PRESS RELEASE

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Washington, DC. The Sports Neuropsychology Society (SNS) has approved an official Position Statement in response to the increasing concern of unsupervised baseline and post-concussion neuropsychological testing in youth sports.

The Position Statement asserts “…the administration of clinical tests, including computerized concussion baseline testing, should be supervised by a trained healthcare professional. Supervision of test administration by an appropriately trained healthcare professional is necessary when using any neuropsychological test, including those administered by computer, to ensure validity of results and comply with long established test standards and ethical guidelines for practice.”

Dr. Gerard Gioia, president of SNS, commented, “There has been much discussion and concern regarding the practice of unsupervised or poorly supervised neuropsychological testing, and its potential for negatively affecting the post-concussion care of the injured athlete.”

Neuropsychological tests that are typically used in sports are brief, computerized screening examinations that athletes at the youth, adult, amateur, and professional levels take during the pre-season, before a concussion occurs. For those athletes who sustain a concussion, the tests are re-administered post-injury and the results are compared to pre-injury “baseline” test results. In addition to most professional sports, many high schools, colleges, and local youth community leagues across the country are routinely administering baseline neuropsychological testing.

If the tests are not properly administered, the results can be invalid for later comparison or for helping to determine if an athlete has recovered. Dr. Gioia explained, “As an organization, we want to advocate strongly for best practices for the athletes we serve. Appropriately supervised test administration and interpretation, whether it is a pre-injury baseline test or a post-injury test is essential.”

The mission of the Sports Neuropsychology Society (SNS) is to advance the field of sports neuropsychology, to generate and disseminate knowledge regarding brain-behavior relationships as it applies to sports, and to promote the welfare of athletes at all levels. A copy of the complete Position Statement can be found at http://www.sportsneuropsychologysociety.com/resources-and-publications/.