including networking, management of personal finances).

Management and support of those entering or leaving elite talent pathways (the latter including people leaving at a young age, those forced to leave through injury, non-selection and retirement)

- Support to those entering talent pathways
- Support offered whilst on a talent pathway
- Support offered after leaving a talent pathway.

Concussion and management of catastrophic sporting events:

- prevention and management of catastrophic incidents
- prevention and management of concussion and other medical issues (e.g. medical checks, defibrillators, rules on concussion)
- timely and appropriate incident reviews, and embedding lessons learned.

Athlete representation and governance

- Role of athletes in performance management
- Recruitment and retention post-transition
- Selection policies and processes
- Agency representation.

Equality and diversity - any specific considerations about the above-mentioned topics in relation to:

- Women
- Ethnic minorities
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people
- Disability.

Grassroots sport

Supporting participants:

Duty of Care Review

- safeguarding for children and adults (participants, employees and volunteers) including medical screening and education of employees/volunteers
- education and support in specific sport-related areas, including anti-doping

Concussion and management of catastrophic sporting events:

- prevention and management of catastrophic incidents
- prevention and management of concussion and other medical issues (e.g. medical checks, defibrillators, rules on concussion)
- timely and appropriate incident reviews, and embedding lessons learned.

Equality and diversity - any specific considerations about the above-mentioned topics in relation to:

- Women
- Ethnic minorities
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people
- Disability.

Notes:

- The review will involve sporting organisations from the devolved nations where discussions relate to elite athletes at the UK level. Discussions about grassroots participation in sport will focus on England only.
- The review will look at what can be learned from existing practices in sport, other sectors and other countries.
- The review will also recommend a key performance indicator to measure the impact of the report and its recommendations, as mentioned in Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation.
- Recommendations will be proportionate and will consider in particular the burdens placed on volunteer sports. The Government has a clear aim to get more people playing sport and more people volunteering in sport, and recommendations from this review should support that.
- A public call for evidence will be issued, seeking contributions to the review.
- Secretariat support will be provided by the sport team from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Review groups

There will be two groups involved with the review - an independent working group to provide independent expertise and offer constructive challenge, and a virtual stakeholder group to provide expert advice and information.

Independent Working Group

Will provide independent expertise and constructive challenge. Will meet approximately three times:

1. To provide initial thoughts and agree the plan of work
2. To review and discuss the review's emerging recommendations
3. To agree the final report

Membership:

- Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson (chair)
- Annamarie Phelps (former Olympic rower, now chair of British Rowing, vice-chair of the British Paralympic Association and board member at the British Olympic Association)

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- John Amaechi (former basketball player, now broadcaster, consultant and academic)
- Baroness Sue Campbell (chair of the Youth Sport Trust, Head of Women's Football at the Football Association)
- Paul Farmer (chief executive, MIND, the mental health charity)
- Anne Tiivas (Director, Child Protection in Sport Unit)
- Jason Roberts (former footballer)
- Brian Moore (former rugby player)

Stakeholder Group

- A wider stakeholder group to provide information on the current position, including strengths and weaknesses.
- Members will represent their organisations/sectors and in some cases lead specific areas of work.
- Will meet as a group infrequently but will mainly work individually with the review team and bring in other expertise from bodies they represent.
- Will include organisations such as the Sport and Recreation Alliance, British Athletes' Commission, UK Sport, English Institute of Sport and Sport England.

Annex B: Summary of Call for Evidence

A public call for evidence was carried out to canvas views from the public and sporting organisations about the different topics covered by the review, with a particular focus on what worked well and how current systems could be improved. The process ran from 12 April 2016 to 23 May 2016. Respondents were invited to answer any or all of the following questions.

At an **elite** sport level, what could be done to improve:

- entering and leaving talent pathways?
- the prevention and management of brain injuries and other medical issues?
- the prevention and management of catastrophic sporting injuries? (meaning life-changing injuries received on the field of play)
- the mental health support offered to sport participants?
- the representation of athletes' interests within sport governance?
- the support provided to people on talent pathways to help them gain a formal education?
- the safeguarding of young people and adults in sport?

At a **grassroots** sport level, what could be done to improve:

- the prevention and management of brain injuries and other medical issues?
- the prevention and management of catastrophic sporting injuries?
- the safeguarding of young people and adults in sport?

In total 375 responses were received - 89 from organisations and 286 from individuals. A short summary of the most frequent recommendations made in each of the topic areas is provided below.

Entering and leaving talent pathways

Entering

- Better information for individuals - possibly standardised content for NGBs that could then be tailored by each sport
- Mentoring opportunities as well as more general awareness of welfare
- Communication and information with/for parents and coaches
- More money and grants to enable people to take part in their sport
- More access/information about education and a greater sense of priority given to this. Also, benefits in establishing links between sports and schools

Leaving

- Mentoring and support - including individual plans
- Better and more consistent information from the sport to the athlete
- Help with transferring to other sports
- Better explanation of reasons for deselection and what can be done to be reselected
- Help with re-training and work experience

Prevention and management of medical issues and injuries

Prevention

- Research - including risk factors, incidence rates, diagnoses
- Use of safety equipment (e.g. helmets) - more/better quality equipment, enforced/mandatory use for high risk activities
- Safe and well-maintained facilities

Duty of Care Review

- Training and education - for coaches, staff, volunteers and athletes so are aware of risks, what to look out for, what to do, what the consequences might be. Courses should be affordable and easy to get to
- Share best practice amongst organisations and between elite and grassroots

Management (immediate and long-term)

- Medical support and equipment on hand
- Emergency action plans and policies in place
- Culture - no pressure to hide injuries, insistence on proper recovery before return
- Transparency - inquiries when incidents happen, publish results, collect data
- More medical staff trained in sport injuries (NHS, first aid volunteers etc)

Mental Health

- Encourage people to talk about mental health issues
- Promote awareness of support available and how to access it
- Better training of welfare officers and other staff in sport (including coaches) - including awareness of early signs of mental health issues
- Access to confidential support - so no fear of sporting career being affected
- Senior-level support for mental health issues within the sport and priority given to promoting mental health

Representation of athletes' interests

- Have athlete representatives on NGB boards
- Establish/use athlete forums
- Promote a culture of partnership on both sides (athlete and NGB)
- Up-skill athletes to help them get involved with governance
- Greater engagement between sport management/staff and athletes and former athletes

Formal education

- Improve awareness of coaches about education - impacts, access to
- Increase access to mentoring
- Improve links between schools/higher education institutions and sports
- Should be an assumption of being in education when under a certain age
- Flexibility in university courses - length of time, ways of studying

Safeguarding

- Education and training for all staff, especially coaches, athletes themselves and parents
- Adult safeguarding should be given the same priority (and/or use the same measures) as for children
- Confidential reporting should be available so participants can report concerns without fear of repercussions (to their sporting career/prospects)
- People should be encouraged to report their concerns, which should be taken seriously and (seen to be) acted upon
- Bullying: people abusing positions of power should not be tolerated