

# Concussion Protocol Harmonization Project Update

Stephanie Cowle

Manager, Knowledge Translation  
Parachute

# May 8, 2017

 Ottawa



# Background

- “national strategy to raise awareness for parents, coaches, and athletes on concussion treatment” (Ministerial Mandate Letters, 2015)
- Need for consistency across Canada



# Project Deliverables

1. Concussion Guidelines based on the Berlin Consensus Statement.
2. Harmonized sport-specific concussion protocols validated by experts and end users.
3. Accredited online continuing education on concussion for health professionals.
4. Social and digital media communications campaign
5. Return-to-School pilot.

# The Path to Protocol Harmonization

**Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport**



**Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport**

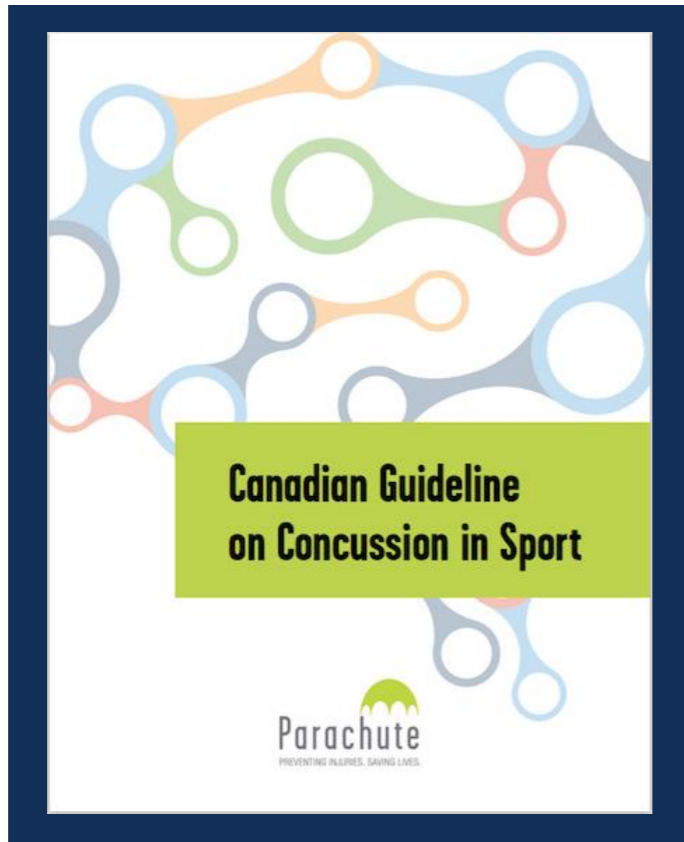


**Canadian Harmonized Concussion Protocol Template**



**Harmonized Sport-Specific Concussion Protocols**

# Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport July 2017



We reviewed current scientific evidence and expert consensus to develop guidance tailored to the Canadian sport and health contexts.

► [parachutecanada.org/guideline](https://parachutecanada.org/guideline)

# Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport



New implementation tools:

- Pre-Season Education Sheet
- Medical Assessment Letter Template
- Medical Clearance Letter Templates

# Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport



- 4,841 Guideline downloads
- 17,186 Guideline webpage visits
- 5.2M media impressions
- Over 25 news stories in print, radio, television, and web



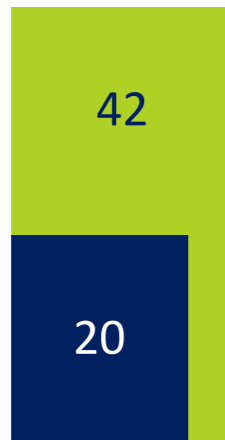
# Harmonized Protocols

- We built tools to translate the guidance into concussion protocols and provided supports:
  - ▶ Harmonized Concussion Protocol Template, Checklist
  - ▶ Return-to-Sport Strategy Adaptation Tool
  - ▶ Digital platform for communication and document submission
  - ▶ Expert advisory review
  - ▶ Webinar explaining the tools, their purpose, and use

# NSO Engagement

- 56 NSOs invited to participate (voluntary) – goal of 20
  - ▶ Introduction through Sport Canada
  - ▶ Early and ongoing communication and consultation
  - ▶ In-person stakeholder event and report
  - ▶ Tools and supports

# Results



## Engagement

42 NSOs engaged:

- Summer and winter
- “High” and “low” concussion risk
- Range of experience with concussion policy



## Usefulness

- 100% of respondents agreed they were given useful tools
- Significant uptake of the protocol template

# Key Facilitators

- **Government support**, including the facilitating role of Sport Canada to help build relationships
- **Partnership networks** across sport, health, education, and government committed to align on concussion
- **Context** – Considering the Canadian sport system and respect heterogeneity (organizational size, resources, needs, etc.)



