

LICENSURE DIFFERENCES OF MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I ATHLETIC DEPARTMENTS

RESEARCH FROM THE FRONT PORCH

“NO ONE LICENSE EXISTS THAT SUGGESTS AN INDIVIDUAL HAS COMPETENCE TO PROVIDE BOTH CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES TO COLLEGIATE ATHLETES.”

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- Licensed Psychologists (LPs), Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs), and Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) are mental health professionals who can offer mental health services to collegiate athletes. However, licensing requirements, license names, and scope of practice for each license vary by state.
- A mental health professional may have both an LP/LPC/LCSW and a Certified Mental Performance Consultant (CMPC) credential. LP/LPC/LCSW are licenses to practice clinical therapy and the CMPC is a certification in performance enhancement. It is important to understand the differences, as receiving mental health care from an individual who is not competent can have negative impacts on an individual's well-being.
- A review of NCAA Division I athletic department staff websites showed the majority of mental health services in athletic departments are provided by psychologists (LPs). There is a much wider pool of mental health professionals that can provide care to athletes, but it appears athletic departments may not be using them.

QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Does my athletic department employ a mental health professional on staff? What license or certification do they hold?
- If my athletic department does not have a mental health professional on staff, do I know where and how athletes are referred for mental health services?
- Have I visited my state's mental health licensing department to learn which licenses can provide clinical therapy to athletes at my institution?
- If my institution recently hired a mental health professional or are in the process of hiring a mental health professional, what licenses are listed under “qualifications”? Is there an opportunity to expand the search beyond just one license? Are we asking for one professional to offer both mental health services and sport performance services; if so, how could we alter the job announcement?



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Additional Resources:

Read the full article in: *Journal of Higher Education Athletics and Innovation* 2022, Vol. 1, No. 9, p. 1-16

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