

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Who is considered a “qualified” medical professional?
 - The definition of “qualified” medical professional varies by State. According to Pennsylvania’s concussion legislation a qualified medical professional is defined as a licensed physician or health care professional who is trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.
 - Medical Doctors, EMT personnel and Certified Athletic Trainers (ATC) all meet the qualified medical professional definition.
2. There are multiple CDC Head’s Up trainings. Which CDC Head’s Up training should Special Olympics coaches take?
 - The policy requires the Heads-Up Concussion in Youth Sports training course, which is available at http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html. The CDC website includes other resources/tools for parents, clinicians and school staff that can be used, as needed.
3. What is the procedure for tracking coach completion of concussion training?
 - Please type your name and county into the certificate (ex. John Smith, ABC County)
 - Save the certificate to your computer as: CCT_Your County_Your Last Name_Your First Name (ie. Jennifer would name her file: CCT_Centre_Tresp_Jennifer). You can also print a copy for your records.
 - Email a copy to sportstraining@specialolympicspa.org, subject line “Concussion Training”.
 - If using as **Continuing Education** you must also complete a Sports Training Application (STA) (Sections 1, 2, and 4) and submit the STA with your certificate.
4. How often is the Concussion Awareness training required?
 - All coaches must complete the training and provide certificate of confirmation at least once every three years. Frequency of training is consistent with the requirements for coach’s certification, volunteer screening and Protective Behaviors training.
 - Concussion Training in PA is allowed to be used as Continuing Education for ALL sports once every nine years.
5. Why are coaches for non-contact sports required to complete concussion awareness training?
 - Although concussions may be more likely to occur in contact sports, concussions can occur as a result of any organized or unorganized recreational activity, and therefore it is important that all coaches participate in concussion awareness training.

6. What is the recommended approach for communicating in writing the concussion awareness and safety recognition program to participants/parents/guardians?
 - It is recommended that U.S. Programs provide the concussion awareness and safety recognition program with the athlete medical at least once every three years and also periodically distribute via newsletters, website, etc.
 - Special Olympics Pennsylvania will provide an informational flier in the near future for programs to distribute to participants/parents/guardians with instructions on managing this process.
7. How should parents/guardians be notified of a suspected concussion?
 - This website <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/> includes several tools that can be provided to parents/guardians of a participant with a suspected concussion. It will also be important to share with the parent/guardian next steps relative to the participant's return to play, as outlined in the policy.
8. Why do Special Olympics' Return to Play requirements as outlined in the Concussion Awareness and Safety Recognition Policy differ from the guidelines provided via the concussion training courses?
 - The return to play guidelines described in some of the concussion training courses require gradually re-introducing strenuous physical activity over the course of several training sessions for those who have suffered concussions. Because Special Olympics' practices/activities do not occur on a daily basis, a similar type of return to play could be difficult to administer and could require a long period of time before an athlete is able to fully participate in Special Olympics activities.
9. What if a coach does not complete the required training?
 - All current coaches must complete the training by December 31, 2015 and if not completed by 2016 will be ineligible to coach on any level.
 - It is our goal that all coaches attending State Events in 2015 will have completed the Concussion Training course. Coaches attending State Games who have not completed the training will be given the opportunity to do so with SOPA staff while at the event.
10. Does the Concussion Awareness and Safety Recognition Policy apply to Unified Partners?
 - Yes, Unified Partners who are suspected of having a concussion are subject to the Return to Play guidelines as outlined in the policy.