

Pennsylvania More Than Doubles the National Average of High School Sports Teams Which Have Access to an Athletic Trainer

As the high school fall sports season gets underway, the Pennsylvania Athletic Trainers' Society (PATS) is proud to announce the results of an ongoing state wide effort. PATS is proud to announce that Pennsylvania now has 90% of its secondary schools having access to an athletic trainer as compared to the national average of 42%.

Harrisburgh, PA ([PRWEB](#)) September 24, 2013 -- As the fall high school sports season gets underway, the Pennsylvania Athletic Trainers' Society (PATS) is proud to announce the results of a recently completed state wide effort to identify schools that provide athletic training services to their athletes. This effort is part of an ongoing study being completed in conjunction with Korey Stringer Institute (KSI) and the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA). Officials from school districts in Pennsylvania were asked various questions to assess the extent of the health care provided to their student athletes via athletic training coverage. The survey was designed to evaluate the extent of the coverage, whether there is full time or part time access to athletic trainers, by whom is the athletic trainer employed, and which sports are provided health care coverage.

Athletic Trainers (ATs) have worked in high schools for decades providing health care to scholastic athletes nationwide. The reported national average of 42% of high schools nationwide providing athletic training services to their athletes has been used for years. This is why PATS is so proud of their 90% high school saturation rate. "Any time you can more than double the national average it is a good thing. However, the current Executive Board believes we need to continue to improve these numbers by identifying those schools not providing Athletic Training services and educating them about the benefits of employing an athletic trainer. All scholastic athletes in Pennsylvania deserve to have access to Athletic Training services and licensed health care professionals." Yvette Ingram, President of PATS.

The researchers at the KSI are reporting preliminary findings from their nearly yearlong study. In PA, 43% of the schools that responded to the study employed a full time athletic trainer, and an additional 40% were full time athletic trainers in a clinical setting. Approximately 11% of the school officials reported using athletic training services on a part time basis. Of particular interest was the number one reason reported for not employing an athletic trainer was a lack of finances. The researchers hope to continue this study during this academic year and branch out to alternative, charter, technical, and magnet schools.

Over the last few years, Pennsylvania legislators have placed a focus on the health care that scholastic athletes are receiving with the signing of the Youth Sport Safety Act in November of 2011 and the signing of the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Law in May 2012. Most recently the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletics Association (PIAA) established minimal guidelines for high schools related to heat acclimatization conditioning. Due to an increased spotlight on issues of heat and cardiac related illness and concussion evaluation, management and treatment secondary schools have begun focusing of who can provide the most appropriate health care for its student-athletes. Athletic Trainers are health care professional who are the perfect fit to ensure the sports safety of student- athletes at the secondary school level. They can ensure that these student-athletes are receiving the intend care outlined in the laws and guidelines mentioned.

At the national level, "[The Secondary School Student Athletes' Bill of Rights](#)" was introduced into the U.S. House of Representatives on February 15th by Rep. Jim Gerlach (PA-6). The document encourages athletes, parents, coaches, and health care professionals to take a proactive approach towards improving the health and

athletic experiences of the nation's approximately 7.7 million secondary school athletes, with more than 350,000 of them in PA. Authors of a recent research study published in the American Academy of Pediatrics, reported that student athletes with access to ATs have lower overall injury rates, lower recurrent injury rates, and higher recognition of concussions. Another national effort being sponsored by the Youth Sport Safety Alliance is a Safe School designation. If you are interested in finding out how to become a designated Safe Sports School follow the [link](#).

For approximately nine months, Athletic Trainers across Pennsylvania have been working to gather accurate data to assess how many schools in PA employ or contract the services of an AT. The Pennsylvania Athletic Trainers' Society intends to continue to educate secondary schools and the public on the importance of providing Athletic Training services. The Society plans to contact those secondary schools that do not provide these services and more specifically identify the reasons why they do not utilizing these services. By continuing to provide educational materials and organizing meetings with administrators, coaches and parents, the Society hopes to see every secondary school in Pennsylvania provide the Athletic Training services every athlete in the Commonwealth deserves. A complete list of schools both with and without ATs as of August 1, 2013 can be found at this [link](#).



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