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## Ohio Athletic Trainer's Reactions to New Ohio Concussion Legislation

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## **Ohio Athletic Trainer's Reactions to New Ohio Concussion Legislation**

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**Objective:** Determine how Certified Athletic Trainers (ATCs) who work at high schools in the state of Ohio felt about the Ohio High School Athletic Association's (OHSAA) legislation and whether or not they agreed with the various changes it posed.

**Design & Setting:** Data was collected via a 20-question online survey that consisted of demographic questions and both open- and closed-ended questions that determined whether or not there was a general agreement or disagreement with the way the OHSAA and state legislature had addressed concussion management and Return To Play (RTP) protocol in their legislation.

**Participants:** The survey was e-mailed to 302 Certified Athletic Trainers who worked in a high school setting in the state of Ohio.

**Main Outcome Measurement:** Survey answers were compiled according to their topic and qualitatively analyzed for common themes that conveyed either a positive or negative reaction to the question. Based on the answers given, an analysis was done to determine whether there was a general consensus of agreement or disagreement with the legislation as a whole and what individual aspects of the legislation, if any, were controversial.

**Results:** 49 (16%) participants submitted completed surveys that yielded usable and statistically relevant data. Results of the survey produced a mix of positive and negative emotions related to various aspects of the legislation, specifically the role of game officials in the Return to Play (RTP) decision. However, ATCs agreed with the main purpose of the legislation, which was to raise awareness of concussions and prevent mishandling of cases involving concussed athletes.

**Conclusion:** The concussion legislation was first put into effect with the purpose of raising awareness of concussions by educating those involved in sports at the youth, middle school, high school, college, and professional levels. The general consensus of the ATC's is that along with these changes that the legislation posed, there should be an increased appreciation for the talents that ATCs bring to the realm of health care in the form of recognizing and diagnosing concussions. The ATCs believe that their role in concussion management should include being involved in determining whether or not an athlete is concussed and should be removed from play while further observations and assessments are done.

**Key Words:** *Ohio Concussion Legislation, Concussion, Second Impact Syndrome, Game Officials, Athletes, Return to Play*