



Cowra Netball Association

Injury Management & Return to Play Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and consistent process for the safe management of players who have sustained **major injuries** (e.g., fractures, dislocations, serious sprains, ligament tears) and to ensure their safe return to netball.

Cowra Netball Association (CNA) prioritises the **health, safety, and wellbeing** of all players, coaches, umpires, and officials.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All registered players of CNA (junior, senior, and representative)
 - Umpires
 - Parents/guardians of junior players
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3. Definitions

- **Major Injury** – Any injury that prevents normal participation for **two weeks or more** and/or requires medical intervention such as surgery, casting, or significant rehabilitation.
 - **Medical Clearance** – Written approval from a qualified health professional confirming that the player is safe to return to training and competition.
 - **Gradual Return to Play (RTP)** – A staged process that allows players to return to activity safely and progressively.
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4. Reporting a Major Injury

1. Any major injury sustained **during training, competition (all players), or outside netball (Rep players only)** must be reported to the following within **48 hours**:
 - Team Coach and Manager; and/or
 - CNA Committee via the **Injury Report Form**
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5. Requirements Before Returning to Play

To ensure player safety, the following steps **must be completed** before a player is allowed to return to training or competition after a major injury:

Step 1 – Medical Clearance

- A written clearance letter or form **from a qualified health professional** (doctor, physiotherapist, sports physician) is required.
 - The clearance must:
 - State that the player is fit to **resume netball activities**
 - Specify any **limitations or restrictions** (e.g., modified training, strapping required)
 - Be **submitted to the Team Manager or CNA Committee** before the player participates in any training or games.
 - **No clearance = No participation.**
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Step 2 – Modified / Non-Contact Training

- As per recommendation by **qualified health professional**
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6. Responsibilities

Players

- Report all major injuries promptly.
- Follow all medical advice and rehabilitation plans.
- Provide **medical clearance documents** before returning to play.

Parents / Guardians (for junior players)

- Support the rehabilitation process and ensure compliance with this policy.
 - Provide CNA with all required documentation.
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Coaches & Team Officials

- Do **not** allow any player to participate without medical clearance.
- Report any concerns or re-injury immediately to the CNA Committee.

CNA Committee

- Maintain records of all reported major injuries and clearances.
 - Support coaches and teams in enforcing this policy.
 - Make final decisions on player eligibility if disputes arise.
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7. Non-Compliance

- Any player who does not follow this policy **will not be permitted** to train or play until all requirements are met.
 - Coaches and officials who knowingly allow a player to participate without clearance may face disciplinary action.
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8. Record Keeping

- Injury reports, clearance letters, and return-to-play records **MUST** be witnessed and documented by CNA Executive Committee. No copies will be kept due to privacy.
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9. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed **annually** or as required to reflect updates in best practice for player safety and sports injury management.
