

# GPA



# MANAGEMENT TEAM SUPPORT BOOKLET

# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

The purpose of this handbook is to highlight to you, as a management team, the structures and programmes we have in place, to support players with balancing life on and off the pitch. Our programmes can assist & positively influence your players' performances in work, college, life and in sport.

I know from my own experience that when I have balance in my life, I am better positioned to perform on the field of play. We want to assist all our members to find this balance and we are asking for your assistance with this. You or your management team are at times first point of contact for players when they are overwhelmed, lost in their career or looking for support. We want you to know that we're here to help.

With the recent ESRI report highlighting that our players are spending on average 31 hours preparing for our games, we need to ensure we have structures and programmes in place to support this dual-career. One of our fundamental objectives is to increase players' self-awareness and motivation to develop themselves as people off the field. We continue to support the person behind the player, both during and after their intercounty careers.

We hope you find this handbook useful and informative and if you would like to meet up and discuss this in more details feel free to contact me directly.

Best of luck with the remainder of the season.

Best regards,

*Paul*



# MANAGER TESTIMONIAL

“ The GPA provide a vision for players and management. This vision is built on real substance, an acute awareness of players needs but more importantly a distinct strategy in terms of initiatives, processes and delivery of programmes. Balance is the core message of their player development and welfare programme. A realisation that development and ambition of players on the field can and will be correlated and reciprocated by a plan, a pathway to achieve a healthy balance off the field. This has been central to their maxim. During my five year tenure with Waterford their sense of empathy, their care for players and management was very evident. They have the foresight to recognise that the pursuit of excellence in our respective codes whilst all-encompassing at times should involve the merging of old fashioned principles of authenticity, honesty and integrity with the willingness to evolve, innovate and above all listen. ”

**Derek McGrath**



# DUAL CAREER

## SPORT

Average training/  
playing week

35 Hours

## LIFE

Average working  
/studying week

35 Hours



**SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL AND  
COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION**

**FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME**

## THE WHAT

The Gaelic Players Association is the official representative body for intercounty players. The GPA represents over 2,300 current players and an increasing number of past players.

### OUR PURPOSE IS:

- To Represent our members' interests
- To Protect their Welfare
- To Support their Development

The GPA operates a comprehensive Player Development Programme, funded by the GAA, supporting players with their education, careers, health, life skills and welfare.

## THE WHY

The GPA's range of development and welfare programmes is designed to protect and support the rights and needs of the player. All programmes are available nationwide and free of charge. Research undertaken in other elite level sports has shown that players who actively engage in off-field development programmes can positively influence and impact their sporting performance by up to 20%.

Happy people, make happy players.



# PLAYER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (PDP)

## WHY THE GPA PDP EXISTS

The GPA Player Development Programmes exists to help support, empower and equip players with the tools and confidence to improve their lives off the field. By doing so, players will be in a better place to help manage the demands of a dual career as an amateur athlete and subsequently perform to his personal best on and off the field.

## THE BENEFITS OF ENGAGING

- Strengthen leadership capacity
- Personal growth and fulfillment
- Sense of optimism
- Enhanced quality of life and social interaction
- Career enhancement
- Healthier relationships
- Personal empowerment
- Better management of physical and emotional health issues

# RANGE OF PLAYER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

## CAREER PLANNING

PROFESSIONAL CV DEVELOPMENT  
INTERVIEW SKILLS DEVELOPMENT  
COMMUNICATION & PRESENTATION SKILLS

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS & DEVELOPMENT

BUSINESS START-UP & DEVELOPMENT

## CAREER

## GPA DENTAL PROGRAMME

CARDIAC SCREENING PROGRAMME

INJURED PLAYER SUPPORT PROGRAMME

ANTI-DOPING EDUCATION

BENEVOLENT FUND

24/7/365 COUNSELLING PROGRAMME

## WELLBEING

## EDUCATION

EDUCATION TRANSITION PLANNING

EDUCATION ADVICE

FULL TIME UNDER AND POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

EDUCATION & TRAINING FUND

GPA ENHANCED SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

TIME & WORKLOAD MANAGEMENT

## LIFE FOCUS

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT COACHING

THE JIM MADDEN GPA LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

FINANCIAL ADVICE

GPA ROOKIE CAMP

GPA  
**PLAYERS THRIVE ON AND OFF THE FIELD**  
GAELIC PLAYERS ASSOCIATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2020



# CAREER

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Face-to-face meeting with a career advisor to;

- Professionally develop the players' CV which is tailored towards the specific job
- To complete mock interviews with the player and to provide him with useful tips to help secure his chosen role

## GPA BUSINESS SUCCESS ACADEMY

This programme is tailored towards players who have a business idea or else a player who already owns his business. It will be able to equip players with the knowledge and tools to develop their business to the next level.

