



Induction Guide

NSO Athlete Wellbeing & Engagement (AW&E) Providers

Prepared by

People Development & Wellbeing
AIS

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Table of Contents

	1
Purpose	3
AW&E providers:	3
1. Support	4
<i>Areas for consideration</i>	4
2. Create	6
<i>Areas for consideration</i>	6
3. Connect	7
<i>Areas for consideration</i>	7
4. Model	9
<i>Areas for consideration</i>	9
Appendix 1: Checklist	10
Glossary	11



Overview

AW&E providers form a key component of an NSO's high-performance (HP) program. They support elite athletes as they navigate HP, empowering them to find a balance between their wellbeing, engagement in activities outside of training and competition, and the requirements of elite sport.

Effective delivery of AW&E support requires sophisticated understandings; both of an athlete's individual needs and the HP environment in which they operate. AW&E providers are proactive in presenting athletes with opportunities for personal and professional development, as well as ready access to tailored mental health servicing and meaningful community engagement initiatives.

The aim of this Induction guide is to give AW&E providers that are new to the HP system or new to a sport, with a starting point of information on the considerations, resources and network available in the AW&E system. This Induction guide reflects, and should be read in conjunction with, the Best Practice Principles for AW&E Managers (available on the AIS website).

Purpose

This Induction guide has been developed to assist new AW&E providers transition into their role in a manner that is confident, supported, informed, and conducive to success.

AW&E providers:

- 1. Support**
categorised athletes in the HP program
- 2. Create**
constructive working relationships with key stakeholders in the HP program and NSO
- 3. Connect**
with peers and resources across the AW&E National Network
- 4. Model**
the wellbeing behaviours being instilled in athletes, including self-care and personal development



1. Support

Provide support to each categorised athlete in the high performance program, as per the athlete's individual needs and requirements

Providing individualised athlete support stands at the heart of the AW&E provider role. The successful and effective provision of individualised athlete support is based on authentic interpersonal connection and the building of ethical, trust-based relationships. To develop such a level of rapport can require a considerable investment of time.

Areas for consideration

1.	Meeting with athletes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a list of categorised athletes that is complete and up to date • Understand the athlete categorisation in your sport's HP program. Which athletes are Podium? Podium Ready? Podium Potential? Which are pathway? • Ensure understandings around primary/secondary service provision arrangements for each categorised athlete are clear. The identity of each athlete's service provider (primary vs secondary; NSO vs NIN) should be established for all relevant stakeholders • Be aware of any immediate concerns as practicable and have met with HP staff as appropriate prior to meeting with the athlete • Know the details around benchmark events for the sport. Have a clear understanding of how best to support athletes before, during, and after these important HP phases • Similarly, develop a detailed awareness around the competition calendar and the movements of athletes who may be travelling for competition. How will competition and/or athlete travel impact your ability to communicate with athletes?
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2.	Athlete wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of the individual life plan arrangements with respect to every categorised athlete in the program • Familiarise yourself with any wellbeing monitoring tool developed or used in your sport's high performance program • Be aware of recent and current personal and professional development (PD) initiatives being delivered to athletes in the program, and work to establish future PD needs and/or delivery arrangements • Have awareness of current athlete arrangements around study and work on a case-by-case basis. Proactively engage with athletes to understand their future career and education plans • Tailor community engagement programs to athlete areas of interest. Be active in determining athlete interests/aspirations on a case-by-case basis • Engage with athletes around issues of life balance, and help to review their training program alongside work, study, and other commitments to maintain/improve
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3.	Record-keeping & confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure processes are in place to maintain and safeguard athlete confidentiality • Record athlete information from meetings in a manner that is effective, transparent, safe, and confidential



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- Be registered to use AMS, and undertake AMS induction and education as required (a guide to getting started may be found in Teams: *AW&E Network/General/Files/AW&E AMS*)

4 Athlete funding

- Be familiar with AIS funding ([dAIS](#)), including knowledge around when applications are due and when grants are paid (further information on dAIS including FAQs and means testing is available on: www.sportaus.gov.au/grants_and_funding/dais_athlete_grants/guidelines)
- Be aware of where to find information on other funding opportunities for athletes (for example, AOC, CGA, PA, NIN).

5 Resources

- Be familiar with the:
 - [Career Practitioner Referral Network \(CPRN\)](#)
 - [Mental Health Referral Network \(MHRN\)](#)
 - [Elite Athlete Education Network \(EAEN\)](#)
 - Know where to find contemporary information on the PD services available to athletes in the program. Contact the Personal Development team at the AIS for more information
 - Be familiar with [myAISPlaybook](#), currently being used (and become familiar with any subsequent tools that may replace *Playbook* in the future).
 - Ensure relevant state or territory's Working with Children/Vulnerable Persons check are current
 - Ensure that any Critical Incident Management program training for my sport includes AW&E
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2. Create

Create constructive working relationships with key stakeholders in the NSO HP program

To maximise the impact of AW&E servicing and initiatives, it is essential that AW&E providers are fully integrated into interdisciplinary HP teams. Constructive working relationships allow for the collaborative assessment, design, and implementation of effective AW&E servicing.

