



Student Aides: Q and A Document

The NATA Official Statement on Proper Supervision of Secondary School Student Aides (SAs) reflects NATA's recommendations for the role of SAs. Bottom line: ATs, not aides, are the appropriate individuals to be providing AT services, specifically injury evaluations, treatments, rehab and RTP decisions. An aide can be an extra "hand" but should never be the "head" when providing appropriate medical care. ATs are encouraged to give thought as to the line between what is an AT service and what is first aid. While it is appropriate for students certified in first aid to provide first aid, ATs should work hard to define that line for their coaches and SAs. This Q&A document is designed to assist secondary school ATs in drawing those lines. **Additionally, each AT should review his/her state's practice act for limitations specific to the state on each of the points within the statement.**

Can student aides tape injured athletes? It may be appropriate for students to practice taping skills on non-injured individuals and classmates for the purposes of a learning experience, but should not provide protective taping to injured athletes for the management of an injury, nor should they tape non-injured athletes for preventative measures prior to or during athletic activity.

May student aides participate in athletic training facility activities? It is appropriate for student aides to observe an athletic trainer in the athletic training facility; however, activities must not include patient care. Student aides may assist with the educational practice activities listed in the NATA Official Statement such as stocking supplies, cleaning duties, making ice bags and performing inventories. Other suggested activities may include assisting with enforcing athlete sign-in procedures, setting up/breaking down sideline equipment, and acting as "extra eyes and ears" for the certified/regulated athletic trainer.

Can student aides assist with injury evaluation, treatment or rehabilitation? Student aides may be involved in learning and practice evaluation, treatment and rehabilitation techniques on non-injured individuals for a learning experience, but it is professionally unethical and irresponsible for student aides to provide these services or patient care for injured athletes.

Can a student aide assist with filing of patient records or entering injury data into an electronic record system? Due to privacy issues, the athletic trainer should check with the school district administration to determine if this activity is permissible.



If a student aide is certified in first aid, can s/he provide this service to injured athletes? In the secondary school setting, student aides may practice first aid activities. First aid is not a protected skill. However, first aid does not include return to play. A student may perform first aid, but cannot determine whether that athlete may return to play.

Can a student be “stationed” at an athletic event or venue with a walkie-talkie to communicate emergency or injury care needs to the certified athletic trainer located at another site? While student aides may act as “eyes and ears” for the athletic trainer, they should be under the direct supervision of the athletic trainer at all times. Communication to the AT regarding emergencies and on field injuries should take place through a coach or school staff member.

Can student aides travel with a team? Student aides may travel with a team, however, this should only occur under the supervision of the athletic trainer. The student aide may observe the athletic trainer, but it is inappropriate for the student aides to participate in patient care, return to play/activity decisions or perform athletic training services.

Can a student aide apply an ice pack?

This is considered first aid so this may be an appropriate activity.

Can a student aide provide stretching exercises to an injured/non-injured athlete? It may be appropriate for the AT to set the patient up, and then have students watch/monitor the patient for compliance and provide feedback on form, etc. The AT is prescribing the exercise, not the student aide.

If certified in CPR/AED can a student aide provide emergency care to an athlete, staff member, official or spectator? Absolutely, they are trained, they are there, and this is first aid.