## MEDIA & PRESENTATION TRAINING

One-to-one training with communication experts. Beneficial for players going into punditry or having to complete a presentation as part of their application for a particular job.



# LIFE FOCUS

## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT COACHING PROGRAMME

Face-to-face meeting(s) with a career / life coach. Recommended for players going through, or planning to going thorough, a transition in their life. Be it from education to career, a career change, a relationship change, retirement from the game, etc. By exploring areas such as personal values, athletic identity, career visions, emotional intelligence and subsequently developing better self-awareness, the player and the coach will be able to work together to develop an off field working plan to support that player to be his personal best.

## FINANCIAL CONSULTATION

This programme provides players with the tools and knowledge to support them with their personal or business finances.

## GPA BUSINESS NETWORKING PROGRAMME

Business networking meetings are frequently held where players in business and influential individuals from business backgrounds are invited along to help connect and support each other in different ways.

# WELFARE

## CONFIDENTIAL COUNSELLING LINE

The emotional physical health and welfare of inter-county players underpin their dual careers. Life events such as bereavement, breakdown in relationships and injury can restrict their ability to cope with their sporting and professional career. These can also have a serious emotional impact on players, which can lead to issues

such as depression, anxiety, stress and engagement in addictive behaviours.

The GPA provide a 24/7/365 confidential counselling support line to all members. – 1800 989 285 & Northern Ireland 0800 044 5059.

## BENEVOLENT FUND

Financial support for any players who are experiencing extreme financial difficulties in their life.

# EDUCATION

## FULL TIME THIRD LEVEL EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

Financial support for all current players who are completing a full time third level education course.

## EDUCATION ADVICE

A conversation / meeting with an Education Advisor to provide the player with practical information about colleges and college courses. The education advisor will also be able to help the player with any application process that may be needed.

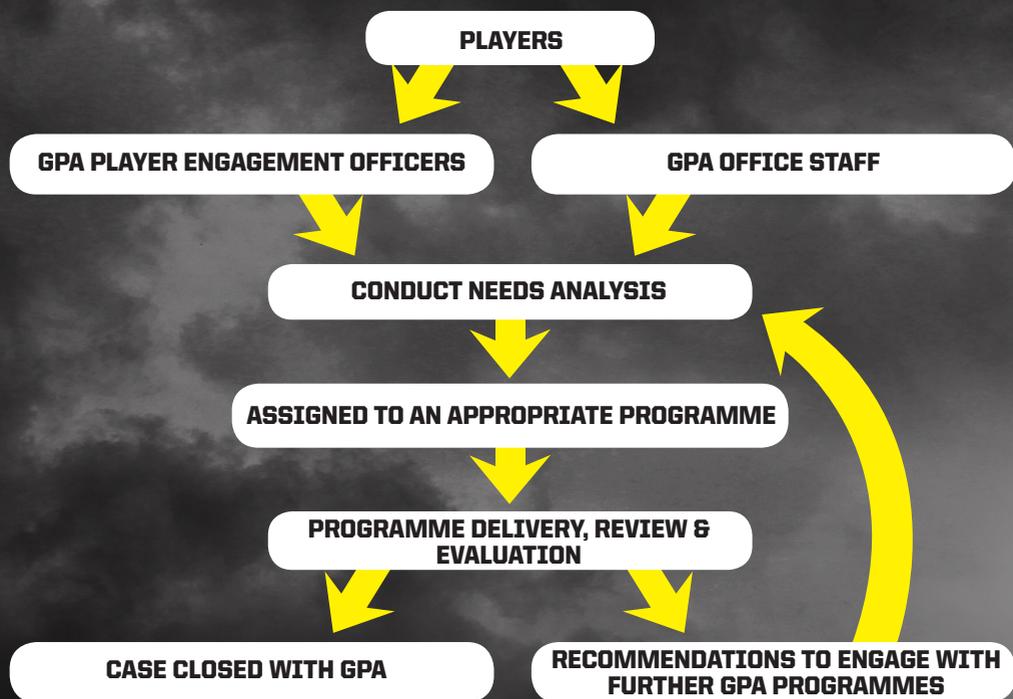
## EDUCATION AND TRAINING FUND

Financial support for players who are completing any part time, training or upskilling college courses.



# THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

This aims to support your players throughout their intercounty career and beyond. The below graphic illustrates how we interact with your player to support them with a holistic support structure.



