

Improving Communication with your Team Physician to Optimize your Athlete's Care

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Conflict of Interest

I have no financial interest to disclose for today's topic.



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Learning objectives

- Summarize concepts of optimizing time with your team physician
- Identify key points that contribute to a healthy working relationship with your team physician
- Prioritizing the role of the athletic trainer as the point of contact for follow up care as part of the healthcare team

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How to Connect with Team Physicians



- Introduce yourself
- Meet them in person
- Phone calls/ letters/ emails
- Athletic Directors
- Former ATC's/ mentors can make introductions
- Ask your school nurse for this information

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Reserved MD Parking

A SIMPLE ACT
OF
KINDNESS
GOES A LONG WAY



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Role of Your Team Physician In Secondary Schools

Sideline Team Physician (s)

- Standing Orders
- Game Coverage
- Allots daily appointments for your athletes as needed
- Welcomes open line of communication

Unofficial Team Physician

- No game coverage
- Signs Standing orders only
- Available by phone/ meeting
- District School Physician

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DO YOU KNOW YOUR TEAM PHYSICIAN ?



Orthopedic Surgeons, Physician Assistants (PAC)
Osteopaths (DO) and Primary Care Physicians (PCP)

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"A strong working relationship and open communication with the Athletic Trainer is critical"

(3)

"The best team physicians recognize the essential position of the athletic trainer and works diligently to optimize the open communication between athlete, athletic trainer, and physician" (3)

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Maintain Lines of Communication

ATC
Initiates
Face to Face
Meetings

Letters
Email
Text MSG'S
Faxes



Planned and
Ongoing

Technology
Telehealth
Unified
Software

Friday Night

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TIME OUTS - BEFORE GAMES/ EVENTS



Build camaraderie with sports medicine team
while preparing for emergencies on the sideline
(1,4)

REVIEW EAP WITH:

- TEAM PHYSICIANS
- EMT'S
- SECURITY
- ATC's, AD's & COACHES

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Barriers to Communication

- Working in Isolation as only ATC
- No Network of Contacts
- Intimidated, decreased confidence and experience
- NO FRIDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL GAMES
- Lack of trust & respect by other HCP's
 - Outranked academically
- HIPAA compliance when athlete is being seen by outside HCP

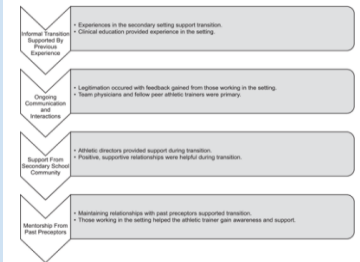


- Unwillingness to collaborate

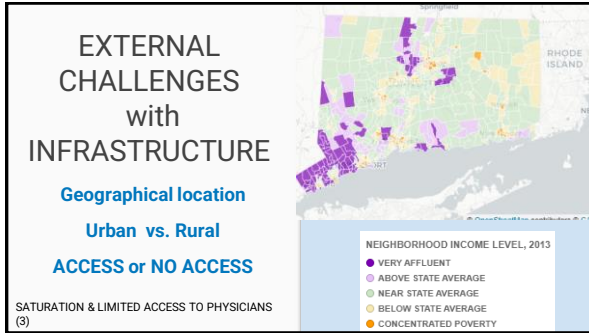
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VALUABLE EXPERIENCES Reported by NEW SSAT's

- Clinical Rotations in High Schools
- Friday Night Football
 - Sideline talks
 - Observing MD's
 - Feedback
- Support by AD's & school staff
- Mock scenarios with Coaches
- Communicating injuries to parents
- Peer AT's & mentors



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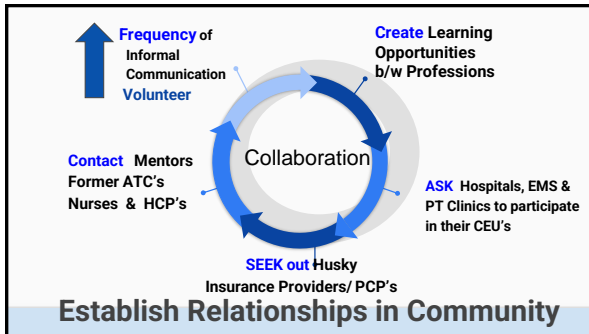
"The Art Of Medicine is Communication"

