



**Erin Willson, PhD Candidate
President, AthletesCAN**

AthletesCAN & Safe Sport

- 2019 Study on Abuse in Canadian Sport
 - Challenges identified by athletes:
 - **Performance Excellence At-All-Costs** “*no medal will ever justify how I was treated*”
 - **Normalization of Harm and Complicity** “*horrible conditions and abuse were glorified*”
 - **Lack of Attention to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**
 - **Culture of Fear and Silence** “*I am fearful that after I speak out, I will be punished*”
 - **Lack of Trust in Organization to Handle Cases** “*Our team was successful, so they kept him despite the abuse*”

AthletesCAN & Safe Sport

- 2022 Pulse Check
 - **Lack of Clarity for Disclosure & Reporting**
 - Not familiar with OSIC
 - Fear of repercussions/retaliation
 - **Lack of accountability within NSO's**
 - Evaluation of funding structures.
 - **Not enough action on moving policies off paper**
 - **Lack of engagement from athletes within NSO's in decisions**
 - **We need to address the *culture* rather than the individual perpetrators**
 - **Need for an athlete-centred system**
 - Involving athletes in decisions, amplify athlete voice to decision-makers, creating an environment *FOR* athletes

AthletesCAN & Safe Sport

Dubin encouraged the examination of the definition of excellence, which was almost exclusively measured by medal counts and international success, and exclaimed **“the pursuit of excellence does not mean that we want our athletes to win at any costs”**

Progress

1. **Establish a mechanism to receive, investigate and adjudicate complaints independent of sport governing bodies;** - in 2022 OSIC was launched to take complaints at the National Team Level, needs to be expanded
2. **Address all forms of maltreatment;** There is a growing acknowledgement that safe sport includes more than “predators”, and that emotional abusive behaviours need to be addressed. The UCCMS was implemented to outline all types of abuse
3. **Enhance the focus on athletes’ holistic well-being;** Not there yet, but being discussed within the OTP model
4. **Implement mandatory education for all sport stakeholders;** Coaching Association of Canada has launched mandatory training – it needs improvement and expand to all stakeholders
5. **Strengthen accountability measures;** We have been working closely with the Minister to adjust how Sport Canada can hold NSO’s accountable
6. **Ensure supports and resources are available for victims of maltreatment;** \$2.4 Million was allocated for victims to support their mental health
7. **Prohibit sexual relationships and forced intimacy between athletes and those in positions of authority;** has been included in the UCCMS