



GSC Concussion Policy

Policy purpose:

The Guelph Skating Club (Club) is focused on ensuring the wellbeing and safety of all skaters, coaches, volunteers, staff, and all other participants. The Club recognizes the potential severity of a head injury and the commitment and intent behind research to manage concussions. The Club is committed to educating those involved with the Club, creating awareness to help prevent injuries and appropriately managing any suspected concussions and diagnosed concussions.

Definitions:

Concussion:

- is a brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to symptoms that can be physical (e.g., headache, dizziness), cognitive (e.g., difficulty concentrating or remembering), emotional/behavioral (e.g., depression, irritability) and/or related to sleep (e.g., drowsiness, difficulty falling asleep)
- may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that transmits a force to the head that causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull
- can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness (in fact most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness)
- cannot normally be seen on X-rays, standard CT scans or MRIs
- can result in symptoms that are evident immediately, or may evolve and persist over the course of hours, days or even months.

Designated Person(s):

In accordance with the requirements set out in Rowan's Law and its associated regulation, the Club is required to identify a designated person(s) as having specific responsibilities under the Removal-from-Sport and Return-to-Sport protocols.

Under the Removal-from-Sport protocol for the Guelph Skating Club, the designated person(s) is/are responsible for ensuring that:

- A skater is immediately removed from further training if the skater has sustained a concussion or is suspected of having sustained a concussion, regardless of whether or not the concussion was sustained from a sport activity associated with the Club;
- If in the opinion of the designated person(s), there is an emergency and/or any red flag signs and/or symptoms appear- including those resulting from a suspected concussion, **call 911**;
- Removal of the skater from further training, practice or competition; and if the skater is under 18 years of age, the parent/guardian is informed of the removal;

- The skater, or the parent/guardian if the skater is under 18 years of age, is advised that the skater is required to undergo a medical assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner before the skater will be permitted to return to training, practice or competition according to the Return-to-Sport protocol for the Club;
- A skater or, if the skater is under 18 years of age, the skater's parent/guardian receives the Removal-from-Sport and Return-to-Sport protocols for the Club as soon as possible after the skater's removal;
- Once removed, the skater is not permitted to return to training, practice or competition, except in accordance with the Club's Return-to-Sport protocol;

Under the Return-to-Sport protocol for the Guelph Skating Club, the designated person(s) is responsible for ensuring that:

- A skater who has sustained a concussion or is suspected of having sustained a concussion does not return to training, practice or competition until permitted to do so in accordance with the Club Return-to-Sport Protocol
- When a skater has **not** been diagnosed with a concussion, the skater is only permitted to return to training, practice or competition if the skater or, if the skater is under 18 years of age, the skater's parent/guardian provides confirmation to the designated person (s) about the outcome of the skater's medical assessment, specifically that the skater:
 - has undergone a medical assessment by the physician or nurse practitioner and has **not** been diagnosed as having a concussion, and
 - has been medically cleared to return to training, practice or competition by the physician or nurse practitioner
- When a skater **is** diagnosed by a physician or nurse practitioner as having a concussion, the skater is not permitted to move on to unrestricted training, practice or competition unless the skater or, if the skater is under 18 years of age, the skater's parent/guardian provides a confirmation of medical clearance by the physician or nurse practitioner to the designated person(s)
- A skater is not permitted to return to training, practice or competition through the Club graduated Return-to-Sport steps unless the skater or, if the skater is under 18 years of age, the skater's parent/guardian provides a confirmation of medical clearance by the physician or nurse practitioner to the designated person(s)
- When a skater is diagnosed by a physician or nurse practitioner as having a concussion, the skater or, if the skater is under 18 years of age, the skater's parent/guardian has been informed of the importance of disclosing the diagnosis to any other sport organization with which the skater is registered or school that the skater attends
- The regulation states that a designated person(s) may rely on the information received from a skater or, if the skater is under 18 years of age, from the skater's parent/guardian in carrying out their responsibilities under Return-to-Sport Protocol

Accountabilities

All individuals and participants are responsible for:

- Being familiar with and understanding the provisions of this policy, the Removal-from-Sport protocol, Return-to-Sport protocol, as well as other applicable Skate Ontario, Skate Canada and Club policies and protocols
- Supporting the Club's vision of providing the safest possible environment for all of our participants in the skating community
- Reporting all incidents of concussion, suspected and/or actual as outlined in the Skate Canada Incidents of Injury Reporting and Management Policy and supporting procedure
- Adhering to this policy and associated protocols as a minimum standard of addressing concussion injuries and the Return-to-Sport requirements
- Taking all applicable concussion and education training, as prescribed from time to time

Through this policy, the Club is committed to the following actions regarding concussions:

1. Increasing awareness regarding what concussions are and the potential for serious complications.
2. Enforcing procedures and training that promote preventable actions to help reduce the number of concussions.
3. Providing procedures that support staff, volunteers and skaters in ensuring quick recognition and removal of any individual with a suspected concussion from Club activities.
4. Ensuring that following a suspected concussion there are clear steps for both the individual and the Club to follow before a Return-to-Sport occurs to ensure the focus is on the individual's long-term health.

This policy has been written to ensure compliance with Rowan's Law and to complement the Skate Ontario Removal-from-Sport Protocol, Skate Ontario Return-to-Sport Protocol, the Skate Ontario Rowan's Law acknowledgement forms, and resources made available on the Skate Ontario website.