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'How' a multidisciplinary team worked effectively to reduce injury risk



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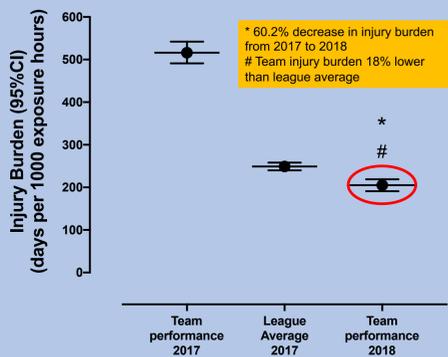


Rationale

Professional sports teams employ professionals from a number of disciplines to support athletes. These multidisciplinary teams (MDT's) have the potential to improve athlete health and performance by integrating different professional perspectives. However, conflict occurs frequently within MDT's due to competition for resources, task interdependence, jurisdictional ambiguity, and communication barriers¹. Further challenges for MDT's relate to attendance and availability for meetings, and the quality of data available to inform decision making². In order to describe how these challenges might be overcome, we explored the working practices and context of an MDT that demonstrated high levels of effectiveness in reducing injury outcomes in professional rugby league.

Approach to the problem

1. Identify an effective MDT



2. Semi-structured interviews with MDT Members



- Head coach
- Assistant Coach
- Strength and Conditioning Coach
- Physiotherapist
- Sport scientist

3. Analysis

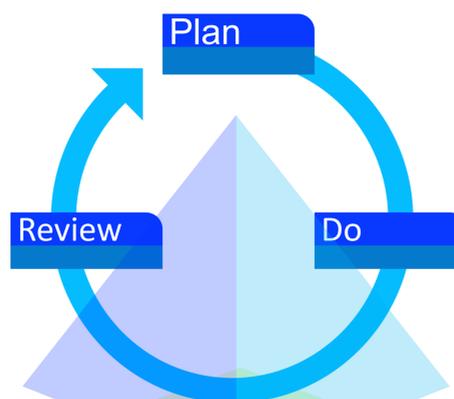


Inductive/deductive thematic analysis of interview transcripts

Results

Operationalisation

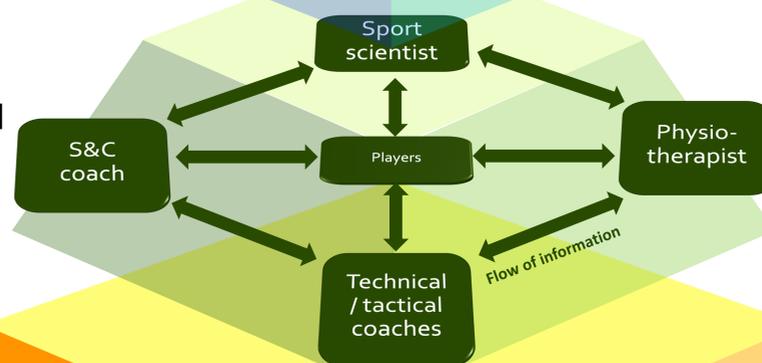
- Iterative plan, do, review cycles to optimize training prescription
- Sophisticated data collection and evaluation to inform decision making
- Space, time and resource to allow these processes to take place



"We always meet up at the start of the week to plan the week's training. We discuss the outlook of the week and we also discuss the previous week generally... GPS will be discussed, injury prevention will be discussed, S&C will be discussed and also what we want to do from a coaching perspective" **Assistant Coach**

Expertise

- Excellence in areas of professional expertise
- Context specific expertise
- Skill in building and maintaining interpersonal relationships



"I think from previous years the reason why I think we're in a better place is because of us as staff. Us, as staff, have gelled better than I've ever known"

Assistant coach

Shared Values



"I think every member of the team, we're working towards the same goals and I think that's key"

Physiotherapist

A shared value system provided a deep rooted understanding of the overarching principles that the group should uphold in their daily practice

"It isn't the Physio's sole responsibility to prevent injury. It's our responsibility as a Department to prevent injury and we all tip into that"

Assistant coach

References

1. Reid, C., Stewart, E. and Thorne, G., 2004. Multidisciplinary sport science teams in elite sport: Comprehensive servicing or conflict and confusion?. *The Sport Psychologist*, 18(2), pp.204-217.
2. Commission for Health Improvement. 2001. National Service Framework Assessments No. 1: NHS cancer care in England and Wales

Further information

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