Pre-Conference Workshop Programming

Thursday 16 October 2025

Students | Educators | Professionals

Audience*: Students & New Graduates*

1200 – 1400 (Classroom) | 1400 – 1500 (Fitness Room)

Using Sports Related Concussion Assessments to Inform Rehabilitation Planning
Enda Whyte, CAT; Martin Sweeney, CAT

The workshop will focus on a multimodal assessment for athletes with persistent signs and symptoms post sports related concussion, incorporating the clinical recovery trajectories proposed by Collins and Kontos (University of Pittsburgh Medical Centre) and physiological trajectory by Leddy (University of Buffalo). To facilitate the impact on clinical practice for the Athletic Trainer/Therapist student/professional, there will be a focus on the physiological, vestibular, ocular and cervical trajectories. The workshop will facilitate clinical skills development by focussing on the demonstration and practice of sports related assessment techniques that can be readily applied in clinical practice. It will be underpinned by an introductory overview of the models of concussion assessment and management. There will also be an emphasis on how the assessment findings will inform individualised management of the athlete with sports related concussion.

Audience: Educators

1100 – 1200

Elevating Minds and United Hearts: Empowering Educators to Teach Behavioral Health in Sports Medicine
Jessica Huett, EdD, LAT, ATC
Alyssa Anderson, PhD, LAT, ATC

Behavioral health is increasingly recognized as a crucial aspect of patient care in sports medicine. According to the World Health Organization, 1 in 8 people globally—around 970 million individuals—experience a mental disorder. Athletic trainers and therapists are uniquely equipped to offer essential support to patients confronting mental health challenges. Therefore, clinicians must have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to address behavioral health needs.

Educators are pivotal in equipping sports medicine clinicians with the knowledge and tools necessary to provide holistic patient care. This interactive workshop helps to empower athletic training and therapy educators with the best practices for teaching behavioral

health content, fostering knowledge acquisition, and developing critical thinking and clinical application.

This session will begin by discussing the importance of integrating behavioral health education into sports medicine programs. As mental health challenges become increasingly prevalent worldwide, sports medicine professionals must be prepared to consider their patients' mental and emotional well-being alongside their physical health. Participants will learn how to help develop curricula that emphasize this crucial content. We will also highlight how to align behavioral health education with accreditation standards and program goals, ensuring relevance and compliance.

Facilitators will provide a structured approach to teaching behavioral health by leveraging established frameworks from adult education (e.g., student development theory, backward design, Bloom's Taxonomy). Participants will explore how these frameworks shape curricula, enhancing higher-order thinking and practical application. Facilitators will discuss practical strategies drawn from their experiences in behavioral health and educational program design. Attendees will analyze real-world content delivery examples, gaining insights and actionable takeaways. Participants will reflect on their teaching environments, identify obstacles to effective education, and collaborate on solutions.

Participants will leave with a customizable template for creating behavioral health lesson plans that guide them through teaching methodologies, learning activities, and assessment strategies. By the end of the workshop, participants will possess both theoretical knowledge and practical tools to enhance their teaching of behavioral health, whether they are experienced educators refining their practices or new instructors seeking guidance to prepare future athletic trainers and therapists to address patients' behavioral health needs.

Facilitators welcome sports medicine professionals, students, and educators to engage in a collaborative environment where we elevate the standards of behavioral health education and unite around a shared commitment to improving patient care.

Audience: Educators

1200 – 1300

Self-coaching Through Challenges Utilising the SOAP Healthcare Excellence Coaching Model

Anna Postawa, MSc, PT

This workshop aims at empowering the delegates to explore and resolve the challenges of their professional and personal life, using the SOAP Healthcare Excellence coaching model.

The learning objectives of this session are:

1. To explain the principles of the SOAP Healthcare Excellence coaching model and to discuss its utility in the process of problem solving and stress management.

2. To present the newly developed self-coaching tool and a worked example of its use to resolve a healthcare work environment-related problem.