SSAT's are the Voices & Advocates for their Athletes

1st yr. SSAT in Inner City School Reported:

- "Athletes would have better care if AT's were immersed in the community"
- "The Community based health clinic in the school didn't understand the role of ATC's"
- "Undocumented athletes were afraid to go to physicians/hospitals"
- "Language Barriers existed & parents couldn't provide transportation for appointments"

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4 Pillars of the Sports Medicine Team

COMMITMENT

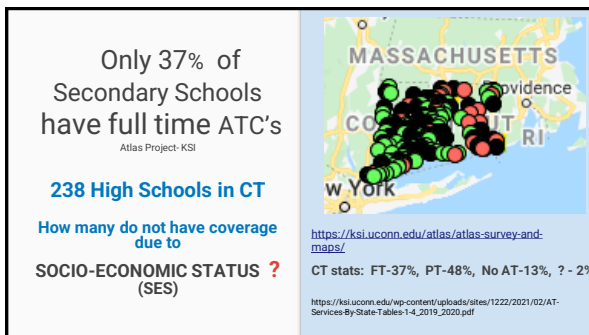
COLLABORATION

COMMUNICATION

CONTINUITY

The loss of any one of the pillars can lead the team to collapse" (3)

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SSAT's are Crucial as Health Care Providers for their athletes as they develop networks of care...

" Early access to health care providers is particularly important in adolescents, as their negative health carries into adulthood, leading to poorer health - related outcomes throughout life" (4)

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Prioritizing SSAT's Role as Point of Contact

- **"PCP's and SSAT's** are often:
 - **First point of contact** with the healthcare system
 - Manage patient care as **care coordinators**
- **Find a provider** in your area that:
 - **Values your profession**
 - **Understands** the demographics of your school



(4)

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SSAT's - Follow up Care

SSAT In High School Setting reports that their athlete is being seen for physical therapy or is seeing another doctor (hand specialist): The SSAT makes a phone call.

- "Is it OK if I work with them on their rehab?"
 - Some doctors say "yes, go ahead and work with them."
- "I'll send them my rehab plan and they'll be like,
 - "Looks good. Just do this and fix this."

This experience was important : The SSAT gained feedback and legitimized her role through her interactions and initiative with the MD (1)


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Who are your biggest **advocates** while caring for your athletes as a SSAT at your school ?

Parents	Coaches and Athletes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Saves them time ○ Saves them \$\$ ○ Peace of mind ○ They know you or will get to know you ○ Athlete's Mental health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improves morale when athlete is visible ○ Coach can't forget about them ○ Coaches' feedback instills motivation ○ Athlete's are happier

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Don't forget your Nurses



Attend their professional development sessions to meet them all.

- Meet and talk daily
- Update them on policies
- Share information - EMR
- Concussion Management for athlete during school
- Resource for doctors and community and HCP's

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We Need More Research

KEY POINTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATHLETES ARE OUR #1 CONCERN • BE OPEN MINDED • BE PART OF THE SOLUTION • MEET & EDUCATE MD's & HCP'S • UTILIZE & SHARE RESOURCES • MEET YOUR PARENTS • LEAVE EGOS AT THE DOOR

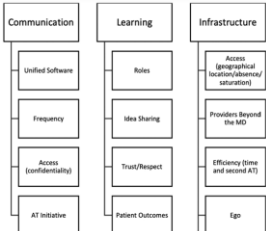


Fig 2 Main Themes and subthemes from open ended questions (2)

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It's Never Too Late to
Climb That Mountain

EL Capitan

CHALLENGE
YOURSELF

TRUST IN YOUR
ABILITIES

STEP OUT OF YOUR
COMFORT ZONE

By Tim Neville- NY Times
Published Oct. 28,
2011 (updated Oct. 27, 2021)




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THANK YOU

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Home of the Red Hawks

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