

Abstracts of the Scientific Poster Award Competition of the 2025 Royal College of Chiropractic Sports Sciences (Canada) Conference (RCCSS(C)) / Les résumés du Concours de Prix d’Affiche Scientifique de la Conférence 2025 du Royal College of Chiropractic Sports Sciences (Canada) Conference (RCCSS(C))

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The Annual RCCSS(C) Conference continues to serve as a forum for advancing sports healthcare practice, education, and research through collaboration and knowledge exchange. The 2025 Annual RCCSS(C) Conference was held November 8-9, 2025, in Toronto, Canada. This year’s conferenced marked the Second Annual Scientific Poster Presentation and Award Competition, showcasing innovative research and clinical insights from the sports healthcare community.

The RCCSS(C) Research and Education Committee extends its sincere appreciation to the Foundation for the RCCSS(C), individual donors who generously supported the poster awards, the RCCSS(C) Conference Committee, the peer review chair and all peer reviewers for their dedication in evaluating submissions. Their contributions made this year’s competition possible and ensured its continued excellence. Presented below are the abstracts of the poster award recipients.

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Conflicts of Interest:

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First Prize Poster:

Title: The athlete-centred care study: bringing the athlete's voice to sports healthcare (step 1 – nominal group technique meetings)

Authors: Alex Lee, David Oh, Scott Howitt, Erica Gavel, Brad Muir, Lara deGraauw, Chris deGraauw, Caroline Poulin, Duong Nguyen, Alessandro Fancella, Sari Kraft, James Gardiner, Neville Wright, Chris Napier, Mohsen Kazemi, Heather Logan-Sprenger

Background: Athletes are key stakeholders in sport and should have a meaningful voice in shaping research and policy on how healthcare is delivered to them. Understanding their expectations, values, and preferences is essential for providing patient-centred care. While patient-centred care is well established in many healthcare settings, limited research has explored this approach in sport.

Objectives: To identify and prioritize athlete expectations, values, and preferences for care to co-create a practice toolkit that supports athlete-centred care.

Study Design: Stakeholder consensus study.

Methods: Canadian national team athletes (13 para and 10 non para athletes) participated in step one of a three-step stakeholder consensus study. Step one involved online nominal group technique (NGT) meetings conducted via Zoom. In small groups, athletes engaged in facilitated brainstorming and prioritization exercises to articulate their expectations, values, and preferences for healthcare. Responses were transcribed in real time, and a qualitative thematic content analysis was performed to identify key themes.

Results: Four NGT meetings were completed (two with para athletes and two with non para athletes). Common themes included clear communication and transparency, individualized care, collaboration, trust and confidentiality, holistic approaches, scheduling flexibility, and sport-specific understanding. Additional themes from para athlete groups included expertise in para sports and disability considerations, accessibility, affordability and

insurance navigation, psychological impact of recovery, ethical and inclusive healthcare, and continuity of care.

Conclusion: These themes informed the development of seed statements for the step two prioritization survey in this stakeholder consensus study to develop an athlete-centred care practice toolkit.

Second Prize Poster:

Title: Sports healthcare providers' perspectives of working with chiropractors managing elite athletes: a qualitative study

Authors: Gabriella DeBono, Alex Lee, Scott Howitt, Melissa Atkinson-Graham, Patrick Bergeron, Silvano Mior

Introduction: Sports teams have established interprofessional healthcare teams to utilize the diverse expertise of professionals to optimize the health and performance of athletes. Historically, chiropractors are inconsistently included within this group. Studies have explored the value of including sport chiropractors within such teams from the perspective of athletes, coaches, and team staff, but few from the perspective of non-chiropractic sports healthcare providers. This study will focus on the perspectives of other healthcare providers who interact with chiropractors within the context of supporting elite athletic management.

Methods: We used an interpretive phenomenological approach framed using theories of professionalization in healthcare that speak to the formation and dynamic nature of professions through concepts like jurisdiction, work, competition, and abstract knowledge. These concepts, and past research exploring the integration of chiropractic in sports healthcare, situate and contextualize our interview guide and thematic analysis.

Participants: N=11 (3 athletic therapists, 5 physiotherapists, 3 medical doctors). Participants were recruited purposively and supplemented using snowball sampling.

Data collection: Semi-structured interviews were conducted and recorded via Zoom. Interviews were approximately 30-40 minutes long and transcribed verbatim.

Analysis: Transcripts were imported in MS Word and NVivo to facilitate analysis. Data were interpretively ana-

lyzed and codes were developed deductively and inductively. Codes evolved through iterative processes during research team meetings and were then clustered into representative themes. Qualitative reflective practices were used during data collection and analysis.

Results: Emerging themes and subthemes include: teamwork (roles and responsibilities, adaptability, and conforming), structuration of work (setting determined, hierarchy), jurisdiction (blurred boundaries, distinct bound-

aries), and trust (relationships, communication, familiarity).

Preliminary conclusions: Early findings suggest that professional boundaries in sport settings are fluid and often shaped by factors beyond professional designation. Additionally, being a “team player” appears to foster positive relationships and builds interprofessional trust between chiropractors and other sport healthcare professionals.