## GPA CONTACT DETAILS

**Alan Kerins**  
087 9609111  
Player Engagement Officer

**Stephen McDonnell**  
086 2097495  
Player Engagement Officer

**Noel Connors**  
086 1249945  
Player Engagement Officer

**Niall McNamee**  
087 9242655  
Player Engagement Officer

**Darran O'Sullivan**  
083 1594949  
Player Engagement Officer

**Eamonn Murphy**  
086 7756375  
Player Representation Manager

**Ian Reeves**  
087 0697424  
Player Development Officer

**Colm Begley**  
087 4466604  
Project Co-ordinator

**Jennifer Rogers**  
089 2575437  
Project Co-ordinator

# SQUAD CHARTER

The Squad Charter for inter county players sets out the basic welfare entitlements in the areas of expenses, gear, nutrition and medical arrangements. It is recommended that the local charter subcommittee made up of players, County officers and team management, meet and agree the provisions under each area at the earliest juncture in the season.

## KEY DATES

It is recommended that Squad Reps meet with Co Officers to agree Charter arrangements before collective training resumes. Regular meetings throughout the year helps address any delays with late expenses or delivery of gear.

**PLAYER EXPENSES**

**PLAYING & TRAINING GEAR**

**MATCH TICKETS**

**MEDICAL ARRANGEMENTS**

## BENEFITS OF AN EFFECTIVE SQUAD CHARTER

- Clarity for all stakeholders with regard to welfare provisions for the playing season
- More streamlined process for managing County team budget for the playing season
- Open and regular communications between Local Charter Subcommittee throughout the season provides a forum to review and monitor implementation of Charter agreements
- Regular and efficient delivery of expenses prevents unnecessary off-field distractions for players allowing for full focus for on-field matters
- Provides a forum for agreement of player availability for club activity during the playing season

## FOOD ALLOWANCE

All Players are eligible to claim €20/£28 per week food allowance to support elite athlete dietary requirements. This can be claimed on a vouched receipt basis or may be pooled collectively for meal packs/"healthy meal" deals.

## GEAR

All players are entitled to training/playing gear and footwear for pre National League, National League and Championship periods of the year.

## TRAVEL

The standard rate of mileage for inter-county players is €65c/£45p per mile. This can be claimed for all pre-approved travel for inter county team purposes.



# INTER-COUNTY CAREER

ONGOING PLAYER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME SUPPORT

PLAYERS  
IN

## GPA ROOKIE CAMP

The GPA Rookie Camp is a one-day programme for new inter-county players to provide greater awareness to the comprehensive support, education programs and resources available to them throughout their inter county careers. It also provides valuable learning in how best to manage the transition to senior inter county gaelic games and the rigours of managing a dual career.

### Programme Outcome Goals:

- Provide players with a greater awareness of the support that the GPA can provide them throughout, and beyond their intercounty careers
- Help players better to manage the transition onto the Senior panel and rigours of managing a dual career
- Greater awareness of what's expected of them as people, and players
- Provide players with coping strategies to deal with the many challenges associated with being an inter county player

- Further develop and support your next generation of leaders and role models

Our next GPA Rookie Camp will be running later this year, we'll be encouraging you to nominate players from your squad to attend on the day.

The inaugural camp 2018 attended by over 80 players across the country with interactive workshops on;

- Building resilience
- Social media & brand management
- Player Development & Welfare
- Nutrition
- Anti Doping Education

For video highlights of last year's click [HERE](#)



PLAYERS  
OUT

## GPA TRANSITION PROGRAMME

Moving into life beyond sport, whether intentionally or through injury, can be a complex process that challenges the mental, emotional and physical resolve of players. Players throughout their careers have such a huge sense of player identity that many can struggle to adjust to retirement.

The GPA Transition Programme aims to assist players in preparing for and adjusting to sport transition through a combination of supportive and developmental interventions, extending players career and personal growth beyond their sports environment.

### Programme Outcome Goals:

- Assists players in better preparing for their transition from intercounty sport.
- Assist players in developing positive coping strategies.
- Provide continuous transition support through both individual and group interventions.
- Help players identify new goals and passions, evolving their identity.

### GPA transition programme includes:

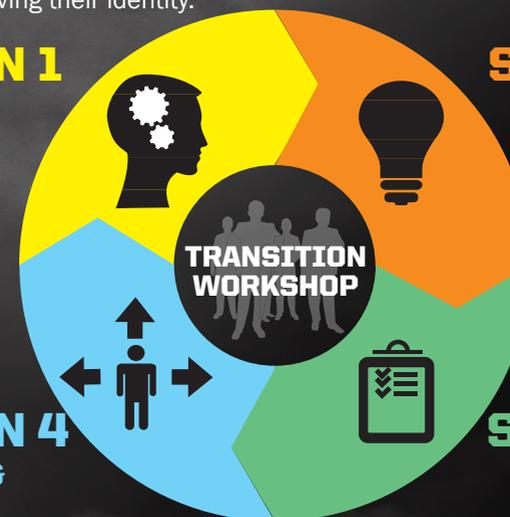
- An introductory transition group workshop
- 4 individual sessions
- Focuses on three holistic interconnected pillars: Identity and Wellbeing, Career and Personal growth, Support structures.

