

Swiss Society for Sports Psychiatry and Psychotherapy SSSPP: annual report 2021 and outlook

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Introduction

The Swiss Society for Sports Psychiatry and Psychotherapy SSSPP aims to promote sports psychiatry in Switzerland, in competitive sports and in the general population. Three areas of activity can be derived from this purpose: (i) sports and exercise in mental illness (health sports and promotion); (ii) mental health and illness in competitive sports; (iii) sport-specific mental disorders and illnesses in popular sports. To date, two of these fields of activity of sports psychiatry have been distinguished, one in competitive sports and one in health sports [1]. Sports addiction and muscle dysmorphia or certain substance use disorders, such as the use of so-called image and performance enhancing drugs (IPEDs), are often included in the fields of activity of sports psychiatrists, but cannot be represented in the two established fields of activity. In 2021, the SSSPP therefore proposed to include a third field of activity: sport-specific mental disorders and illnesses in popular sports [2, 3]. The COVID 19 pandemic and the restrictions caused by it continued to occupy us in 2021, for example in working with patients and in consultations, as well as in the planning and implementation of events. In 2021, we were also concerned with the reporting on the Magglingen Protocols at the end of 2020 and violence and abuse in competitive sports. The annual report will also deal with this and other important topics and developments that the SSSPP dealt with in 2021. In addition, an outlook for 2022 will be given. Due to the complexity of the activities in the field of sports psychiatry in Switzerland, it is not possible to deal with all aspects. We ask you for your understanding and refer you to the SSSPP homepage: www.sportpsychiatry.ch

Organisational aspects of the SSSPP

Membership development

As in its founding year 2019 and in 2020, the SSSPP was able to record a further and very pleasing increase in ordinary and extraordinary members in 2021. Institutional members who have continued to support the work of the SSSPP in 2021 are the Private Clinic Wyss AG, Psychiatric Services Grisons, PZM Centre for Psychiatry Münsingen AG, Psychiatric Services Solothurn and, in 2021, Private Clinic Meiringen AG. The contributions of all members help greatly to develop the SSSPP and sports psychiatry in Switzerland. The use of the contributions will be presented in the treasurer's report at the general meeting, which will take place during the annual conference in 2022. New members are always welcome and active participation is very much desired.

The executive board

Marcel Rass was elected by the members at the general meeting on the occasion of the 2nd SSSPP annual meeting and has since then held his office on a non-provisional basis. Elections for the executive board will be held at the general assembly in January 2022. Interested persons who are also full members of the SSSPP are requested to submit their application for the attention of the Executive Board.

The Commission for Continuing Education and Training

Carlos Gonzalez Hofmann and Marcel Rass were also elected by the SSSPP members in the Commission for Continuing Education and Training at the 2021 general meeting.

Communications Officers

Achudhan Karunaharamoorthy and Theofanis Ngamsri were appointed by the Executive Board as SSSPP Communications Officers. Daniela Sinsel is also to support SSSPP communications in future as social media officer. Any requests to the SSSPP Communications Officers can be made to [info\[at\]sgspp.ch](mailto:info[at]sgspp.ch).

Interdisciplinarity and interprofessionalism

The SSSPP promotes interdisciplinarity and interprofessionalism in the fields of sports psychiatry (in Switzerland). In various working groups, for example on violence and abuse in competitive sports or the use of image and performance enhancing drugs in popular sports, specialists and experts from different professional groups are involved. The same applies to the *Sports Psychiatry* editorial board. The involvement and inclusion of non-specialised physicians for child, adolescent and adult psychiatry in the board should also take place in the future and corresponding considerations and discussions launched.

It would be desirable that all genders are always involved and represented on the executive board and in the other bodies of the SSSPP. In addition to interdisciplinarity and professionalism, a good gender mix should be an equally important or central aspect of the SSSPP's activities.