Areas for consideration

1.	Key people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with key stakeholders in the NSO and HP program: the CEO; HP Director; HP coaches, staff, and service providers; and institutional partners, sporting bodies, and any other relevant members of the HP team • Discuss with key stakeholders about the position that AW&E holds in the HP program and where the AW&E provider role sits within the HP team (for example: include key stakeholders' expectations and/or requirements in relation to AW&E, and any immediate AW&E needs they might have) • Ensure that processes and understandings are established around the management of requests for sensitive and/or confidential information from coaches or other HP staff • Connect with the NSO's media manager as practicable and appropriate to discuss AW&E exposure via NSO channels
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2	AW&E Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive and read the AW&E Framework for my sport. Connect with the AIS on the progress of my sport's Framework. • Consider all relevant factors around the implementation of the Framework, including: priority actions already achieved, priority actions still to be achieved, and any ongoing any challenges/barriers • Be familiar with the annual Wellbeing Health Check process for HP sport
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3	Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand athlete categorisation within my sport, including the key pathways into the sport, and key transitions through the sport • Be aware of key NSO policies and agreements affecting athletes, such as the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Athlete Agreement – Membership Protection Policy (MPP) – Social Media policy – Anti-doping, Code of Conduct, or other integrity policies – Selection policy and communications • Complete any required induction and/or integrity courses, and be aware of individual athlete status regarding the completion of any required induction and/or integrity course • Know if any NSO engagement with AW&E service offerings is required or due (for example: Mental Health in Sport workshops, Mental Health Referral Network briefings, Critical Incident Management education)



3. Connect

Connect across the AW&E National Network to engage with a community of peers for mutual support and knowledge-sharing, and access to key information and resources

While you may be the only AW&E provider in your sport's HP program, it is important to bear in mind that you are a valued member of a network that spans the high performance industry. The AW&E National Network comprises skilled AW&E practitioners at AIS, NSO, and NIN level who are available to offer guidance and support.

The multi-disciplinary and continuously evolving nature of AW&E means that knowledge-sharing is critical to the field's advancement. For that reason, membership of (and contribution to) the network is a pivotal aspect of the AW&E provider role. Engaging closely with the AW&E National Network is also important for the access it provides to key information and resources that inform and facilitate successful AW&E service provision.

Areas for consideration

1.	Key people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual meetings with the AIS AW&E providers in other NSOs to help foster positive working relationships as well as an understanding of key roles, resources and opportunities • Access AIS AW&E staff contact list (AW&E general overview and AIS Organisational structure) • Connect with relevant NIN providers (if applicable) • Other key stakeholders that may be relevant to connect with (for example, the Australian Olympic Committee or Paralympics Australia, Commonwealth Games Committee, etc)
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2	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with other AW&E providers in NSOs and the NIN, particularly providers who work in similar sports (for example, centralised vs decentralised) or who are geographically close • Investigate opportunities for meeting with other AW&E providers, either formally or informally • Develop a travel budget to enable attendance at AW&E meetings, workshops, and/or conferences. • Know how to access the Teams "AW&E Manager" network channel. Familiarise self with the resources contained in the Teams and SharePoint system
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3	Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Teams is a platform on which remote meetings are held. It contains information, resources and past conversations. Resources contained in TEAMS include:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – LinkedIn for Athletes/AW&E providers – Articles and reports – Calendar of events/programs – Fact sheets – PD program – Manager skills program – AMS guide – Career and education resources – Mental health resources – Community engagement resources



4 AIS website *Information on a range of relevant topics, including:*

- [Health and Wellbeing](#)
 - COVID 19
 - MHRN
 - AW&E key contacts
 - Disordered eating in high performance sport
- [Grants and Funding](#)
 - dAIS
- [Career and Education](#)
 - EAEN
 - CPRN
 - Elite Athlete University Scholarships
 - EVOLVE
 - Navigating the USA collegiate system
- [Community Engagement](#)
 - Share a yarn
 - Mental fitness program
 - Athlete appearances
- Guidelines and Best Practice
 - Best Practice Principles for AW&E Providers
[AW&E best practice principles](#)
- Social Media guidelines and best practice principles
<https://www.ais.gov.au/social-media-principles>
- Conduct and professionalism resources
 - Athlete relocation guidelines
 - Critical Indecent management
 - Respectful Behaviours program
 - Induction and HP behavioral standards
 - AIS athlete advisory committee

5 Clearinghouse *The Clearinghouse for Sport (Clearinghouse) is the information and knowledge-sharing platform for Australian sport. Sign up [here](#)*



4. Model

Model self-care at all times and in all key contexts: physical, mental, emotional, and professional wellbeing

AW&E providers model wellbeing as a matter of course, taking care to demonstrate a healthy sense of balance in their own personal and professional life. As a function of this care, AW&E providers actively invest in their own personal and professional development, and use evidence-based strategies that assist with maintaining their own mental wellness.