# Key Facilitators

- **Action-driven** – time-based outcomes
- **Clear guidance**, with simple-to-use, audience-specific tools to reduce the burden on organizational capacity
- **Ownership by NSOs**, to strengthen engagement, organizational capacity for follow-through on policy implementation



# Challenges

- Access to the systematic review evidence was delayed when the *Consensus Statement* was published later than anticipated.
- Connecting with the right contacts at each sport organization was key.
- Competing priorities, including the sport seasons (timelines less than one calendar year)
- Concussion is a complex topic involving multiple overlapping systems. Continued focus was required to stay within the scope of the project.

# Moving Forward

## No harmonized protocol yet?

- ▶ It's not too late to get involved. Join us!

## Who knows about your protocol?

- ▶ All staff and volunteers should know you have a protocol, and where to find it (Include board members!)
- ▶ Ensure your protocol is easy to find on your website
- ▶ Include your protocol in pre-season education
- ▶ Include concussion and how your organization is addressing it at your AGM and other events

# Moving Forward

## How can your organization take a leadership role?

- ▶ Share your protocol or the templates/tools with PSOs and clubs



*Prepared by ACA medical staff, last update: August 2017.*

### **2017-2018 CONCUSSION PROTOCOL PTSO/CLUB LEVEL**

**Alpine Canada Alpin (ACA)** has developed the **Alpine Canada Concussion Protocol** to help guide the management of athletes who may have a suspected concussion as a result of participation in alpine skiing - related activities, in conjunction with the Parachute Canada harmonized Sport concussion protocol.

Source: Alpine Canada, [alpinecanada.org](http://alpinecanada.org)



# Concussion Education for Medical Professionals

- We identified priorities for improving consistency in healthcare practice.
- We developed an accredited online concussion CME course focused on these priorities:
  - ▶ Assess patient presenting with possible concussion (initial hours post-injury)
  - ▶ Manage concussion care (2-4 weeks post-injury)
  - ▶ Identify when referral to specialized care is required

# CATT Medical Professionals

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar with the CATT logo and 'CONCUSSION AWARENESS TRAINING TOOL' on the left, and a menu with 'Audience', 'Learn', 'Concussions', 'Resources', 'News', and 'About' on the right. The main heading is 'Medical Professional Course'. Below this, there is a section titled 'Medical Professional Course' with a description: 'The Concussion Awareness Training Tool is designed to provide medical professionals with the information they need to provide evidence-based care for their patients who have sustained a concussion.' This is followed by 'Accreditation Information' stating that CATT MP is an Accredited Self-Assessment Program (Section 3) of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, approved by UBC CPD for 2 hours. To the right is a smaller version of the course landing page with a 'START COURSE' button and a 'DETAILS' dropdown. At the bottom of the screenshot, there is a small CATT logo and a line of text: 'The Concussion Awareness Training Tool is an accredited program designed to provide medical professionals with the information they'.

## Accredited by UBC CPD



CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
FACULTY OF MEDICINE

# Partners

- Parachute Concussion Expert Advisory Committee (co-chairs: Dr. Charles Tator and Dr. Michael Ellis)
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Sport Canada
- F-P/T Working Group on Concussion in Sport
- Canadian Concussion Collaborative
- National Sport Organizations (NSOs) and Multi-sport Service Organizations (MSOs)
- Dr. Jack Taunton
- Dr. Paul Korn
- BC Injury Research and Prevention Unit
- Ophea

# Final Thoughts

- In one year we...
  - ▶ Launched the first coordinated effort at the national level to address concussion
  - ▶ Translated research into the first-ever national concussion guidance focused on the needs of sport organizations
  - ▶ Built a foundation at the national sport level, poised to

# Final Thoughts

- We are just getting started!
  - ▶ Use and share – Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport, protocol template, concussion education resources
  - ▶ Share solutions to emerging challenges
  - ▶ Ongoing collaboration between the health and sport systems is necessary for concussion outcome optimization in Canada

# Thank you



@parachutecana  
da

[www.parachutecanada.org](http://www.parachutecanada.org)