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Barriers That Influence Adoption of ACL Injury Prevention Programs Among High School Girls' Soccer Coaches

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Injuries to the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) of the knee are one of the most serious injuries sustained in sports. It has previously been shown that female athletes are at a risk 4-6 times greater than their male counterparts to sustain such an injury. Injury prevention programs (IPP) are available that have previously been shown to successfully reduce the risk of ACL injuries, but data on the implementation of these programs is limited. **Purpose:** To obtain data on the implementation of ACL IPP among high school girls' soccer coaches in Pennsylvania and to identify barriers that limit the implementation of such programs. **Methods:** An online survey was completed by Pennsylvania high school girls' soccer coaches (N=32) to assess ACL IPP knowledge, attitudes, implementation rates, and barriers to implementation. **Results:** Overall, coaches reported a higher rate (45%) of implementation than shown in previously studied populations. Only one commonly used ACL IPP was found to be familiar to greater than 50% of participating coaches. When reporting barriers to implementation, lack of knowledge of ACL IPP was reported by 37% of coaches with only 21% of coaches reporting having received formal training on ACL IPP. Time was also reported by 17% of respondents and was the most frequent response in open ended questions regarding barriers. **Conclusion:** The data suggest that coaches may benefit from training opportunities providing instruction on ACL IPP and instruction on the use of programs that can be utilized with minimal time requirements. More research is needed on implementation strategies and the potential use of policy changes by regulating organizations to encourage the use of IPP.