

EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

An emergency action plan (EAP) is a written document that outlines the emergency response to a catastrophic injury or adverse event. An EAP is written to respond promptly to all types of emergencies and is not condition specific (e.g., saying the “heat EAP” is **incorrect** as the EAP is written for all injuries/illnesses not a specific condition). The EAP is most often developed by athletic trainers (ATs) or athletic directors (ADs) (at the high school level), and should include feedback from all stakeholders across the socioecological framework for the community you work in (i.e., coaches, administrators, facility staff, EMS, etc.). Despite evidence to support the usefulness of an EAP in improving patient outcomes, a majority of high schools do not have comprehensive EAPs.

RESOURCES

Korey Stringer Institute:
[EAP Template](#)

[Medical Time Out](#)

NATA Position Statement:
[Emergency Planning in Athletics](#)



NATA FOUNDATION FUNDED RESEARCH

Samantha E. Scarneo-Miller, PhD, LAT, ATC
“Emergency Action Planning Policy Adoption in Secondary School Athletics”

Findings from this study provided national benchmark data on current adoption of EAPs in the high school setting as reported by ATs, ADs, coaches and nurses. Factors influencing adoption are multifactorial inclusive of a failure to include stakeholders in the development, the needs for improved cultural perceptions of sport safety, and minor associations with social determinants of health. [Learn more](#)

from RECENT ARTICLES

"Athletic Administrators' Reporting of Emergency Preparedness Regarding Policies and Procedures in Iowa Secondary Schools" [Williams et al, 2021](#). The purpose of this study was to describe emergency preparedness in high schools in Iowa. Most schools described having a written EAP (83%), and schools with access to an AT more frequently stated they had an EAP. However, fewer than half said that the EAP was distributed and reviewed annually by athletics staff members. *Take home point: Including stakeholders across the socioecological framework provides insights and support for EAP development and implementation.*

"Influence of State-Level Emergency Planning Policy Requirements on Secondary School Adoption" [Scarneo-Miller et al, 2020](#). Findings from this study show that a statewide policy requirement for an EAP appears to be associated with local adoption of EAPs in secondary schools. ATs should be familiar with their state laws and other policies governing their athletics program and aim to become involved with statewide policy advocacy efforts, [such as the TUFSS Project](#). *Take home point: ATs should adopt a written EAP inclusive of all best practice components for their secondary school, and a state policy can make it easier to get community buy-in.*

"Emergency Action Plans in Secondary Schools: Barriers, Facilitators, and Social Determinants Affecting Implementation" [Scarneo-Miller et al, 2020](#). ATs and ADs were asked about their EAP adoption in high schools across the US. Perceived barriers to implementation included lack of knowledge of how to implement an EAP; facilitators included access to healthcare personnel, state mandates and support from someone in an administrative position. Further, ATs working at suburban schools displayed greater odds of having an EAP compared with those working in rural communities. ADs at larger schools (>500 students) led to higher odds of adopting an EAP, compared to those working at smaller schools. *Take home point: EAP adoption is multifactorial and ATs must consider the social determinants affecting their specific school when updating or creating a written EAP.*

highlights NATA FOUNDATION FREE COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM

Written Policy Adoption for Emergency Preparedness and Environmental Injuries in West Virginia High Schools ([McCool et al, 2022](#)) S- 51

ATs need to review and revise sports medicine policies to be in line with all components of best practice documents.

Athletic Trainers’ Perceptions of Accessibility to Healthcare Delivery Resources for Those Working Per Diem Services ([Mair et al, 2020](#)) S-331

Access to an EAP or equipment, like an AED, is imperative for ATs in per diem services. To practice at the top of our license, ATs must be prepared.

