

# REST HUB

## Travel Ready



### Travelling Minds: Tips to optimise athlete wellbeing during travel



#### Plan & prepare

Adequate planning and preparation can help to reduce anxiety and uncertainty.

- > Familiarise athletes with the country you are travelling to, your accommodation, and available facilities.
- > Encourage athletes to adapt their home routine for travel; consider what may work in different environments and identifying items that may create familiarity and consistency.
- > Encourage athletes to focus their attention on factors within their control, while acknowledging those beyond their control and influence.



#### Expect the unexpected

Remain flexible in thinking, and adaptable to unexpected changes or disruptions.

- > Embrace the adventure of travel; challenges and surprises are part of the journey.
- > Consider contingencies for common travel disruptions.
- > Set realistic expectations by accepting that not everything will go according to plan. This mindset will help to reduce stress and disappointment around travel but can also assist with managing setbacks or adversity when it comes to training or competition.



#### Self-care

Prioritise self-care before, during, and after travel.

- > Encourage athletes to take care of their self-care needs whether it is physical, mental and/or emotional.
- > Discuss the use of social media and potential impact on wellbeing.
- > Encourage rest, hydration, the consumption of nourishing foods, and engagement in activities that help to relax and recharge.



#### Social supports

Stay connected throughout.

- > Recent research in sport shows that support is attributed to underpin the stress-resilience-performance relationship, creating a stress-buffering effect and enhanced resilience<sup>1</sup>.
- > Social support can provide comfort and reassurance. Maintain communication with friends and family at home, as well as those present on the ground.
- > Encourage athletes to connect with their support team prior to departure to discuss how and when they will communicate and identify who they can go to for support when needed.



#### Be present

Practice mindfulness and stay present in the moment.

- > Encourage athletes to pay attention to their **surroundings**; this not only optimises wellbeing, but also trains focus and attention, attributes that benefit performance.



#### Relax & rehearse

Use travel downtime to engage in mental rehearsal techniques.

- > Mental practice can enhance focus and readiness for competition.

For individualised support, athletes are encouraged to consult an accredited psychologist.

### Recommended Reading

<sup>1</sup>Burns L, Weissensteiner J, Cohen M, Bird S. A survey of elite and pre-elite athletes' perceptions of key support, lifestyle and performance factors. *BMC Sports Sci Med Rehabil.* 2022 Jan 3;14(1):2. doi: 10.1186/s13102-021-00393-y.

Bühlmayer L, Birrer D, Röthlin P, Faude O, Donath L. Effects of mindfulness practice on performance-relevant parameters and performance outcomes in sports: A meta-analytical review. *Sports Med.* 2017 Nov;47(11):2309-2321. doi: 10.1007/s40279-017-0752-9.

Koehn S, Morris T, Anthony W. Imagery intervention to increase flow state and performance in competition. *The Sport Psychol.* 2014 Mar;28(1):48-59. doi: 10.1123/tsp.2012-0106.

Schuster C, Hilfiker R, Amft O, Scheidhauer A, Andrews B, Butler J, Kischka U, Ettlin T. Best practice for motor imagery: a systematic literature review on motor imagery training elements in five different disciplines. *BMC Med.* 2011 Jun 17;9:75. doi: 10.1186/1741-7015-9-75.

Wang Y, Lei S, Fan J. Effects of Mindfulness-based interventions on promoting athletic performance and related factors among athletes: A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trial. *Int J Environ Res Public Health.* 2023 Jan 22;20(3):2038. doi: 10.3390/ijerph20032038.