3. To support the delegates during their individual practice of self-coaching.

Background information:

Coaching, defined as a goal-oriented, one-on-one intervention that aims at professional and personal development, has recently gained attention in the healthcare environment. The main benefits of coaching observed among clinicians are improvements in

wellbeing and performance. A coaching process is usually facilitated by a certified coach, whose main role is to ask questions that evoke the client's self-awareness. The self-awareness gained throughout the process is later used by the client to identify action steps helpful in overcoming challenges or achieving goals, in line with their own values and beliefs. An alternative to a coaching process is self-coaching, described as an internal dialogue aimed at challenging one's own limiting beliefs in order to solve problems or reach goals. Both coaching and self-coaching processes require structure that allows the reflection to be progressively oriented towards problem-solving and goal setting. During a coaching session, the coach facilitates this process. However, a self-coaching activity requires either experience or a worksheet/other tool that provides a structure to the process.

The SOAP Healthcare Excellence Coaching Model:

This coaching model has been recently developed with a specific goal of supporting healthcare practitioners in the process of overcoming challenges and reaching goals, by drawing on their ability to utilise SOAP notes for clinical reasoning. The SOAP Healthcare Excellence coaching model combines the structure of SOAP notes and the principles of the cognitive behavioral therapy approach, to provide a framework that is familiar to healthcare professionals.

Who can benefit from this workshop?

This workshop facilitates the development of problem-solving skills that are critical for productive coping with challenges. Anyone (either an educator, practitioner or student) interested in learning a new strategy that can enhance their well-being, and resilience should consider this workshop beneficial.

Audience: Educators

1400 – 1500

Embracing 'Structural Humility' in Athletic Training and Therapy Education
Michael Cole
Tyrone Cassius

As healthcare inequalities persist in Sports and Exercise Medicine, the integration of 'cultural and structural humility' into athletic training and sports therapy education has become imperative for fostering inclusivity and equity.

This workshop introduces the concept of 'cultural and structural humility' as both a lens and a tool for educators to develop their pedagogy and curriculum, and for professional bodies to develop their intended learning outcomes and graduate attributes.

Building on the concept of cultural competency - whilst addressing its significant limitations - 'cultural and structural humility' comprises a recognition of the 'self' and community in relation to structural power dynamics in society. Such a focus on mutually-beneficial collaboration with patients and communities helps to redress power imbalances and develop understandings of – and responses to – systemic and institutional oppressions. Participants will engage in critical discussions about the interplay between identity, biases, interculturality and systemic social forces. Through collaborative activities, we will consider privilege, power, positionality, and praxis, and in doing so identify interculturality, advocacy and activism as actionable strategies for critical, inclusive learning environments. Participants will leave with practical insights and suggestions for educational approaches.

Join this workshop and share in efforts to advance global and local physical therapy education by prioritising equity and co-creating the conditions that address internal, interpersonal and structural drivers of unnecessary disparities in the sport, exercise and education sectors.

Audience: Professional

900 – 1000

Optimizing Squat Mechanics for Rehabilitation Success
Michael Higgins, PhD, ATC, PT, CSCS

The squat is a foundational exercise in rehabilitation programs, widely used for its versatility and relevance to functional movement. Despite its common use, the squat is often prescribed with a one-size-fits-all approach, without adequate consideration of how variations in technique can impact outcomes. Factors such as stance width, foot rotation, trunk angle, tibial position, and squat depth significantly influence joint loading patterns and muscular recruitment.

A deeper understanding of these variables is critical for Health Care Providers (HCPs) who aim to prescribe squat exercises that are both safe and effective. When these elements are

not tailored to the individual, the benefits of the squat may be diminished—or worse, contribute to faulty movement patterns or reinjury.

This interactive workshop bridges the gap between theory and clinical application, offering participants a biomechanical framework to better evaluate and prescribe squat exercises. Attendees will explore how simple changes in squat technique can be strategically applied to optimize rehabilitation goals, whether addressing pain, improving mobility, increasing strength, or restoring functional movement patterns.