Areas for consideration

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|-------|--------------|---|
| 1. | Professional | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and consider the personal development opportunities available (including via the Manager Skills program), or other personal development opportunities that can support career • Actively plan to upskill, modify and evolve in line with values, aspirations, and changing circumstances • Possess and employ strategies for managing workload effectively • Safeguard against 'information overload', balancing the need stay up to date with happenings across the AW&E network with a healthy respect for the dangers of becoming overwhelmed by sheer quantities of data. Be discerning and considered when it comes to access what is relevant to the sport |
| <hr/> | | |
| 2 | Personal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have clear boundaries, and know both when and how to 'switch off' and take time for self • Possess and employ strategies that ring-fence personal time and essential needs • Have someone, whether a colleague or outside professional, to whom I can confidentially talk to about my work • Prioritise mental wellbeing with strategies such maintaining connections, remaining active, learning new skills, and/or practicing mindfulness and gratitude • Take time out • Ask for help or support if and as needed • Be aware of the AIS MHRN, and that AW&E providers are eligible to access it (as well as athletes) if and when needed |
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Appendix 1: Checklist

The first few weeks in a new DTE can be a daunting experience – for both athletes and for staff. Whilst some of the above considerations will take time for the AW&E provider to develop knowledge about and apply in the DTE, others are more relevant to attend to in the first few weeks.

Each HP environment will have its own needs and priorities, and the AW&E provider should use their own discretion as to what is required for their own circumstance. Nevertheless, the checklist below may assist a new AW&E provider to determine some immediate priorities in the first few weeks:

#	Subject	Details	Yes / No? X
1	List	Is my categorised athletes list complete and up to date (contact details, location, schedule and benchmark events)?	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Immediate concerns	Are there any immediate concerns I need to know about involving any categorised athletes?	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Introduction	Have I called or spoken to each athlete, and introduced myself? Has comms gone out from my sport about my role?	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Framework	Have I got a copy of the AW&E Framework for my sport? Have I connected with the AIS PDW team on the progress of my Framework and the annual Wellbeing Health Check process.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Stakeholders	Have I met with key stakeholders in the HP program: CEO; HP Director; HP coaches; Staff; Service providers and institutional (NIN) partners; and External partners (ie Australian Olympic Committee or Paralympics Australia, Commonwealth Games Committee)	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Categorisation	Do I understand the athlete categorisation my sport's HP program? Which athletes are Podium? Podium Ready? Podium Potential? Which are pathway?	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Funding	Am I familiar with AIS funding (dAIS), including knowledge around when applications are due and when grants are paid? Do I know where to find information on other funding opportunities for athletes (for example, AOC, CGA, APC, NIN)?	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Programs	Am I familiar with the key AW&E programs (for example, MHRN, EAEN, Wellbeing Health check)? Do I know where to find contemporary information on the PD services available?	<input type="checkbox"/>



Glossary of Terms

AMS	Athlete Management System
AOC	Australian Olympic Committee
Categorisation	Is a term that refers to an athlete's HP level within an NSO's HP program (and therefore how much funding they are eligible to receive) ("categorisation" should not be confused with "classification" which is the system for Para-sport that groups athletes with similar impairments into categories for competition).
CGA	Commonwealth Games Australia
CPRN	Career Practitioner Referral Network is an AIS referral program for athletes
DTE	Daily Training Environment
EAEN	Elite Athlete Education Network is an AIS program with Universities and TAFEs
EVOLVE	AIS work placement program for athletes
HP	High Performance
MHRN	Mental Health Referral Network
NIN	National Institute Network (the AIS and the state academies and state institutes of sport as a whole)
NSO	National Sporting Organisation
NTC	National Training Centre
PA	Paralympics Australia
PDW	People Development and Wellbeing (the name of the department at the AIS that AW&E is part of)
SIS/SAS	State Institutes of Sport and State Academies of Sport
Teams	Teams is the online communications platform that connects the AIS, its NIN partners, and NSOs.
WHC	Wellbeing Health Check is the AIS's annual assessment of each NSO's wellbeing service and delivery to athletes.





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@theAIS #theAIS

Leverrier Street Bruce ACT 2617
PO Box 176 Belconnen ACT 2616
+61 2 6214 1111