Network

In 2021, there was an intensive exchange in the sports psychiatric networks, in which the SSSPP and its members were involved. In addition to the exchange and joint work on publications, for example, the meeting of the executive boards of the three German-speaking sports psychiatry societies (German Society for Sports Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Sportpsychiatrie und -psychotherapie DGSP; Austrian Society or Sports Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, Ös-

terreichische Gesellschaft für Sportpsychiatrie und -psychotherapie ÖGSPP; SSSPP) established a new forum for exchange that is to be continued in 2022.

The first joint annual meeting of the three societies on the occasion of the *International Conference on Sports Psychiatry ICSP* is also another example of the good cooperation between the three societies.

The SSSPP also strives to maintain good contact with the Sports Psychiatry and Psychotherapy Department of the German Society for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, Psychosomatics and Neurology (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Psychiatrie und Psychotherapie, Psychosomatik und Nervenheilkunde e. V. DGPPN).

Internationally, there were several exchanges at presidium level between the International Society for Sports Psychiatry ISSP and SSSPP in 2021, during which the first joint projects were discussed and outlined.

SSSPP curriculum sports psychiatry

Structured training and quality assurance is of central importance for every specialist discipline. To this end, the SSSPP has developed a three-stage curriculum, which is the first curriculum of its kind to guarantee specific further training in sports psychiatry [4].

Level 1 of the curriculum has already come into force and in cooperation with the Dampsoft Academy in Eckernförde, Germany, a first course on “Basic Sports Psychiatric Care” was held in autumn 2021. Due to the high demand, another course is to be held in Northern Germany in 2022.

The development of stage 1 was initially carried out jointly with the DGSP. The version of the curriculum that was finally adopted by the executive board of the DGSP – after stage 1 of the SSSPP curriculum came into force – differs significantly in scope and content from the SSSPP curriculum, which is more comprehensive and limits admission to the courses to physicians and psychologists.

Levels 2 and 3 of the both curricula should again overlap more, if possible, and the intention to do so was confirmed by representatives of the DGSP and SSSPP boards.

It would be desirable if the ÖGSPP and the other sports psychiatry organisations could also be involved in the curriculum. The same applies to neighbouring disciplines, such as sports physicians or Sport and Exercise Medicine Switzerland SEMS. Corresponding contacts and an exchange regarding this have already taken place.

Participation in the events posted on the SSSPP homepage also enables the acquisition of SSSPP credits and the completion of certain parts of the SSSPP curriculum, irrespective of the course structure. A block course for level 1

of the SSSPP curriculum is planned for the first half of 2022 in Switzerland. As soon as the planning is finalised, information on this will be posted on the SSSPP homepage.

Communication

SSSPP Society News

As in 2020, the *Leading Opinions Neurologie und Psychiatrie* again enabled us to report regularly and in every issue in 2021 on the various topics of the SSSPP and the further development of sports psychiatry (in Switzerland) in the form of the SSSPP Society News.

Newsletter

The SSSPP Society News was often a component of the SSSPP Newsletter, which reported at equally regular intervals on further and current topics, events and more. The newsletters are sent to all SSSPP members and sometimes also to the societies of neighbouring disciplines.

SSSPP homepage

The SSSPP homepage, which we have also been able to develop further, provides extensive reports in German and English about the SSSPP and its fields of activity, as well as research, events and current news. Contact information for sports psychiatrists can also be found on the SSSPP homepage, as well as information on SSSPP publications and on sports psychiatry by SSSPP members.

New social media

The presence of the SSSPP in the social media is also to be established and we hope to be able to report more concretely on this in 2022. The communication officers are responsible for the content of the SSSPP homepage and social media.

Areas of activity

The SSSPP was equally involved in the three fields of activity of sports psychiatrists in 2021. By way of example, violence and abuse in competitive sports and the use of image and performance enhancing drugs (IPEDs) will be briefly discussed.

Violence and abuse in competitive sports

Following the publication of the Magglingen Protocols and reports on violence and abuse in competitive sports at the end of last year, the SSSPP took a position in an open letter and a statement in the *Schweizerische Ärztezeitung* [5, 6].

