



Athletic Trainers' Society of NJ Applauds Concussion Bill Signing

Says law will make sports safer, ensures athletic trainers are experts in concussion management

Wayne, NJ ([PRWEB](#)) December 9, 2010 -- Officials from the Athletic Trainers Society of New Jersey (ATSNJ) are applauding New Jersey's new concussion law, which was signed by Governor Chris Christie at a ceremony at the New Meadowlands Stadium earlier this week. The law, authored by Assemblyman Patrick Diegnan (D-18) and Senator Richard Codey (D-27), establishes guidelines and requirements for school districts in developing concussion plans, and for educating student athletes and their parents or guardians. The law also requires licensed athletic trainers to receive concussion training as a condition of license renewal.

The law, which will be in effect beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, will now require any athlete with signs and symptoms consistent with concussion to be removed from participation and evaluated by a physician or licensed health care provider, such as an athletic trainer, who is trained in the management of concussion, and requires clearance from a concussion-trained physician prior to return to play. "Ultimately, this will take the guesswork out of managing those athletes who may have sustained concussion," says Mike Prybicien, ATSNJ President and athletic trainer at Passaic High School. "Ensuring concussed athletes are removed from play and evaluated by trained health care providers is critical in providing proper care."

Athletic trainers, who are licensed by the New Jersey Board of Medical Examiners, will now be required to submit proof of concussion education as a condition for license renewal as a result of the new law. Athletic trainers are already required to complete 75 hours of continuing education every three years to maintain national certification. According to Dr. Robb Rehberg, former ATSNJ President and professor of athletic training at William Paterson University, the new requirement highlights the athletic trainer's important role as health care providers in the management of concussions. "Athletic trainers are now the only licensed health care providers in the State that are required by law to receive concussion training in order to continue practice. This truly highlights the expert role athletic trainers play as front line health care providers for student athletes, especially in the management of concussions." Eric Nussbaum, Colts Neck High School athletic trainer and ATSNJ President-Elect agrees, adding "this is yet another example of why all schools should ensure student-athlete safety by employing the services of an athletic trainer. Though concussions can never be completely prevented, this law ensures that the concussed high school athletes who have access to a licensed athletic trainer will be managed appropriately by a highly trained professional."

According to researchers, approximately 300,000 concussions are sustained in sports each year, and that ten percent of high school athletes participating in contact sports sustain a concussion each year. ATSNJ officials believe the new law places New Jersey at the forefront of concussion safety efforts, and will result in better care for concussed student-athletes.

ABOUT THE ATHLETIC TRAINERS' SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY

The Athletic Trainers' Society of New Jersey (ATSNJ) consists of Licensed Athletic Trainers, physicians and other allied health care professionals whose goal is to promote quality healthcare for athletes in any setting. For more information, visit the ATSNJ on the web at www.atsnj.org.

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