



PRESS RELEASE

RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP 2021 & MOVEMBER TEAM UP TO DELIVER GROUNDBREAKING MENTAL FITNESS CHARTER

19 February 2020

Rugby League World Cup 2021 (RLWC2021) and men's health charity **Movember** are proud to announce a partnership that will see the two organisations work collaboratively to deliver the tournament's groundbreaking mental fitness initiative.

The Duke of Sussex, Prince Harry recently announced RLWC2021 as the first-ever global sporting event to launch a Mental Fitness Charter, with an aim to educate every player, team official, match official, teammate and volunteer to look after their own mental fitness and of those around them, as well as delivering mental fitness workshops to 8,000 young Rugby League players and their parents.

Movember is the leading global charity changing the face of men's health, with a focus on mental fitness and suicide prevention in males. They will use their vast expertise in the field to help successfully deliver RLWC2021's Mental Fitness Charter, alongside [Rugby League Cares](#) - who helped develop the project - and the Rugby Football League.

As the Official Mental Fitness Partner of RLWC2021, Movember will deliver its [Ahead of the Game](#) initiative, a program which is focused on improving youth mental fitness through community sport.

Working with community Rugby League clubs across the country, '*Ahead of the Game*' will be presented to 8,000 young athletes, 8,000 parents and 360 coaches, with the aim of improving mental resilience in adolescent athletes and raising mental fitness literacy and awareness among players, parents and coaches.

The evidence-based program, which has been developed by Australian sports psychology researchers Dr Christian Swann from Southern Cross University and Dr Stewart Vella of the University of Wollongong, is also being rolled-out in other sports in Canada, New Zealand and Australia.

As part of the Mental Fitness Charter, RLWC2021 is committed to improving mental fitness awareness among its own staff and all its participants. During tournament time, approximately 60 members of staff, 2,021 volunteers and 900 participants from the 32 competing teams will receive mental fitness awareness sessions in the form of face-to-face training.

Movember will also play a crucial role in the tournament-time mental fitness campaign, with match day activations – in the form of game day activity, community outreach and digital content - planned to raise mental fitness literacy amongst supporters.

As part of its \$1.5 million investment into the initiative, Movember will also help to create a post-tournament legacy plan to ensure the impact of the Mental Fitness Charter is felt long after the final whistle at the final game.



Speaking about the partnership, RLWC2021 Chief Executive, Jon Dutton said: "Following the launch of our trailblazing Mental Fitness Charter last month, we're delighted to announce RLWC2021's partnership with Movember, leaders in mental fitness awareness."

"By delivering this program alongside Movember, Rugby League Cares and the Rugby Football League, we will further demonstrate how the legacy of RLWC2021 is being created before the tournament begins in twenty months' time. This initiative will make a genuine positive impact in communities across England, along with promoting positive mental fitness through Rugby League that reaches millions of people worldwide."

Tracy Herd, Program Manager for Movember said: "We are delighted to be working with RLWC2021 and Rugby League Cares to deliver sport-based mental fitness training to communities where the impact of poor mental health, particularly for men, can be devastating."

"Research shows that half of mental health conditions start by the age of 14, and 75% by the age of 24¹. By intervening early and teaching boys the skills to be able to cope with life's setbacks and build their resilience, it will prevent minor issues from becoming bigger problems later in life."

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About RLWC:

RLWC2021 will be the first time the men's, women's and wheelchair competitions have been staged in a single celebratory event, culminating in an epic finals weekend to crown the champions of each tournament.

The tournament will take place between 23rd October and 27th November 2021 across 21 venues. 32 teams will compete in three tournaments. For more information on RLWC2021 and its pledge to tackling mental health, visit www.rlwc2021.com

About Movember:

Movember is the leading global men's health charity. The charity raises funds to deliver innovative, breakthrough research and support programs that enable men to live happier, healthier and longer lives. Committed to disrupting the status quo, millions have joined the movement, helping fund over 1,250 projects focusing on prostate cancer, testicular cancer and suicide prevention.

In addition to tackling key health issues faced by men, Movember is working to encourage men to stay healthy in all areas of their life, with a focus on men staying socially connected and becoming more open to discussing their health and significant moments in their lives.

The charity's vision is to have an everlasting impact on the face of men's health. To donate or learn more, please visit movember.com.

For more information: sam.mills@movember.com / 0411 241 475

¹ Kessler RC, Angermeyer M, Anthony JC, et al. Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of mental disorders in the World Health Organization's World Mental Health Survey Initiative. *World Psychiatry* 2007; 6: 168–76.