Using real-time demonstrations and clinical case examples, this session will help HCPs refine their approach to one of the most powerful tools in their therapeutic arsenal. Participants will leave with practical strategies to better match squat variations to individual patient presentations, ensuring that this commonly used exercise delivers maximal benefit.

Audience: Professional

930 – 1030

The Spectrum of Concussion Prevention
Erica Beidler, PhD, ATC
Patricia Kelshaw, PhD, ATC

Concussion has become a leading injury concern for athletes worldwide. Effective injury prevention requires integrating primary, secondary, and tertiary strategies. Primary prevention aims to prevent injuries, secondary focuses on reducing acute impact after an injury, and tertiary seeks to minimize long-term effects. Athletic trainers and athletic therapists play a pivotal role as community-based healthcare providers, responsible for developing, implementing, and executing concussion policies across various settings. As the first line of defense in identifying and managing concussions, they are uniquely positioned to integrate these multi-level strategies into their clinical practice.

This presentation will provide athletic trainers and athletic therapists with an overview of evidence-based concussion prevention strategies within the public health prevention framework. As research continues to evolve, understanding how to apply these strategies in clinical settings is essential for enhancing patient care. Based on their specific clinical settings, athletic trainers and athletic therapists must determine their role in developing and implementing primary, secondary, and/or tertiary concussion prevention strategies within their site-specific concussion management plans. Attendees will learn how to assess barriers and resources available within their practice sites to implement effective concussion prevention strategies. The session will guide participants in selecting feasible interventions tailored to the needs of their patient population, considering the constraints of their environment. Additionally, the presentation will explore how to balance evidence-based practices with real-world considerations in designing and enhancing concussion protocols. By addressing these factors, athletic trainers and athletic therapists will be

empowered to advocate for comprehensive concussion prevention strategies that reduce risk, promote recovery, and improve long-term outcomes.

The overall goal of this presentation is to equip athletic trainers and athletic therapists with evidence-supported primary, secondary, and tertiary concussion prevention approaches. After attending, participants will be able to: 1) demonstrate a foundational understanding of injury prevention and risk reduction models, 2) recognize their essential role in developing and implementing concussion prevention protocols, and 3) construct site-specific prevention strategies based on current research, available resources, and the unique needs of their patient population.

Audience: Professional

1000 – 1100

Make the Adjustment: Risky Pitching Mechanics in Youth Baseball
Dennis Coonan, MSE, LAT, ATC
Matthew Brewer, MS, LAT, ATC

The overhead motion in sports as found in baseball, volleyball, tennis, and cricket (among others) is incredibly complex and requires precision function and timing to perform correctly. When not performed correctly, risk of injury can increase. This workshop is designed to take a look at various components of the overhead motion, give assessment tools to determine if there may be faulty biomechanics at play, and then provide intervention techniques to correct the issues. Using simple tools and techniques, attendees will get a hands on experience that will enhance their ability to identify risky mechanics in athletes and how to initiate interventional strategies.

Audience: Professional

1000 – 1200

MSK Ultrasound Workshop: Shoulder Girdle
Stavros Daoukas, MSc, GSR, PgCertUS

This highly practical and interactive workshop is designed to develop participants' knowledge and skills in MSK Ultrasound with a focus on the shoulder girdle. The hands-on session will guide participants through the fundamentals of image interpretation and probe handling techniques. Key anatomical structures commonly assessed in the shoulder will be covered, including the rotator cuff tendons, long head of biceps tendon, subacromial/subdeltoid bursa, pectoralis major tendon, and glenohumeral joint recesses. No prior knowledge is required on operating and/or practicing diagnostic ultrasound.

Audience: Professional

1030 – 1130

Thoracic Manual Therapy for Neck and Shoulder Pain
Michael Higgins, PhD, ATC, PT, CSCS

Mechanical neck and shoulder pain are common complaints among both the general and athletic populations. While traditional treatment approaches for shoulder pain often focus solely on the glenohumeral joint, this perspective overlooks the critical influence of adjacent regions—particularly the thoracic spine. Emerging research supports the concept of regional interdependence, suggesting that impairments in one area can contribute to symptoms in another, reinforcing the importance of a more integrated assessment and treatment strategy.

