



Criteria and Application Procedure
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH-APPROVED TRAINING
IN SPORTS-RELATED HEAD INJURY FOR
CLINICIANS PROVIDING MEDICAL CLEARANCE FOR RETURN TO PLAY

105 CMR 201.011, *Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities*, specifies that by *September 2013*, physicians, nurse practitioners, certified athletic trainers and neuropsychologists providing medical clearance for return to play shall verify that they have received Department-approved training in post-traumatic head injury assessment and management or have received equivalent training as part of their licensure or continuing education.¹ After September 1, 2013, this verification will need to be included on the *Medical Clearance for Return to Play* form completed by the authorized clinician and submitted to the injured student's school.

DPH is interested in approving such clinical training programs in sports-related head injury and this document provides the criteria on which such approval will be based and describes the application process.

Criteria for DPH-Approved Sports-Related Head Injury Training for Clinicians Providing Medical Clearance for Return to Play

Learning Objectives for Clinical Training:

Participants should

- Be able to recognize the signs and symptoms of head injury/concussion and to distinguish from other types of head or spinal injuries.
- Understand the short and longer term consequences of concussion, including repeated concussions.
- Understand the appropriate clinical management of concussion, including rest, gradual return to activity (academics and sports), and best practice for medical clearance for returning to athletics.

¹ This requirement is different from the 105 CMR 201.000 regulations' other requirement for *annual training* in sports-related head injury for coaches, certified athletic trainers, trainers, volunteers, school and team physicians, school nurses, athletic directors, marching band directors, parents of student athletes and student athletes. To meet the requirements of the regulation, the *annual training* must be from a DPH-approved *annual training* program (see <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/community-health/dvip/injury-prevention/sports-related-concussions-and-head-injuries.html> and scroll down to "MDPH Approved Annual Training" for a list of DPH-approved *annual training* programs).

- Understand the state regulations relevant to health care providers, including return to play and medical clearance requirements.

Clinical Training Content:

The training must be based on the most up to date medical evidence and clinical best practice and must include the following content areas:

- Description of the signs and symptoms of concussion/head injury, diagnosis of concussion including the fact that loss of consciousness is not required to diagnose a concussion.
- Discussion of signs and symptoms suggesting a serious alternative or accompanying diagnosis, such as an intracranial hemorrhage or lesion or increased intracranial pressure.
- Discussion of signs and symptoms suggesting a possible accompanying spinal injury.
- Description of the short and long-term sequelae of concussions, including the cumulative effects of repeated concussions over a lifetime.
- Discussion of the risks of recurrent concussion and injury prior to complete recovery, including second impact syndrome.
- Importance of low threshold for removing students with suspected concussion from play for further evaluation.
- Description of the key elements of and the importance of return to play guidelines.
- Description of the key elements of and the importance of return to academic plans.
- Review of current MA state regulations, including relevant requirements for health care professionals including when to remove the student athlete from play, steps for graduated re-entry to athletics and academics, and the need for medical clearance before returning to play.

In addition, training organizers should demonstrate the following:

- How the presentation will be tailored to the specific needs of the audience.
- How participants will be assessed regarding their understanding of the content presented.
- What criteria will be used to issue a certificate or other acknowledgement of content mastery

Faculty Requirements and Qualifications

- Ideally the faculty for the clinical training would involve a multidisciplinary team to reinforce the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to concussion diagnosis, management, follow up and reentry into academics and athletics.
- Experience and expertise in one or more of the following subject areas: pediatrics and/or adolescent medicine, sports medicine, neurology, neurosurgery, neuropsychology, or appropriate, relevant subject. At least one member of the team must be a licensed physician, certified athletic trainer, nurse practitioner or neuropsychologist.
- Knowledge of relevant anatomy and physiology and of concussion prevention, diagnosis and management. This expertise may be demonstrated through certifications, publications, etc.
- Familiarity with the Massachusetts sports-related head injury legislation, regulations and the requirements concerning health care professionals.

Application Procedure:

Those seeking approval of a sports-related clinical concussion training under these regulations, must provide the following information and materials to the Department of Public Health:

- 1) Completed Cover Sheet (see attachment)
- 2) Learning Objectives for the Training
- 3) Intended Audience(s) for the training (physicians, neuropsychologists, nurse practitioners or certified athletic trainers). Note: if the training may be used for more than one audience, please describe what changes, if any, would be made to assure that the presentation meets their learning needs/styles.
- 4) Expected length of the training
- 5) Prior relevant trainings held, if applicable
- 6) Anticipated fee associated with training
- 7) How attendance and content mastery will be documented (providing certificates, documenting continuing medical education credits, etc.)
- 8) How participant's understanding/learning will be assessed (evaluation/testing)
- 9) Affirmation that if the content of the training changes, a new set of learning objectives and training materials will be submitted to the Department for approval
- 10) Materials to be used (copies of agenda, presentation materials, handouts)
- 11) Resumes or curriculum vitae of all proposed trainers

All materials should be submitted with four hard copies to the following address:

Olga Higuera
Division of Violence and Injury Prevention, 4th Floor
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
250 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02108
617 624-5463
617 624-5075 (fax)

Applications will be reviewed as they are submitted. Applicants will be contacted with any questions or with notification of approval/non-approval by DPH in as timely a manner as is practicable. Applicants should expect that the review process will take a minimum of 8 weeks. *Please keep this in mind when preparing for your training.*

Cover Sheet
Sports-Related Head Injury Training for Clinicians Providing Medical
Clearance
Approval Application

- 1) Name of the Organization:
- 2) Contact Person:
- 3) Address:
- 4) Phone:
- 5) Email:
- 6) Fax:
- 7) Title of the Training:
- 8) Training or Course Director (Name, Title):
- 9) Names and Qualifications of Faculty/Trainers
 - Trainer 1 -
 - Trainer 2 -
 - Trainer 3 -