

Selecting Mental Health Program Providers in Sport

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VicHealth has a longstanding commitment to promoting mental health and wellbeing and we acknowledge now, more than ever, this work is critical.

During 2020, VicHealth engaged researchers at Monash University to conduct a review to better understand what work is being undertaken to support positive mental health and wellbeing in community sport across Victoria.

This review found there are a wide range of providers in the sector. Whilst these organisations play a valuable role in developing positive mental health and wellbeing, the sector remains largely unregulated. There are a multitude of differing services of varying quality on offer, which can be challenging for sports clubs, leagues, and associations to navigate.

Why support for Mental Health and Wellbeing in sport is so important.

Community sport offers an ideal space to support mental health and wellbeing, particularly for young people.

It provides a safe space and trusted network where people feel socially connected.

High numbers of young people participate in organised sport, meaning that clubs, leagues, and associations can provide an important context outside schools where positive messages, mental health education and guidance regarding support services can be provided.

For more information, click here - <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/how-to-select-mental-health-program-providers-for-sports-clubs>

Tips for Selecting a Provider.

There are rapidly increasing numbers of organisations offering support services to community sports clubs in Victoria. These can be individuals, businesses, not-for-profit organisations, or community agencies that deliver programs and provide resources to sporting clubs. Selecting the right provider will enable you to provide the best possible program to your members.

The review of these organisations found they offered a range of services and approaches, including:

- Guest talks to club members
- Education programs
- Strategies to support mental health and wellbeing
- Support pathways.

Clubs also have a duty of care to ensure that the providers they are partnering with are safe and do no harm to the mental health or wellbeing of people at the club. Navigating the range of programs for sporting clubs, leagues and associations can be challenging. The following questions are designed to guide your organisation through selection of an appropriate provider.

1. What expertise in Mental Health and Wellbeing in sport does the provider organisation have?
2. Are mental health professionals involved in developing programs?
3. Who are the program facilitators and what are their qualifications?
4. What evidence can the organisation provide that documents their programs impact?
5. How long has the provider worked in the community sports sector?
6. What approach or model does the organisation use?
7. Does the provider seek to support ongoing cultural change in your club?

Please see further information and a summary on each of these questions in the link below:

<https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/-/media/ResourceCentre/PublicationsandResources/VicHealth-tips-for-sport-club-mental-health-provider-selection.pdf?la=en&hash=A8ECD98936A05DADAD5682ED491AC54C03467B60>

Netball Victoria Partner.

WorkSafe Mental Health & Wellbeing program delivered by SALT.

The WorkSafe Mental Health & Wellbeing program delivered by Sport and Life Training (SALT) is a FREE interactive presentation that gives participants an understanding of anxiety and depression and provides them with positive mental health habits for life. It educates participants in how to have real conversations and aims to reduce the stigma that remains around mental health issues. Players are encouraged to ask good questions of their friends and to be open and honest about how they are coping. The presentation is highly interactive and engaging. Attendees are required to bring a charged smart phone with data.

Sessions are aimed at women and men aged 15+ and capped for groups of 30 people online while 40 people can attend in person. A coach or club team manager will be required in the session. Program will run for 60 to 75 minutes.

Click the link to apply- <https://vic.netball.com.au/worksafe-wellbeing-program>

Other Resources:

- VicHealth's blog
[Ten go-to mental health organisations for young people](#)
- Reboot Sport's blog
[4 Steps to Reboot Mental Health through Sport](#)
- AFL and Orygen
[What works for Mental Health in sporting teams](#)
- Head to Health
<https://headtohealth.gov.au/>