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## ***Perceived Knowledge and Confidence of Social Determinants of Health in College and Secondary School Athletic Trainers***

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### ***OBJECTIVE***

For most athletes, their athletic trainer is the healthcare provider with whom they interact the most while for others, ATs are the only health care professionals they interact with. It is crucial that ATs can assess and implement strategies that account for SDH in athletes. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the number of years certified as an athletic trainer in the college and secondary school settings and perceived knowledge of factors and confidence in the implementation of interventions to address social determinants of health (SDH) when treating patients.

### ***SETTING AND DESIGN***

Cross-sectional survey

### ***PARTICIPANTS***

This study utilized the NATA survey service for participant recruitment and convenience sampling of the Marietta College Athletic Training staff, previous preceptors, and social media. This study targeted certified athletic trainers currently practicing in the collegiate or secondary school setting. A total of 69 participants completed the survey, 44 participants identified as female and 25 as male. The average age of participants was 38 + 11.61 years old and had been certified as an athletic trainer for 15.6 + 10.76 years. 31 participants currently worked in the college/university and 38 participants were currently practicing in the secondary school setting. Participants held a variety of academic degrees; 17 reported an academic doctorate (Ed.D, Ph.D), 15 had a clinical doctorate (DAT), 20 individuals held a master's degree, and a 17 reported a bachelor's degree.

### ***INTERVENTION***

Participants completed an electronic survey consisting of demographic, Likert-style, and open-ended questions that assessed the perceived level of knowledge and confidence of implementing interventions to address social determinants of health. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher then reviewed by content experts.

### ***MAIN OUTCOME MEASURES***

To address research question 1 independent t-test was used to determine if there was a difference between total perceived knowledge and confidence scores of participants by setting. A Chi-square test was used to assess the relationship between practice setting and perceived knowledge of the participant. Research question 2 used a spearman's correlation which was used to examine the relationship between years as an AT and perceived confidence in implementing SDH into clinical practice. Research question 3 utilized thematic analysis on the qualitative data by 2 researchers then a consensus on themes for each response was reached.

### ***RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS***

No significant difference between practice setting and total perceived knowledge and confidence scores, along with no significant relationship between practice setting and perceived knowledge of SDH. However, participants scored an average of 64% of the possible total for perceived knowledge overall score, and 55% of the possible total for perceived confidence overall score. No significant relationship between years certified as an AT and perceived confidence of SDH but, a significant relationship was found

between total perceived confidence score and highest degree of participants ( $r=.255$ ,  $p=.034$ ). Desired ways to improve overall knowledge and confidence includes additional CEUs, conversations with colleagues and the health care team, and additional resources and speakers specifically applying this topic to clinical practice for Athletic Training.

**KEY WORDS:** *Social Determinants of Health, Athletic Training*

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