THE EPIDEMIOLOGY OF INJURY AND ILLNESS OF ATHLETES AT THE INDIAN OCEAN ISLAND GAMES 2019

Background The Indian Ocean Island Games is a multi-sport event that occurs every four years and includes athletes from seven islands of the Indian Ocean, namely, Comoros, Reunion, Mayotte, Madagascar, Maldives, Seychelles, and Mauritius.

Objective This study aims to describe the injury and illness epidemiology of the athletes participating during the 2019 Indian Ocean Islands Games.

Material and Methods This prospective cohort study recorded injury and illness cases from athletes who competed in these Games. All medical physicians received detailed instructions and training on data collection using an injury report form. All athletes (minor and adults) who provided consent, or consent given from the minors’ guardians, were included in this study. Athletes who did not provide consent for this study were excluded.

Results 1 521 athletes (531 women and 990 men) reported 160 injuries (injury incidence rate of 10.5%) and 85 illnesses (illness incidence rate of 6%). The percentage of distribution of injuries were highest in football and basketball. Most injuries occurred during competition compared with training. Joint sprains were the most common type of injury (28%), followed by muscle strains (19%). Men suffered most injuries (79% vs. 21%). Similarly, men sustained more illness than women (57% vs. 43%). Most illnesses affected the respiratory system (67%), and infection was the most common cause of illness (84%) in participating athletes.

Discussion These findings are similar to previous events in other parts of the world. However, unique ailments, not previously reported on, were discovered.

Conclusion Epidemiological data from this study can be referred to athletes who compete in similar multi-sport events and/or Olympic Games in the Indian Ocean region.