

# Leadership experiences of elite football club physicians during the COVID-19 pandemic

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## Start of Block: Introduction

### Leadership experiences of elite football club physicians during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Principal Investigator: Dr Sean Carmody  
Co-investigators: Gurneet Brar, Mike Davison

Dear Participant,

You are being invited to take part in a research study on leadership experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Before doing so, it is important for you to understand the purpose of the study, what will be asked from you and how your information will be used. Please take the time to read the text below and if you have any further questions or queries, do not hesitate to get in contact with: Dr Sean Carmody at [seanocearmaide@gmail.com](mailto:seanocearmaide@gmail.com).

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The aim of this investigation is to analyse the leadership experiences of elite football club physicians during the COVID-19 pandemic. The unprecedented nature of the pandemic has seen fundamental changes in the role played by physicians, placing extra emphasis on the need for effective communication, crisis leadership and rapid decision making, which has never been seen before. These demands that have come suddenly with the swift resumption of elite football are likely to pose a significant burden on top of physician's usual duties. This study aims to evaluate these factors and how they have formulated specific experiences for physicians within the field of elite football.

#### **Why have I been invited?**

You have been asked to take part in this study so that we can gather information regarding your personal experiences of leadership during the COVID-19 as an experienced physician within elite football.

#### **Do I have to take part?**

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide that you wish to participate, we will ask you to agree via a short consent form below.

#### **What do I have to do if I choose to take part?**

Please answer the questions openly. The survey is designed to last 10 minutes. Based upon the

results of this survey, you may be asked to interview for further elaboration on the points mentioned in your survey.

**What will happen with my information?**

All information shared with us will remain confidential and shared only amongst the investigators of this study. You may withdraw at any point during the questionnaire.

**What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

There are no associated disadvantages or risks of partaking in this survey, apart from the time taken to complete it. The questions of this survey will not be of a sensitive nature.

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

We cannot ensure that there will be any direct benefits of taking part in this study. However, your responses will be used to analyse different leadership experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, and suggest tools that can be put in place to better equip physicians in the event of future crises within elite football.

**What if I have concerns?**

If you have any concerns about the survey or its content, then please inform the principal investigator at your earliest convenience using the contact details stated above.

**Who is organising and funding this research?**

This study is being undertaken as part of the principal investigator's research project for the Masters in Sporting Directorship at Manchester Metropolitan University. No funding has been provided for this study.

**Ethical Approval**

Ethical Approval for this study has been granted by Manchester Metropolitan University.

**Consent Form**

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information stated above
2. I confirm that I have had the chance to ask any questions and these have been answered fully
3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I am free to withdraw at any point whilst completing the survey
4. I agree to have the investigator's request an interview following the results of my questionnaire for further details about my experience
5. I consent to take part in the above study.

By clicking onto the next page, you provide consent to take part in the study. Otherwise we thank you for your time and you may close this tab without continuing.

**End of Block: Introduction**

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**Start of Block: Block 1****Q1 Full Name***Should you wish to remain anonymous, please leave the box blank*  

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**Q2 Age**

25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75

Age ()

**Q3 To which gender identity do you most identify?**

- Female (1)
  - Male (2)
  - Transgender Female (3)
  - Transgender Male (4)
  - Gender variant / non-conforming (5)
  - Option not listed (6)
  - Prefer not to say (7)
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## Q4 Number of years qualified as a doctor

- Under 5 (1)
  - 6-10 (2)
  - 11-15 (3)
  - 16-20 (4)
  - 21-25 (5)
  - 26-30 (6)
  - 31+ (7)
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## Q5 Highest level of Postgraduate Training

- Foundation training (1)
  - Sport and Exercise Medicine (CCT via training) (2)
  - Sport and Exercise Medicine (awaiting CCT) (3)
  - Sport and Exercise Medicine (via Article 14) (4)
  - General Practice (5)
  - Acute Care Common Stem / Emergency Medicine (6)
  - Core Medical Training / Internal Medical Training (7)
  - Other (8)
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*Display This Question:*