The SSSPP Working Group on Violence and Abuse in Competitive Sports, which was subsequently formed, took part in the consultation

process on *Swiss Sports Integrity*, a reporting and investigative body for ethical violations, which is intended to further strengthen the protection of athletes and to further promote the integrity of Swiss sports. The working group is also preparing an SSSPP position paper on violence and abuse in competitive sports, which is to be published in a special issue on sports psychiatry in the *Praxis and Schweizerische Rundschau für Medizin* at the beginning of next year.

The aim of these activities is to introduce and demonstrate the importance of psychiatric expertise in activities to prevent and deal with violence and abuse in competitive sports.

Image and performance enhancing drugs

A comprehensive paper on IPED use in recreational sports was submitted by SSSPP members to the *Swiss Medical Forum* and accepted for publication [7].

A comprehensive research initiative on the use of IPEDs in recreational sports is in preparation, and out of this initiative, an association was also founded in 2021 to address the topic of neuro, image and performance enhancing drugs NIPEDs.

Initial information will soon be available on the homepage www.niped.ch.

Sports psychiatrists

Sports psychiatry services for competitive and recreational athletes are available on the SSSPP homepage under “Sports Psychiatrists”. Further efforts will be needed in 2022 to be able to offer such services close to homes and sports facilities throughout Switzerland. All interested parties and SSSPP members are therefore invited and requested to develop and build up corresponding offers in 2022. New offers can be submitted directly to the communication officers for posting on the SSSPP homepage.

Label for Sport Psychiatry

An SSSPP label for consultation hours is to be developed by an SSSPP working group that will, like the SSSPP curriculum, serve to ensure the quality of sports psychiatry services.

Research

Various research projects in the three fields of activity of sports psychiatry were launched in 2021 and are in different project stages; we will certainly report on this in the society news, newsletters or the other communication channels in 2022. The research projects mostly involve various disciplines and, in line with the orientation of the SSSPP, are interdis-

disciplinary and interprofessional as well as cross clinics, institutions and practices.

The SSSPP provides its members a REDCap instance upon informal application and summary of the research project. It is planned to make further research tools and support available to researchers for their projects in the future. All SSSPP members as well as working groups are invited to be visible on the SSSPP homepage with their projects and publications. Information on this can be given directly to the communication officers for posting on the SSSPP homepage.

Publications

Since 2020, the *Swiss Archives of Neurology, Psychiatry and Psychotherapy SANP* has functioned as the official organ of the SSSPP. In 2020, the SSSPP published the German version of the SSSPP position paper on physical activity and mental health in the *SANP* [8].

Special issues

A special issue on sports psychiatry was published in the 3rd issue 2021 of the *Schweizer Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie und Neurologie* [9]. In addition to an introduction (editorial) to sport psychiatry, articles discussed violence and abuse in competitive sports, physical activity and mental health in the context of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, and exercise addiction and its comorbid disorders. In addition, the three-stage curriculum of sports psychiatry was extensively discussed.

A special issue on psychiatry and sports medicine was also published in the 6th issue 2021 of the German *Journal of Sports Medicine (Deutsche Zeitschrift für Sportmedizin DZSM)* and in accordance with the title, various topics in competitive and health sports were taken up and discussed in an interdisciplinary manner in 2 editorials and 8 contributions [10].

Gonzalez Hofmann et al. proposed in the special issue the addition of a psychiatric baseline assessment (PBA) to the pre-participation examination (PPE) in competitive sports, and a position paper, also written by psychiatrists as well as sports physicians, discussed an addition to the care model in competitive sports to promote mental health [11, 12].

In the other area of activity of sports psychiatrists, Imboden et al. and Gerber et al., for example, dealt extensively in reviews of sport and exercise in depression, and cardiovascular health and excess mortality in people with depression and sport activity as a "game changer" in the Special Issue in the *DZSM* [13, 14]. Other articles included and discussed head injuries and overtraining in competitive sports from a sport psychiatry perspective, as well as sports and exercise in patients with schizo-

phrenia and with geriatric psychiatric disorders.

Further publications and outlook

The special issues are presented here as examples. For all other publications, original papers, overviews, etc., please refer to the SSSPP homepage and the "Publications" section, where the articles, including the reported contributions from the special issues, are posted – as far as this is permitted by the publisher.

