

3

Rehabilitation

Sports physiotherapists use clinical reasoning and therapeutic skills to assess and diagnose sports-related injuries, and to design, implement, evaluate and modify evidence-based interventions that aim for a safe return to the athlete's optimal level of performance in their specific sport or physical activity

Context:

- rehabilitation occurs from the point of physical activity or sports-related injury until the athlete returns to their optimal level of performance.
- rehabilitation occurs in individual or team contexts, within a multidisciplinary team and in a variety of locations, including private practice and training sites.

Behaviours:

- analysis of the injury and underlying processes, requiring specific knowledge of:
 - specific sports: frequently associated injuries, specific physical and psychological demands,
 - physical and psychological processes that occur during healing,
 - psychosocial influences in different athletic contexts,
 - influences of age and co-existing conditions or impairments
 - any concurrent interventions or investigations
- selection and implementation of appropriate assessments of the athlete's performance capacity¹, and efficiency of movement
- interpretation of information relating to any other previous, or concurrent, injury, illness or intervention.
- design and implementation of individual rehabilitation programs incorporating research-based, sport-specific rehabilitation strategies.
- measurement of intervention outcomes and appropriate modifications to practice.
- provision of advice regarding progress and appropriate timing of return to sporting and exercise activities.
- multidisciplinary communication to ensure the appropriate sharing of information and team approach, including referral where appropriate, and ensuring client confidentiality.
- estimation of risks involved in the independent use of equipment or strategies by the athlete or other individuals:
 - provision of guidance regarding situations where the knowledge and skills of the sports physiotherapist are required, and
 - where appropriate, education regarding the appropriate application of the equipment or strategies.
- communication with the athlete that reflects understanding of psychosocial influences on the rehabilitation process.

Specific National Interpretations –

1: The physical capacity of the athlete to perform a sport or physical activity, relating to specific physiological, biomechanical, kinesiological and psychological demands

Standards Relating to Competency 3: Rehabilitation	
A foundational knowledge	
The sports physiotherapist demonstrates the ability to:	
3A: 1	recognise sport-specific demands and their potential effects on healing and pain processes, <i>in different sporting contexts</i>
3A: 2	discuss the impact of co-existing and pre-existing pathologies on the rate and quality of tissue healing
3A: 3	identify the potential impacts of various factors on recovery, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • co-existing and pre-existing conditions, • the experience of acute or chronic pain, • the effects of other medical interventions on different body systems, and • the impact of complications on recovery • psychological, social and cultural influences
3A: 3	show insight into the biopsychosocial impact of injury on athletes and other professionals <i>in different sporting contexts</i>
3A: 5	identify clinical and performance-related assessment techniques and protocols that are most appropriate <i>in different sporting contexts</i>
3A: 6	recognise the relevance of medical investigations and of information collected by other professionals in the multidisciplinary team
3A: 7	identify current intervention strategies used to promote early safe return to activity and progression to optimal function, including risks associated with their use
B critique and synthesis	
The sports physiotherapist demonstrates the ability to:	
3B: 1	critically analyse current research into measurement and intervention strategies used in rehabilitation and appropriately integrate new information into practice
C information collection	
The sports physiotherapist demonstrates the ability to:	
3C: 1	collect existing information relating to the athlete's condition, its severity, and implications for their daily life and sport or exercise participation
3C: 2	obtain a client history using reasoned selection of questions and sensitive communication <i>in different sporting contexts</i> ; the history should incorporate information relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the client's priorities and goals • the specific sport or exercise activity and context, • psychosocial influences • co-existing and pre-existing conditions or treatments that might impact on diagnosis or intervention, and • other influences on performance, such as equipment and hydration or nutrition
3C: 3	assess the severity and duration of acute and chronic pain
3C: 4	observe and analyse specific sporting movements required by the athlete on return to participation <i>in different sporting contexts</i> , including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • activities associated with the original injury, and • movements specific to a team role or position
3C: 5	select and apply the most appropriate clinical and performance-related tests to the individual, the injury, and the sport, <i>in different sporting contexts</i> (for example, tests of strength, functional performance, range of motion and flexibility)