Manual therapy directed at the thoracic and cervical spine has been well established as an effective intervention for neck pain, improving both pain and function. However, its role in managing shoulder pain is less clear. While thoracic mobilization and manipulation have shown some benefit in individuals with shoulder dysfunction, results are mixed, and the mechanisms remain poorly understood. Despite these uncertainties, a growing body of evidence supports the use of thoracic manual therapy to reduce pain and disability in patients with overlapping cervical and shoulder complaints.

This workshop addresses the competency gap in understanding and applying manual therapy techniques for patients presenting with combined neck and shoulder dysfunction. Through a combination of lecture, demonstration, and hands-on practice, participants will have a better understanding of the anatomical and biomechanical relationships between the cervical spine, thoracic spine, and shoulder girdle. They will also learn how to safely and effectively integrate cervicothoracic mobilization and manipulation into clinical practice to reduce pain and improve function in both regions.

By the end of the session, attendees will be better equipped to assess and treat patients with complex mechanical neck and shoulder pain using a regionally informed, evidence-based approach.

Audience: Professional

1200 – 1300 - Classroom | 1300 – 1400 - Pool

Aquatic Therapy for Injury Prevention, Rehabilitation, and Sport Performance
Valerie Herzog, EdD, LAT, ATC
Hannah Stedge, PhD, LAT, ATC

Aquatic therapy has been shown to be equally or more effective than rehabilitation on land to decrease pain, increase range of motion, increase strength, improve appropriate gait patterns, improve balance, and reduce swelling. These effects have been demonstrated in patients with a wide variety of conditions including osteoarthritis, low back pain, stress fractures, and for post-operative repairs of the rotator cuff and anterior cruciate ligament.

Aquatic therapy is also very useful for improving sport performance, cardiovascular endurance, and chronic injury prevention. Aquatic therapy is commonly utilized by various healthcare professionals in a variety of practice settings such as high school and collegiate sports, rehabilitative clinics, or professional athletic teams. Athletic trainers and therapists should be equipped with the skills and latest evidence to implement a safe and effective aquatic therapy program. This two-part interactive workshop will provide participants with current evidence and use of aquatic therapy as well as authentic practice with the aquatic therapy tools in a pool. The workshop will begin with an overview of the current available research on aquatic therapy and the principles of aquatic therapy including indications, contraindications, and special considerations. We will then review the types of aquatic therapy exercises and their purpose such as upper extremity, lower extremity, gait training, balance, cardiovascular, and power. Following the lecture, participants will have time to change into swim attire. We will then move the participants to the pool and split them into two groups, one with each instructor and the provided aquatic therapy tools. One group of participants will begin in the deep end and focus on exercises most appropriate for deep water such as running, lymphatic drainage, and injury prevention. The other group will begin in the shallow end of the pool and will focus on exercises for range of motion, strength, gait training, balance, and power. During this time, instructors will discuss the most useful aquatic therapy tools to utilize for accomplishing these effects and also discuss modifications for little to no additional equipment. Following demonstration and practice of each exercise, participants will break into small groups to develop an aquatic therapy program with activity-specific exercises for a provided patient case study. The session will end 30 minutes before the scheduled end-time to allow participants time to shower and change back into conference attire for their next session.

Audience: Professional

1230 – 1330

A Growing issue? Understanding Adolescent Development for Injury Prevention – Practical Applications

Gemma Parry, BASRaT-reg and HCPC Registered Physiotherapist
Dave Hartley BASRaT-reg

Working with young athletes? Then you'll know that no two kids grow at the same rate – and that managing this well can make a big difference to performance, development, and injury risk. But how confident are you when it comes to measuring and applying growth and maturation data in real-world settings?

This practical, hands-on workshop is designed to boost your confidence and skills – whether you're brand new to the topic or looking to sharpen up.

We kick off with a quick-fire Fact or Fiction quiz to bust some common myths around adolescent growth. Get moving, get chatting, and walk away with a clear understanding of the key principles that underpin good practice.

