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Serious Injury Protocol

SARU via BokSmart have endorsed the appointment of a ***Serious Injury Case Manager (SICM)***, whose primary role is to assist SARU in the appropriate management of rugby-related serious and/or catastrophic injuries.

In the event of a serious and/or catastrophic rugby injury, a person of authority should be identified at the club or school to immediately take charge of managing the situation. In the case of such an injury seniority should preside with a sports physician, medical doctor, emergency care personnel, physiotherapist, biokineticist, rugby medic, first aider, coach, referee, and manager in that order.



The **BokSmart SpineLine's Emergency Service provider (ER24)** is the **first point of contact** in the case of such an injury. In the case of a suspected serious and/or catastrophic injury to the head, neck, spine, brain or fatality of an injured rugby player, the SICM will provide the link between the relevant club, school or team and SARU.

A serious and/or catastrophic injury is defined as any head, neck, spine, or brain injury that is life-threatening, or has the potential to be permanently debilitating and results in the emergency admission of a rugby player to a hospital or medical care centre.

The following protocol should then be adhered to:

1. Provide immediate on-site and appropriate medical care of the injured player
2. Telephone the “BokSmart SpineLine” call centre on **0800 678 678** and alert the Emergency Medical Service provider, **ER24**, to the injury
3. Arrange that the Emergency Medical Service provider has dispatched an appropriate emergency response team to the venue, e.g. ambulance **WHERE APPLICABLE**.
4. Ensure the injured player is suitably transported to the hospital or medical facility.
5. The Emergency Medical Service provider will then immediately notify the SICM
6. The SICM will then accordingly notify:
 - a. SARU’s Senior Manager: Medical
 - b. SARU’s Senior Manager: Rugby Safety
7. SARU’s Senior Manager: Medical will then contact:
 - a. All the relevant rugby personnel
 - b. The relevant Provincial union’s CEO
 - c. SARU’s GM of Corporate Affairs
8. The SICM will remain in frequent contact with the Emergency Medical Service team and the hospital or medical facility to which the injured player has been transported.
9. The SICM will also where possible notify the player’s family of the injury, unless in the case of a fatality, whereby the police will take responsibility for this task.
10. The SICM will identify a singular point of contact within the club, school or team and keep them updated about the situation
11. If the injury is as serious as was originally suspected, and the situation requires it, the SICM will then fly/travel to the relevant hospital and visit the patient to:
 - a. Ensure that adequate care is provided
 - b. Complete a follow-up questionnaire where possible

- c. Submit a report to:
 - i. SARU's Senior Manager: Medical
 - ii. SARU's Senior Manager: Rugby Safety
 - iii. The Chairman of the Chris Burger/Petro Jackson Players' Fund

The club, school or team's identified responsible person in charge must:

1. ***Telephone the "BokSmart SpineLine" number immediately***
2. Coordinate with the Emergency Medical Service provider to arrange suitable transportation to the nearest and most suitable hospital or medical facility
3. Record and collate to the best of their abilities the injury details, and the personal details of anyone associated with the injury, including witness reports if any are available
4. Notify the next of kin, unless in the case of a fatality, whereby they should contact the police, who will perform this task
5. **Both the *identified responsible person AND the referee, individually must complete the "Serious Injury Report" form and e-mail or fax it within 48 hours to the SICM (Mrs. Gail Baerecke – Cell: 0728903538, e-mail: manager@playersfund.org.za, fax: 021 659 5653), who in turn will send copies on to SARU's Senior Manager: Medical, Senior Manager: Rugby Safety, and the relevant Provincial Union CEO.***

The BokSmart Serious Injury Case Manager or SICM number is NOT an emergency helpline. If you require emergency assistance regarding a potentially serious head, neck or spine rugby injury, then please call the BokSmart SpineLine, 0800 678 678, operated by ER24, immediately.

If you want to report on a serious head, neck or spine rugby injury, then you can leave a message on the SICM number, and they will get back to you as soon as possible.

Provincial Union's responsibilities

1. The Provincial Union's representative should confirm knowledge of the injury and contact SARU's Senior Manager: Medical, and SARU's Senior Manager: Rugby Safety in this regard
2. The Province has to nominate a representative that will attend any inquest or participate in any investigation that might arise regarding the incident
3. Arrange hospital visits by Provincial team players, for the patient if possible
4. Assist the club, school or team in any fund-raising initiative that might arise

SARU's responsibilities

1. Maintain regular contact with the SICM to be updated about the progress of the patient and the situation
2. Make contact with the family and show support where possible
3. Ensure relevant documentation is received and due process is followed
4. Maintain accurate records of the serious injury report on the SARU database
5. Facilitate an in-depth investigation into the incident where relevant or applicable