

# Press release: Government unveils mental health action plan to improve support for elite sportspeople

Tracey Crouch, Minister for Sport and Civil Society, today unveiled the first Mental Health Action Plan for Elite Sport, which has been developed with mental health and sports organisations to improve awareness and training in top-level sport.

A new mental health strategy will be implemented across all elite sports to promote good mental wellbeing and give athletes and National Governing Bodies better information about accessing sports and clinical psychologists.

By 2024, elite sport must have mental health procedures embedded in their performance plans, and provide clear pathways for athletes to help them access professional mental health support.

National Lottery Funded athletes will also be encouraged to visit mental health units to improve discussions and help break down the stigma around mental health.

Good mental health practise will also be embedded at a grassroots level as part of the plan.

Sport England will ingrain mental wellbeing into its Talent Strategy and teach holistic athlete development, and mental health welfare alongside physical training.

The Action Plan was developed after the Minister hosted two roundtables last year one with elite athletes from across British sport to hear firsthand the pressures they face and the other for sports and mental health organisations to discuss how the sector can improve support, and share best practice.

Tracey Crouch, Minister for Sport and Civil Society, said:

We know that sport has a very positive impact on people's mental health and can help in their recovery. But when sport is your job, the immense pressure to succeed can become too much.

This Action Plan sets out how Government, sports and mental health organisations can work together to give athletes the right support before they reach crisis point.

Progress has been made to break down the stigma around mental health and this plan underlines our commitment to tackling this important issue in sport. It will help create a stronger industry where our elite sports men and women can continue to thrive and inspire future generations.

Emma Boggis, chief executive of the Sport Recreation Alliance, added:

I am very pleased to have worked together with the Sports Minister and Mind to develop this Action Plan which is committed to making a real change for elite sportspeople.

We know that there is good practice in the sector through our work on the Mental Health Charter for Sport and Recreation and working closely with our wider membership. But we also recognise that this needs to become common practice so that athletes and their support teams feel that their mental wellbeing is a priority.

We believe that by working together we can collectively help to create a positive environment, with greater understanding and knowledge, that helps our athletes and the wider population to engage in sport and physical activity.

The government will now establish a small group to oversee progress in delivering the plan and will report on progress as part of the Sporting Future annual report to Parliament.

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

Read the full [Mental Health Action Plan for Elite Sport](#)