D information processing	
The sports physiotherapist demonstrates the ability to:	
3D: 1	analyse the results of clinical and performance-related tests relative to sport-specific expectations
3D: 2	interpret assessment results to make a clinical diagnosis of developing or existing pathologies that are unrelated to the sport
3D: 3	reach a clinical diagnosis and devise a problem list that integrates information from a variety of sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a critical analysis of best practice, • the results of therapeutic evaluations, • information relating to any previous, or concurrent, injury, illnesses or interventions, • awareness of the psychosocial influences on the athlete, and • sport-, athlete-, and team-specific rehabilitation goals
3D: 4	integrate rehabilitation goals with foundational knowledge to devise an individual, research-based, sport-specific programme of intervention strategies
3D: 5	consider co-existing and pre-existing pathologies in rehabilitation planning, ensuring that strategies have a positive impact on the problems identified
3D: 6	make professional judgements regarding the appropriate times for progression of participation following illness or injury <i>in different sporting contexts</i>
E action / intervention	
The sports physiotherapist demonstrates the ability to:	
3E: 1	recognise and act on indications for urgent or non-urgent referral of an athlete for further investigations or intervention by other members of the multidisciplinary team (for example, MRI, ultrasound imaging, X-ray, surgery)
3E: 2	design and implement evidence-based conditioning, strengthening and stretching exercise programmes, specifically related to a specific individual, injury, and sporting role
3E: 3	design and implement individualised and evidence-based programmes to increase neuromuscular control, incorporating skill acquisition principles (for example, static, dynamic, reactive or preparatory techniques)
3E: 4	skilfully and appropriately carry out massage and manual therapy techniques <i>in different sporting contexts</i> , for example, for warm-up, recovery, and rehabilitation
3E: 5	use taping in an evidence-based strategy targeted at different treatment aims <i>in different sporting contexts</i> , for example, to promote rest, protection and facilitation of healing
3E: 6	use intervention strategies or appropriate referral to facilitate an athlete's coping with pain, and reduce its severity and duration where possible
3E: 7	sensitively communicate with the athlete to promote compliance with advice and rehabilitation, incorporating exercise psychology principles such as goal-setting, pacing and feedback
3E: 8	design training methods to maintain fitness and function of uninjured parts of the body during the recovery period, e.g. metabolic training, visual imaging techniques
3E: 9	estimate risks involved in the independent use of equipment or strategies by the athlete or other individuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide guidance regarding situations where the knowledge and skills of the sports physiotherapist are required • educate individuals regarding the appropriate application of the equipment or strategies
3E: 10	sensitively advise the athlete and other professionals regarding progress and appropriate timing of return to sporting and exercise activities
3E: 11	sensitively educate the athlete and other individuals regarding principles of post-injury rehabilitation and prevention of re-injury to the athlete and other individuals
3E: 12	communicate effectively and respectfully in the multidisciplinary team, to ensure a coordinated and effective multidisciplinary approach in collaboration with the athlete
3E: 13	integrate strategies to ensure privacy and confidentiality for the athlete and sports team, in all communications

F evaluation and modification	
The sports physiotherapist demonstrates the ability to:	
3F: 1	modify the use of clinical and performance-related testing to provide the most appropriate information at different stages in the rehabilitation process (for example, progressing from tests of functional movements to complex field testing that relates directly to the sporting demands)
3F: 2	incorporate awareness of the principles of measurement reliability and validity into judgements relating to the interpretation of assessment data
3F: 3	make appropriate use of intervention outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as biofeedback for the athlete and other professionals • to encourage compliance • to inform advice regarding participation and progression of training, and • to influence team decisions
G specific national standards	
3G: 1	