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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 barriers. Further challenges for MDT’s relate to attendance and availability for meetings, and the quality of data available to inform decision making. 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

“Plan”

“Review”

“Do”

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

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

- Do what is best for the players, not for the team
- Injury prevention is everyone’s responsibility
- There is always room to improve
- Everyone’s expertise is valued

References

Further information
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