



Explanatory note concerning the *Concussion Management Protocol* produced by the Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec (MEQ) in relation to the [agreement between the Collège des médecins du Québec \(CMQ\) and the Ordre professionnel de la physiothérapie du Québec \(OPPQ\) that came into effect on May 21, 2020](#)

This agreement¹ specifies the role of physiotherapists in the evaluation and initial management of concussions in the sports communities they are involved with, particularly with regard to:

1. the exclusion of criteria that would normally warrant an [urgent medical evaluation](#)²
2. the initial management of suspected concussion-related symptoms based on the [recommendations currently in effect](#)³ ([Concussion Management Protocol](#) and [Tracking Sheet](#))
3. participation in certain decisions relating to medical authorization to return to sports activities involving a risk of contact, collisions or falls⁴ (Stages 5 and 6 of the return to physical and sports activities section of the [Tracking Sheet](#))

In order to be authorized to take action in the above situations, physiotherapists must:

- have a practice profile that includes regular involvement in concussion management
- maintain their competencies in this area through periodic professional training at least every four (4) years, so that they are always aware of the most recent international recommendations for managing sports-related concussions
- be involved on a longitudinal basis with the team or sports community of a person who has suffered a concussion

¹ <http://www.cmq.org/pdf/activites-partages-physio/avis-conjoint-cmq-oppq-commotions-sports-def.pdf?t=1591035614311>

² Sport Concussion Assessment Tool – Fifth Edition (SCAT5), <https://aqmse.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/bjsports-2017-097506scat5.full.pdf>

³ <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/athletes-entraîneurs-et-officiels/concussions/>

⁴ http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/loisir-sport/Commotions-cerebrales-Fiche_suivi_AG.pdf



It is important to obtain a medical evaluation in the following situations:

- in the presence of warning signs at any time following the injury
- if symptoms worsen in the hours or days following the incident
- in the presence of developments that suggest a progression toward more persistent symptoms (over 14 days for an adult or over 28 days for a child or adolescent)
- in the case of a mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI) or concussion that develops persistent symptoms, an individualized multidisciplinary approach is recommended; and a doctor should be involved in the decision regarding the return to activities involving a risk of contact, collisions or falls
- in the presence of a comorbidity (e.g. learning difficulty), or when the patient has suffered a concussion during the previous year, or has a history of two or more previous concussions

Using relevant tools to document interventions:

- **Initial evaluation:**
 - [The most recent version of SCAT⁵](#) should be used to document the initial evaluation and the absence of criteria that would warrant an urgent medical evaluation.
 - The physiotherapy evaluation must record normal results with respect to concussion-related elements, particularly with respect to the cervical spine and the neurological examination.

- **Evolution:**
 - The tracking sheet in the *Concussion Management Protocol* of the Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec (MEQ) must be used to document any changes in the person's condition at the various stages in the protocol.
 - Moreover, during each evaluation, the use of a symptom scale (like that of the SCAT) is recognized as the best way to monitor improvements in symptoms.

- **Decision to return to physical and sports activities:**
 - Physiotherapists must document the criteria used to make an informed decision about the return to physical and sports activities.
 - For this purpose, it is recommended that a medical clearance letter like that produced by the [Association québécoise des médecins du sport et de l'exercice \(AQMSE\)](#) be used as a support tool in determining whether a patient can return to a physical or sports activity.⁶

⁵ Sport Concussion Assessment Tool – Fifth Edition (SCAT5),

<https://aqmse.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/bjsports-2017-097506scat5.full.pdf>

⁶ <https://aqmse.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/aqmseautorisation-medicale-eng.pdf>