*If Highest level of Postgraduate Training = Other*

Q6 If you answered "other" to the question above, please state your highest level of qualification below

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Q7 Have you successfully completed the two-part Membership of the Faculty of Sport and Exercise Medicine (MFSEM) exam?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Not Applicable (4)

Q8 Nature of involvement with professional football

- Part time (1)
- Full time (2)
- Ad-hoc Voluntary (3)

Q9 Highest playing level of organisation that you work primarily for

- International (Womens Senior) (1)
- International (Mens Senior) (2)
- International (Womens Youth) (3)
- International (Mens Youth) (4)
- Highest National Level League (Women) (5)
- Highest National Level League (Men) (6)
- Second highest National Level League (Women) (7)
- Second highest National Level League (Men) (8)
- Academy Football (Girls) (9)
- Academy Football (Boys) (10)
- Other (11)

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*Display This Question:*

*If Highest playing level of organisation that you work primarily for = Other*

Q10 If you answered "other" to the previous question, please specify the organisation below

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Q11 In which country is the organisation you primarily work with based?

- England (4)
- Scotland (5)
- Ireland (6)
- Wales (7)
- Spain (8)
- Germany (9)
- Italy (10)
- USA (11)
- Other (12)

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*Display This Question:*

*If In which country is the organisation you primarily work with based? = Other*

Q12 If you answered "other" to the previous question, please specify the country below

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**End of Block: Block 1**

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**Start of Block: Block 2**

Q13 Do you have any formal leadership qualifications?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

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*Display This Question:*

*If Do you have any formal leadership qualifications? = Yes*

Q14 If you answered "yes", to the question above, please specify the qualifications below

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Q15 Please provide short details on any previous leadership experience either in a medical context and/or a football context

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Q16 Do you feel the demands of your role increased during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Definitely true (1)
- Somewhat true (2)
- Neither true nor false (3)
- Somewhat false (4)
- Definitely false (5)



Q17 Do you feel your communication skills were enhanced during the COVID-19 pandemic through your work in football?

- Definitely true (1)
  - Somewhat true (2)
  - Neither true nor false (3)
  - Somewhat false (4)
  - Definitely false (5)
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Q18 Do you feel you were expected to take on more of a leadership role during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Definitely true (1)
  - Somewhat true (2)
  - Neither true nor false (3)
  - Somewhat false (4)
  - Definitely false (5)
- 

*Display This Question:*

*If Do you feel you were expected to take on more of a leadership role during the COVID-19 pandemic? = Somewhat true*

*Or Do you feel you were expected to take on more of a leadership role during the COVID-19 pandemic? = Definitely true*

Q19 If you answered "definitely true" or "somewhat true" to the question above, do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training, to take on this increased leadership role during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Extremely prepared (1)
  - Somewhat prepared (2)
  - Neither prepared nor unprepared (3)
  - Somewhat unprepared (4)
  - Extremely unprepared (5)
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Q20 Please specify any particular leadership skills / duties / demands that were required of you during the COVID-19 pandemic that you would never have anticipated beforehand.

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Q21 Did you feel under pressure to make clinical decisions which were not in keeping with best medical practice during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Definitely yes (1)
  - Probably yes (2)
  - Unsure (3)
  - Probably not (4)
  - Definitely not (5)
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Q22 Do you feel your relationship with those holding managerial roles within the club has enhanced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Definitely yes (1)
- Probably yes (2)
- Unsure (3)
- Probably not (4)
- Definitely not (5)

End of Block: Block 2

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Start of Block: Block 4

Q23 Do you feel team physicians would benefit from more formal leadership training to better equip them for the demands posed by the role?

- Definitely yes (1)
  - Probably yes (2)
  - Unsure (3)
  - Probably not (4)
  - Definitely not (5)
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Q24 Do you feel training for team physicians should include specific training on communication skills?

- Definitely yes (1)
- Probably yes (2)
- Unsure (3)
- Probably not (4)
- Definitely not (5)

End of Block: Block 4

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