

4.1 Manager of the Patient/Client

Sports physiotherapists are involved in the day-to-day management of their clients, involving a continuum of behaviours.

For the purposes of description, these behaviours are separated into four competencies. The first two are injury prevention and acute intervention. The third addresses the period between a physical activity or sport-related injury and the safe return to function, participation, and optimal performance in physical activity, exercise and sport. Lastly, performance enhancement describes a sports physiotherapist's contribution to the multidisciplinary team in relation to enhancing conditions for maximal performance.

- 1 Injury Prevention
- 2 Acute Intervention
- 3 Rehabilitation
- 4 Performance Enhancement

All these competencies involve evidence-based practice: the location, critical analysis, and synthesis of new information to allow judgements regarding the appropriate application of findings to practice.

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Injury Prevention

Sports physiotherapists assess the risks of injury associated with an athlete's participation in a specific sport or physical activity context; they inform and train athletes and other professionals in a way that reduces the occurrence and recurrence of injuries.

Context:

- preventive activities may occur in clinical practice, training and competition contexts.
- most frequently the sports physiotherapist works within a multidisciplinary context, where their assessments contribute to the development of a complete profile of the athlete.

Behaviours:

- assessment of injury risk - integrating evaluations of:
 - the athlete's physical and psychological performance capacity¹,
 - the influence of factors such as age, coexisting conditions, and previous injury, including associated biomechanical and patho-physiological limitations,
 - requirements of the specific sport or exercise,
 - potential impacts of environments and equipment.
- formation of professional judgements that inform training regimens with the aim of safely increasing the athlete's performance capacity¹, specifically related to the sports or activity context.
- facilitating the development of greater efficiency in movement
- advising and educating athletes and other professionals regarding the risks associated with particular environments and equipment.
- continual updating of knowledge in the field, appropriate integration of new information into decision-making processes.

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 1: Injury Prevention	
A foundational knowledge	
The sports physiotherapist demonstrates the ability to:	
1A: 1	analyse the effects of sport-specific exercise and training on human anatomy, exercise physiology, biomechanics, and movement science <i>in different sporting contexts</i>
1A: 2	integrate sport-specific and scientific knowledge to underpin descriptions of the mechanisms of injury development and the likely severity <i>in different sporting contexts</i>
1A: 3	discuss different intrinsic and extrinsic sport-specific injury risks associated with different population and gender groups
1A: 4	discuss the epidemiology of sports-specific injuries in relation to different population and gender groups <i>in different sporting contexts</i>
1A: 5	analyse the potential impact of sport-specific regulations and equipment on injury risk <i>in different sporting contexts</i>
1A: 6	describe the likely effects of pharmacological agents and nutritional status on injury risk
1A: 7	maintain current awareness of the pharmacological and nutritional agents used in the prevention of injury and return to play, including their effects, risks and status in relation to anti-doping regulations
1A: 8	identify specific assessment techniques and protocols used to establish performance profiles and potential injury risks, for example, functional and performance-related tests
1A: 9	identify available intervention strategies to minimise sport-specific injury risks <i>in different sporting contexts</i> , for example, safety equipment, taping, specific advice such as pacing
1A: 10	discuss the social significance of sports and exercise participation, and the impact of injury, in relation to the athlete and other individuals
1A: 11	discuss issues relating to compliance with advice and intervention strategies, including factors affecting motivation and adherence, and different coping strategies
1A: 12	identify risks for exercise addiction and overtraining and their effects on health and performance
B critique and synthesis	
The sports physiotherapist demonstrates the ability to:	
1B: 1	analyse the specific sports skills and sequences required by an athlete and develop appropriate field tests to estimate the athlete's response <i>in different sporting contexts</i>
1B: 2	critically analyse published research relating to principles of injury prevention, assessment techniques to evaluate an athlete's risk of injury, and intervention strategies used to minimise risk of injury
1B: 3	continually integrate new information and established principles of injury prevention
C information collection	
The sports physiotherapist demonstrates the ability to:	
1C: 1	elicit a subjective client history to identify any physical and psychological factors that suggest increased risk of injury
1C: 2	obtain and interpret information relating to the athlete's previous and current experiences of acute and chronic pain
1C: 3	conduct sport specific pre-participation evaluation using validated instruments to assess factors such as range of movement and control of sport specific movements, <i>in different sporting contexts</i>
1C: 4	develop and perform sport-specific functional tests to assess the athlete's potential risk of injury <i>in different sporting contexts</i>
1C: 5	communicate within a multidisciplinary context, obtaining further information from other professionals in relation to injury prevention

D information processing	
The sports physiotherapist demonstrates the ability to:	
1D: 1	use advanced knowledge of normal movement patterns and typical injury mechanisms to interpret the additional demands placed on the body <i>in different sporting contexts</i>
1D: 2	make individual and sport-specific professional judgments regarding injury risks <i>in different sporting contexts</i> – integrating the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical and psychological performance capacity¹, • the difference between load and ‘loadability’¹, • the influence of other factors such as pain and injury history, age, pre-existing or co-existing conditions, and functional limitations, • requirements of the specific sport or exercise, including the potential for overtraining injuries, • potential impacts of environments and equipment, and • ethical issues and awareness of a duty of care to the athlete
E action / intervention	
The sports physiotherapist demonstrates the ability to:	
1E: 1	use effective and respectful communication to provide education regarding injury risks and enhance motivation to comply with preventative strategies
1E: 2	develop appropriate intervention strategies to reduce the athlete’s risk of injury <i>in different sporting contexts</i> , such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical conditioning, strengthening and endurance training, • factors affecting muscle control, • appropriate muscle stretching, • protective taping, bracing, or strapping, • thermal modalities, and • training to facilitate the development of greater efficiency in movement
1E: 3	provide effective training and education in injury-prevention strategies for athletes of all levels and abilities, other professionals and individuals
1E: 4	recognise scope of practice and the expertise of other professionals, leading to appropriate referral and communication of information
1E: 5	refer or advise athletes and other professionals appropriately in relation to the use of pharmacological and nutritional agents in the prevention of injury or in return to play
F evaluation and modification	
The sports physiotherapist demonstrates the ability to:	
1F: 1	evaluate the effectiveness of interventions to reduce the likelihood of injury, using appropriate assessment tools
1F: 2	accurately interpret measurement and evaluation findings, with awareness of their limitations, leading to a reasoned response (for example, modification of the intervention strategy)
G specific national standards	
1G: 1	

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