
Personal Intimate Care Needs of Athletes

In line with its values of encouraging and promoting greater independence Special Olympics Ireland supports athletes to manage their own intimate care to the best of their ability. The organisation recommends that at club training and at events that this responsibility is undertaken by a family member and or carer. Where this is not feasible an athlete's parents or carer has a responsibility to advise the Club Safeguarding Officer and to share an intimate care support plan outlining how the support needs are met.

Every endeavour should be made by the club to work in partnership with the athlete and their parents/guardians/carers to support the intimate care needs. However, it is recognised where the expertise may not be available to support an athlete's intimate care needs an athlete and or family /carer may need to decide if Club attendance is viable.

Definitions

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of an athlete.

This can include:

- Feeding
- Oral care
- Washing
- Dressing/undressing
- Toileting
- Menstrual Care
- Supervision of an athlete involved in intimate self-care

Except in cases of emergencies volunteers should not undertake any aspect of intimate care that has not been agreed between the parents / carers and athlete (if appropriate). Try to encourage an athlete's independence as far as possible in their intimate care. Where the athlete is fully dependent, talk with them about what is going to be done and give them choice where possible