

Concussions in Combat Sports and Government Regulation Efforts

If you are looking for a quick introduction to concussive injuries (*or if you need an aid for explaining concussions to others*) Dr.

Mike Evans from [the Sport Concussion Library](#), is a great starting point.

Given the problems that concussions in sports can create members of Parliament and BC's Legislature have introduced Bills to attempt to regulate the problem.

On the Federal side Bill C-319 *The National Strategy for Serious Injury in Amateur Sport Act*, has been introduced. [The text of the Bill can be found here](#). This Bill seeks to create a “national strategy” to reduce concussions in sports. If passed the Bill would require the Minister of State to convene a national conference with a view to establishing

- *a program to track incidence rates and the associated economic costs of injuries in amateur sport*
- *guidelines regarding prevention, identification, treatment and management of concussions in amateur athletes*
- *guidelines that must be met before athletes are allowed to return to sport after suffering a concussion*
- *submissions for Criminal Code amendments making it an offence for “a coach or any other person in authority” to knowingly permit a concussed participant to return to sport without meeting return to play guidelines*
- *national standards for the training of coaches and other persons involved in amateur sport*
- *standardized educational programs for coaches and other persons involved in amateur sport*

This is a private members bill introduced by [Glenn Thibeault](#). Given its slow progress (*it has not advanced beyond First Reading despite being introduced in June 2011*) it does not seem likely to pass into law. I have contacted Glenn about the Bill's status but as of the date of publication I have not yet heard back from him.

On the Provincial side, [Dr. Moira Stilwell, BC's Minister of Social Development](#), introduced [Bill M-206-2011 The Concussions in Youth Sport Safety Act](#). This bill, if passed, will designate certain sports as “high risk” and would require the following:

- *the creation of guidelines by high risk youth sport organizations to education coaches, athletes and parents about concussions*
- *mandatory removal of concussed participants from competition*
- *prevention of a concussed athlete from returning to play until receiving clearance from a designated health care professional*

This Bill can be applauded for its educational component without unnecessary red-tape. The Bill is a work in progress and is not anticipated to pass into law with the current government. Dr. Stilwell herself confirmed as much to me via Twitter with the

following message. Given the uncertainty of BC's upcoming election it is far from clear about whether this bill will ever become law:

