



## Catholic Schools Office Diocese of Lismore

# HEAD INJURY AND CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

<b>SOP Number:</b>	HlaCMSOP1:00
<b>Status:</b>	Ratified
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<b>SOP Contact Officer:</b>	School Resources Services –Work Health and Safety Officer
<b>Related Documentation:</b>	Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore <i>Foundational Beliefs and Practices – The Essential Framework, 2007.</i> Parent and Caregiver Complaints Policy and Standard Operating Procedure Privacy Policy and Standard Operating Procedure First Aide Standard Operating Procedure

## **RATIONALE**

This Standard Operating Procedure outlines the procedural obligations on all employees to identify, report, and address Head Injuries and Concussion, and to subject them to ongoing monitoring.

## **SCOPE**

This Standard Operating Procedure applies to all employees in Catholic schools, the Catholic Schools Office and any related entities under the administration of the Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Lismore.

### **1. DEFINITIONS**

#### **1.1 Brain Injury**

Damage to any of the structures of the head as a result of trauma.

#### **1.2 Concussion**

A concussion is an injury to the brain that results in temporary loss of normal brain function. It usually is caused by a blow to the head. In many cases, there are no external signs of head trauma.

#### **1.3 MySafety** – current electronic information / reporting system of injury management within the schools of the Lismore Diocese.

### **2. PROCEDURES**

All head injuries to anyone in the school or associated with a school activity should be treated seriously and recorded in MySafety. When entering a student head injury incident ensure the 'head injury' box is checked/ ticked.

A concussed student must not be allowed to return to school or sport before having a medical clearance. In every case, the decision regarding the timing of return to school or sport should be made by a medical doctor (with experience in managing concussion).

#### **Brain Injury Australia has developed the Five R's of Concussion:**

- i. Recognise
- ii. Removal
- iii. Referral
- iv. Rest
- v. Return to School/ Sport

#### **Visible clues include, but are not limited to:**

- i. Loss of consciousness or responsiveness
- ii. Dazed, blank or vacant look
- iii. Unsteady on feet/ balance problems or falling over/un-coordination
- iv. Lying motionless on ground/ slow to get up
- v. Grabbing/ clutching of head
- vi. Confused/ Not aware of plays or events

When trying to recognise a concussion injury, the student or staff member should be asked some basic questions such as, 'is it before or after lunch?' 'what subject did you have last period?' or 'what is the score?', 'how did you get to school (or sports ground) today?' or what day is it? etc.

**If a person is unconscious basic first aid principles apply.**

- i. Protect the students' neck and secure and open airway.
- ii. Call for medical assistance.

Any person with suspected concussion must be withdrawn from activity, playing or training immediately. All students with concussion or suspected concussion require urgent medical assessment and should not be allowed to return to school or play in the same game or training session.

***IF THERE IS ANY DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT!***

All students who receive a concussion or with a suspected concussion should be seen by a doctor with experience in managing concussion.

**Parents, Carers or Guardians must always be notified of any head injury.**

Parents, Carers and/or Guardians should be strongly encouraged to advise the school when a student suffers a head injury when in their care, out of school time.

Unconscious students should only be moved by qualified medical support staff. If there is no one onsite qualified, call an ambulance, then do not move the student and await the arrival of the ambulance.

A student should be referred to a hospital for assessment if there is any concern regarding the injury or the student displays any of the following:

- i. Loss of consciousness or seizures
- ii. Confusion
- iii. Deterioration after their injury (e.g. increased drowsiness, headache or vomiting)
- iv. Neck pain or spinal cord symptoms (e.g. student reports numbness, tingling, weakness in arms or legs)

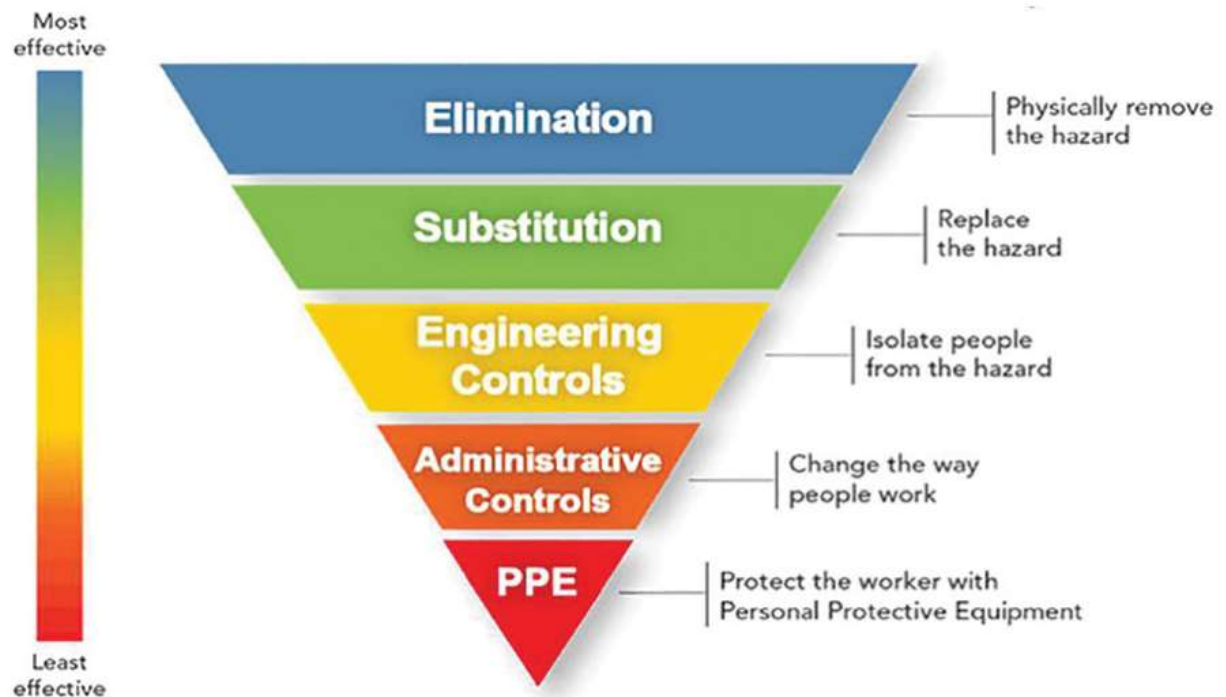
Symptoms may take some time to appear.

Rest is very important after a concussion because it helps the brain to heal. Concussions affect people differently. While most students with a concussion recover quickly and fully, some will have symptoms that last for days or even weeks. A more serious concussion can last for months or longer.

It is important that students do not ignore their symptoms and in general a more conservative approach should be used in cases where there is any uncertainty.

If you have any questions, please contact the Work Health and Safety Officer at the CSO.

# HIERARCHY OF CONTROL



### VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approval Date	Authorised By	Notes
1	September 2019	AD SRS	Originally released