

Special Olympics

Health Promotion



The Healthy Athlete Clinical Director Role: Health Promotion

Special Olympics is a global movement of people creating a new world of inclusion and community, where every single person is accepted and welcomed, regardless of ability or disability. We are helping to make the world a better, healthier, and more joyful place – one athlete, one volunteer, one family member at a time.

The Healthy Athletes program provides health services and education to Special Olympics athletes and changes the way health systems interact with people with intellectual disabilities. Through free health screenings, training for healthcare professionals, and evaluation of the health status of people with intellectual disabilities, Healthy Athletes has become a powerful public health organization worldwide.

Clinical Directors are an important part of the Healthy Athletes Health Promotion Team. Clinical Directors are responsible for working with their local Special Olympics Program and other volunteer health professionals in coordinating a Health Promotion event in their region.

The role of a Health Promotion Clinical Director includes, but is not limited to:

1. *Determining event opportunities*

Identifying and scheduling the best opportunity to provide Health Promotion screenings is a joint effort between the Clinical Director and their local Special Olympics Program. Clinical Directors will also determine which areas of Health Promotion (nutrition, hydration, bone health, sun safety, tobacco avoidance, physical activity) to offer and how, based on the local needs and resources available.

2. *Recruiting and Training Volunteer Health Professionals*

Clinical Directors are the best people to identify and train health volunteers to work in the specific areas that will be offered in the Health Promotion venue, because they know their community and its local health care professionals. Potential volunteers may come from:

- Private Practitioners
- Universities/Colleges/Schools
- Health and Professional Associations
- Medical Facilities
- Government Medical Facilities (Military/VA/State/National/Local) and
- State or Local Public Health Agencies

3. Capacity Grant Application

Clinical Directors will work with their local Program to ensure that supplies and equipment needed to deliver the core components of HP are included in the Healthy Athletes' Capacity Grant application. These grants assist Programs in purchasing interactive educational materials, athlete giveaways and incentives, volunteer recognition, signage and other supplies/equipment needed to conduct an impactful Health Promotion program.

4. Obtaining Equipment, Supplies and Athlete Giveaways

Needed supplies, equipment and athlete giveaways may be available to Clinical Directors through donations or loans obtained by networking with local sponsors and health services. Special Olympics headquarters also receive donations of goods and equipment that can be made available for events if local sources are not available.

5. Setting Up and Supervising the Healthy Athletes Venue

On the day of the event, the Clinical Director is responsible for supervising the set up and delivery of screening and interactive education services by trained volunteers.

6. Collecting and Reporting Data

Clinical Directors use Healthy Athletes Software (HAS) to document screening data collected during the event. Data is used to determine the need for health care provider referrals, and to assess the health status and needs of individual Special Olympics athletes. This data provides Healthy Athletes Programs worldwide with the statistics needed to increase awareness and provide more services.

7. Program Evaluation

Evaluation gives Clinical Directors the opportunity to continuously improve and adapt their programs to the needs of the athletes.

Health Promotion Clinical Director Background and Requirements:

- A current credential or license to practice in a healthcare field which utilizes routine medical procedures. Examples include RD, RN, BSN, DTR, CHES, PA, MD, DO, PT, OT, EMT, kinesiology, chiropractor and/or a teaching certificate in a healthcare field.
- Three plus years of supervised hands-on clinical work experience in the health promotion field and/or their health care profession. Must include direct or group patient education, screening, care plan development. Experience may include up to 1 year in a supervised educational practicum.
- A minimum three-year commitment to ensure quality and continuity of the Health Promotion program.
- Attendance at a SOI sponsored Train-the-Trainer session or completion of the online Clinical Director Training Program where information and training about Special Olympics, Healthy Athletes, and Health Promotion specific management.