



**September 2021**

### **MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SUPPORT PROVIDED BY PLAYER ASSOCIATIONS**

**Support helplines:** Most player associations provide 24 hour helpline support for a range of mental health issues which can be rapidly followed-up by one-to-one sessions with qualified psychiatrists or counsellors. This service is on offer to members of the RPA (Rugby Players Association), PCA (Professional Cricketers Association), LMA (League Managers Association), PFA (Professional Footballers Association), PFA Scotland, PJA (Professional Jockeys Association), PDPA (Professional Darts Players Association), WPBSA (World Professional Billiards & Snooker Association) and the European Tour. The support often extends to former players too.

The PFA also has a nationwide network of counsellors (100+ counsellors on the network which includes former players) available for all members.

**Charity Partnerships:** The PFA, Rugby League, PCA, PJA and PDPA and WPBSA work with Sporting Chance, a leading charity set up by Tony Adams which provides a 24hr helpline, access to counselling, education and residential treatment.

**Mental Health Awareness Campaigns:** A number of high profile welfare campaigns which tackle mental health have been led by the player associations:

Mind Matters (PCA) – An online educational resource for current and former cricketers to provide information on mental health, signs and symptoms and where to go for support. Featuring Andrew Flintoff and Monty Panesar.

Lift The Weight (RPA) – An online hub with resources, links and cases studies featuring a range of rugby players including Johnny Wilkinson and James Haskell, designed to remove the stigma surrounding mental health issues.

Jockey Matters (PJA) – A series of educational videos including specific films about mental wellbeing, addiction, substance abuse and resilience aimed at raising awareness of mental health issues and the support available. Featuring Kieran Shoemark, Ray Dawson, Graham Lee and Mark Enright.

Don't Panic (PFA) – A mental health awareness campaign highlighting 24 hour support helpline and access to safety net for academy players and parents.

Your Cue To Talk (WPBSA) – A campaign to raise awareness and support for players who may be struggling featuring snooker players talking about their mental health.

**Mental Wellbeing education & resilience training:** Many player associations provide education around mental wellbeing, resilience training and mental health first aid training

both at Academy and Club level covering various issues such as resilience, addiction, bereavement, career transition and injury.

In the light of significant social media abuse online, player associations have also provided further support:

- The PPF has produced a set of [Social Media Guidance](#) for its members
- The PFA has produced a set of guidelines and advice for their members suffering abuse. [Find out more](#)
- The PJA is co-funding a short film 'The Fall' which focuses on jockeys' mental health and the impact of social media abuse. [Find out more](#)
- The PCA have introduced a series of social media abuse workshops. [Find out more](#)
- The PDPA's ThinkDARTS campaign provides guidance to members on how to report social media abuse and seek support. [Find out more](#)
- The RPA delivers social media education, and support to players, in conjunction with the B5 Consultancy as part of the RPA Academy Induction Day and via the RPA Gain Line programme.

**Mental Wellbeing Apps:** PFA Scotland has a Support app with relevant contacts and a self-referral form and self help information. The PCA and PDPA also uses a Mental Wellbeing app with Thrive, an NHS approved app which has been transformed into a custom-made support mechanism for players.

**Player Welfare staff members:** The PFA have a dedicated welfare officer Michael Bennett whilst other sports have a network of Personal Development Managers who can provide players with access to relevant mental health support networks. The PJA has employed its own Performance Consultant Aodhagan Conlon who is a former jockey and the LMA also has its own in-house psychiatrist Dr Allan Johnston.

#### **FURTHER INFO ON PLAYER ASSOCIATION MENTAL WELLBEING SERVICES**

LMA - <https://leaguemanagers.com/member-services/mental-health/>

PCA - <https://www.thepca.co.uk/health-welfare/>

PDPA - <https://www.pdpa.co.uk/wellbeing/sporting-chance/>

PFA - <https://www.thepfa.com/players/wellbeing/mental-health-and-football>

PFA Scotland - <https://pfascotland.co.uk/mental-health/>

PJA - [https://www.thepja.co.uk/service\\_cat/healthy-mind/](https://www.thepja.co.uk/service_cat/healthy-mind/)

WPBSA - <https://wpbsa.com/players/support/mental-health-support/>

*For more information on the PPF's work on Mental Health, including the Mental Health Charter for Sport and Recreation, or for relevant player association contacts, please contact Simon Taylor [simon@ppf.org.uk](mailto:simon@ppf.org.uk) 07726 627422 or visit <https://www.ppf.org.uk/resources/mental-health/>*