

New study launched to examine the mental health of footballers

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The University of Liverpool has launched a new study to explore and assess the mental health and well-being of academy and professional football players.

The subject of [mental health](#) in football is an area that has had increasing media interest over the last few years. According to the 2015 Fifpro study professional footballers suffer more from symptoms of depression and anxiety than the general public.

Researchers, Andrew Bethell, Dr. Ross White and Dr. James Reilly working with former professional footballer Lee Richardson, have launched the study which aims to assess the mental health and well-being in current and former academy and professional footballers (both male and female players).

Satisfaction and mental health

As part of the study the researchers will be liaising with players, clubs and relevant stakeholders asking them to complete an online questionnaire. Players will be asked to answer questions about their football career, life satisfaction and mental health. The questionnaire will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

Participants will then have the option to consent to be contacted for follow up studies in the future, which will allow the researchers to monitor how they respond to transitions during their career (i.e.

retirement, deselection, transfer, injury, etc.). This will help to highlight 'trigger' points that could affect a player throughout their lives.

'Timely and important' research

Lead researcher, Andrew Bethell, said: "Our study aims to fully understand the scope of mental health challenges faced by individuals across the sport. We will be working closely with current and former players, as well as coaches, managers and other key stakeholders within the football industry.

"It is hoped that findings from the study will help us better understand factors influencing the mental health and well-being of footballers, and ensure that the forms of support offered to players are tailored to their needs."

Lee Richardson, said: "Adverse mental health is something which affects a significant percentage of the population for many different reasons and [football](#) is not immune from that. This is a timely and important area of research that I am proud to be involved with."

More information: Further details about the study can be found at www.onthehead.org

Provided by University of Liverpool

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