### SESSION 1 INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT

### SESSION 4 EVALUATION & NEXT STEPS

### SESSION 2 TRANSITION ROAD MAP & ACTION PLAN

### SESSION 3 ACTION PLAN REVIEW



# INJURED PLAYER SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Injuries, while hopefully infrequent, are often an unavoidable part of our games. While most injuries can be managed with little disruption in sport participation and other activities of daily living, some impose a substantial physical and mental burden on our members.

This programme provides comprehensive support to players through the injury process with the help of a GPA case officer, to ensure the time away from the game is optimised.

## Programme Outcome Goals:

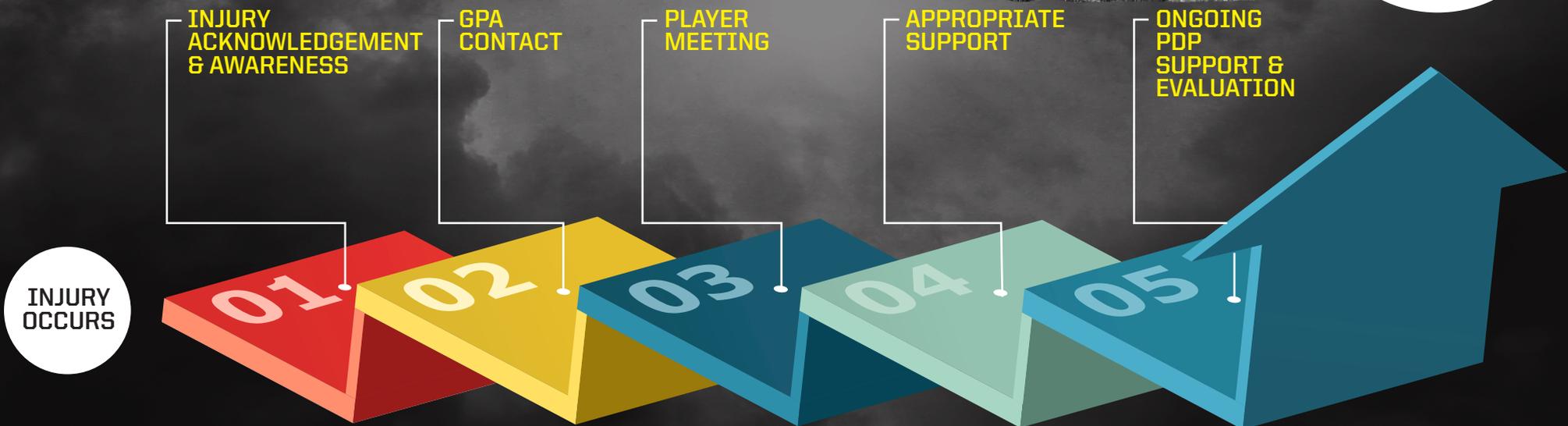
- The programme will support injured players in their physical and psychological recovery through a collective collaboration of our Player Development & Welfare Programmes.
- Opportunity for the injured to invest & focus time into other areas of their lives, which will contribute to their dual-career throughout their recovery.
- Greater communication between key stakeholders, to ensure there is an all-inclusive support structure around the player at hand.

## Programme Content:

- Well-Being
- Personal Development
- GPA Contact
- Financial



PLAYER RECOVERY



# MANAGER TESTIMONIAL

“ The GPA have always acted as an invaluable resource to my players & I. The GPA's Player Development & Welfare Programmes have assisted the Senior Tipperary Hurling Panel through thick & thin, with the objective of reaching our full potential both on and off the field. Players' performances are correlated with their performances in their careers, education, relationships and emotional well-being. As my players continue to engage with the GPA to be the best version of themselves, I recognise their positive attitudes, optimistic behaviours and personal fulfilment, as they seek satisfaction in all areas of their lives. I understand the importance of having individual players managing their dual-careers and the collective benefit that this has on the squad as a whole. I would encourage all managers to ensure his players are using the GPA's support, to promote their development and welfare, as people and as players. ”

**Liam Sheedy**



# MANAGER TESTIMONIAL

“ From my time as being a player with the Wexford Footballers, to my current role as Manager of the London Gaelic Football Team, I have been a big supporter of the GPA and the work they undertake. Their Player Development & Welfare Programme has gone from strength to strength and I would encourage all Managers to promote these services and recommend engagement with the multitude of programmes that are on offer for your players. The programmes look to develop your players' academic, professional and playing careers, alongside balancing their personal lives and relationships. This can only benefit your team and squad as a whole. As a manager I have engaged with the support network and programmes on offer with regard to my career and I am indebted to the GPA for their guidance and support through uncertain times. I recommend all to utilise their excellent services. ”

**Ciaran Deely**