Two further special issues for the *Praxis* and *Schweizerische Rundschau für Medizin* are in preparation for publication in the first half of 2022.

Textbook of sports psychiatry

Volume 1 of the "Textbook of Sports Psychiatry" on mental health and illnesses in competitive sports is expected to be published by Hogrefe Verlag AG in Mai 2022 and will be then available in bookshops [15]. For the first time, the field of activity of sports psychiatrists could thus be represented in a german textbook. The SGSP supports the textbook on sports psychiatry.

Volume 2, on sport and exercise in mental illness is in preparation. In both volumes – due to the overlaps in the fields of activity – sport-specific mental disorders and diseases in popular sports will also be included and discussed.

Sports Psychiatry

The SSSPP played a major role in the launch of *Sports Psychiatry – Journal of Sports and Exercise Psychiatry*, the first journal on sports psychiatry, which will be published by Hogrefe Verlag AG from 2022.

The first issue of *Sports Psychiatry* is planned as an abstract volume for the ICSP 2022. Issue 2 will be dedicated to the field of activity of sports psychiatry in competitive sports and issue 3 to health sports.

Further information on the journal and the submission of publications is available on the journal homepage: <https://www.hogrefe.com/ch/zeitschrift/sports-psychiatry>.

Congresses, further and continuing education

The following is a small selection of congress contributions by members of the SSSPP.

The SSSPP and/or members of the SSSPP were represented in lectures or with symposia at various congresses and conferences, for example at the *Sports, Medicine and Health Summit SMHS 2021* in Hamburg with the symposium "SMHS meets SSSPP: Mental Health in

Competitive Sports", at the congress of the Swiss Society for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy (Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Psychiatrie und Psychotherapie SGPP) with a state-of-the-art lecture on sports psychiatry in competitive sports as well as sessions on the two other fields of activity of sports psychiatry. Members of the SSSPP were also involved at the DGPPN Congress in the "Symposium on Violence and Abuse in Competitive Sport", which was announced by the organisers as a congress highlight.

The summary of the individual contributions in the two sessions at the SGPP congress were reproduced in the 5th edition *Leading Opinions 2021* [16].

Mention should also be made here of the 1st *Bünder Sportpsychiatrie-Symposium* of the Psychiatric Services Grisons on October 1, 2021 in Chur and the joint symposium of the Privat Clinic Wyss AG, Pro Mente Sana and BSC Young Boys Bern on November 30, 2021 in the Wankdorf stadium. Both of the very well attended symposia, with interesting presentations and invigorating discussions, provided a good insight into the breadth of sports psychiatry in competitive sports.

The "Online Summit Generation Change – Mental Health of Children and Adolescents" took place from September 22 to 29, 2021 and should also be briefly mentioned here.

All other events in 2021 are posted on the SSSPP homepage under the heading "Events", as are the events already scheduled for 2022.

Annual Meeting, ICSP 2022

The first *International Conference on Sports Psychiatry ICSP* will take place in Zurich January 14 to 15, 2022. It will be organised by the SSSPP in cooperation with the DGSP and ÖGSPP. The ICSP, which is planned as a hybrid event, is intended to establish itself as a regular format and promote networking and exchange in sports psychiatry.

The popularity of the event so far makes us confident that the ICSP will be a success and can establish itself as a regular congress format. The registration form and further information on the congress can be found at <https://kongress.sgspp.ch/2022/en>

Any enquiries about the congress can be directed to the ICSP 2022 Congress Secretary Theofanis Ngamsri via the contact form on the congress homepage.

Media

Sports psychiatry topics were also very present in the media in 2021 and the media coverage often included SSSPP members. A selection of the reports involving SSSPP

members is available on the SSSPP homepage under "Media".

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all SSSPP members for their trust and support for the work of the SSSPP board and for helping to shape sports psychiatry in Switzerland. We wish you and your environment all the best and health as well as a wonderful Christmas season and a good start into 2022.

Sporty greetings

Malte Christian Claussen,
on behalf of the Executive Board of the SSSPP

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