

Concussion spotter tool

Learn about the criteria for establishing a concussion spotter and the required training for higher-risk sports.

Overview

The concussion spotter tool was developed in response to recommendations made by the [Rowan's Law Advisory Committee](#). The tool outlines criteria for establishing a concussion spotter and required training.

This information is for sport organizations in Ontario.

Disclaimer

The following document is not a substitute for legal advice. Sport organizations should seek independent legal advice to clarify obligations under *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*.

Concussion spotter

A “concussion spotter” is a person responsible for observing participants on a field of play and flagging situations to a “designated person” where an individual may have sustained an injury from a jarring impact to the head, face, neck, or elsewhere on the body that transmits an impulsive force to the head.

Designated person(s)

The role of the designated person(s) is to remove an athlete from play if they are suspected to have sustained a concussion. “Designated Person(s)” is identified under Section 4 of *Rowan’s Law (Concussion Safety), 2018*.

Determining the need for a concussion spotter

It is recommended that sport organizations in higher-risk sports have a concussion spotter present at all games and practices, in addition to the designated person(s).

Higher-risk sports are those where there is a higher risk of concussion as a result of:

- A. person-to-equipment contact
- B. person-to-person contact
- C. high speed of action
- D. falls on snow/water/ice/ground

A and B include:

- collision sports where athletes purposely hit or collide with each other or inanimate objects, including the ground, with great force (for example, hockey, football, rugby, lacrosse)
- contact sports where athletes routinely make contact with each other or with inanimate objects (for example, soccer, basketball)
- limited-contact sports where contact with other athletes or inanimate objects is infrequent or inadvertent (for example, baseball, softball, squash, volleyball)

Concussion spotter training

The concussion spotter is required to review the Ontario government’s [concussion awareness resources](#) that include a [concussion awareness interactive e-module](#).

The resources should be reviewed annually.

Procedure for flagging possible concussions

Individual sport organizations should establish a procedure for the concussion spotter to flag possible concussions to the designated person(s).

Case study: Rugby's blue card program

Rugby Canada and Rugby Ontario are using the [blue card](#) program at all levels of the game in Ontario.

A blue card is issued by a match official when a player is identified with a suspected concussion by a coach, player, match official or identified individual (such as a Concussion Spotter) and removed from the field of play.

This means:

- a player issued a blue card is required to leave the field of play immediately and cannot return to play in that match
- a player issued a blue card cannot return to play in any future match without receiving both medical clearance and clearance from Rugby Ontario in writing – as well as meeting the requirements of the World Rugby Return-to-Play Protocols