Then it’s over to the Tools and Tech Showcase – your chance to try out gold-standard measurement techniques in a relaxed, supportive environment. Rotate through measurement stations, practise data entry, and get instant feedback from facilitators and peers. You’ll leave knowing how to collect data accurately and confidently.

In the second half, we shift from theory to action. You’ll hear real examples of how growth data is being used in elite sport to inform training and reduce injury risk. Then you’ll tackle a practical case study – working in groups to identify suitable interventions for a young athlete based on their maturation profile.

We wrap up with a Q&A and group reflection, sharing ideas and tips you can take straight back to your setting.

Whether you're an athletic trainer, coach, physio, S&C coach, or work in youth development, this workshop will give you tools you can use straight away – plus a clearer understanding of how to support growing athletes safely and effectively.

Audience: Professional

1300 – 1500

MSK Ultrasound Workshop: Knee and Thigh
Stavros Daoukas, MSc, GSR, PgCertUS

This highly practical and interactive workshop is designed to develop participants’ knowledge and skills in MSK Ultrasound with a focus on the knee and thigh region. The hands-on session will guide participants through the fundamentals of image interpretation and probe handling techniques. Key anatomical structures commonly assessed in the knee and thigh will be covered, including the quadriceps tendon, suprapatellar joint recess, femoral trochlea cartilage, patellar tendon, superficial and deep infrapatellar bursae, prepatellar bursa, Hoffa's fat pad, menisci and collateral ligaments. No prior knowledge is required on operating and/or practicing diagnostic ultrasound.

Audience: Professional

1300 – 1400 (Fitness Room)

Lost in Transition: Leveraging the VOMS as a Throughline from Assessment to Clearance
Julie MacDonald, MSc, CAT(C), RKIN, RMT

In the multimodal assessment of sports related concussion (SRC), evidence-based tools like Vestibular Ocular Motor Screening (VOMS) are helping practitioners recognize and diagnose this injury with more precision. The VOMS in particular helps to identify signs and

symptoms of concussion with greater objectivity, and it enhances the rigour of initial management practices.

Yet the VOMS is more than a diagnostic tool. Just as it informs a multimodal assessment process, so too can it inform rehabilitation and clearance practices. In fact, it should!

This workshop will leverage the familiar framework of the VOMS and demonstrate its utility as both an evaluative and a prescriptive tool in the management of SRC. Through hands-on application, participants will:

- Review and refine implementation of the VOMS as an assessment tool
- Learn complementary visual, vestibular, and proprioceptive evaluation strategies that assist in the interpretation of VOMS results
- Discover and apply targeted rehabilitation exercises to address assessment findings and support to Return to Play progressions
- Identify meaningful indicators of recovery that contribute to a comprehensive medical clearance process.

Due to the dynamic nature of concussion recovery, a framework that is consistent from assessment through clearance is an asset for athletes and practitioners alike. It creates opportunities for objective measurement of progress over time, and it contributes important indicators of recovery in a comprehensive clearance process. Practitioners can expect to leave this workshop with an enhanced understanding of the VOMS, and a renewed appreciation of its versatility in the multimodal management of SRC.

Audience: Professional

1330 – 1430

Leveraging Mobile Applications for Personalized Injury Prevention Program Delivery
Hayley Root, PhD, MPH, ATC
Lindsay DiStefano, PhD, ATC, FNATA

Injury prevention programs (IPPs) are warm-up strategies that take <15 minutes to perform and can prevent 40-80% of non-contact lower extremity injuries. Unfortunately, less than one in five secondary school coaches in the United States adopt these programs and implementation numbers are even lower in youth sport. The non-adoption of IPPs reflects a failure to disseminate and implement effective programs – causing millions of athletes to suffer unnecessary injuries. This session will demonstrate how athletic trainers can leverage a freely available mobile application to implement IPPs by addressing commonly reported barriers (e.g., lack of confidence to implement, confusing exercises, time) and perceived facilitators (e.g., ability to integrate a program into practice easily).