

ePACT Use Case: Challenge Triathlon Medical Support

“When we accessed injured or ill triathletes’ medical data through ePACT, it reduced the risk of making a mistake in their treatment. It helped us provide the best care possible during that critical situation.” – Paula, BC Paramedic

In 2013 and 2014, the Challenge Penticton Triathlon used ePACT for their athletes, collecting emergency information to support injured or ill athletes during the race, and to contact spouses, family and friends of athletes while they received medical attention.

The 2013 event was the first for the Challenge Family in Canada, as it is an international organization started in Germany in 1986. In Europe, standards around organizational support at events and acceptance of personal risks are different than in North America. Because of this, there is little to no collection of emergency information for many events held in European countries. Therefore, the Challenge adopted ePACT as their emergency standard for data collection, and implemented new processes in their Medical Tent to support athletes requiring care.

Approximately 15% of Challenge Penticton athletes received medical attention during the race for reactions ranging from bee stings to asthma attacks, dehydration to heat stroke, injuries from swim, bike or running accidents, reactions to over-exertion, or personal issues pertaining to existing medical conditions. Some cases were minor, while others were truly life threatening and required significant care.

This is not unique to the Challenge. Extreme sporting events like these, whether races, relays or personal **endurance events tend to average anywhere from 5% to 20% of participants requiring care.** Marathons and triathlons, charity bike rides or swims, mountain bike competitions, or simply fun but 'ultimate' games and contests must deal with injuries, illness and crisis management.

ePACT Use:

- ▶ The Challenge invited athletes to use ePACT to securely share their emergency information online.
- ▶ Athletes completed their single emergency record, adding medical and key contact details.
- ▶ Athletes invited emergency contacts, like their spouse or roommate, who agreed to support them if a personal or large scale crisis were to occur on race day.
- ▶ Invited emergency contacts had to accept or decline acting in this role. If accepted, they were then connected to the athlete and the Challenge for information sharing and communications.
- ▶ Once connected, authorized medical staff could view information and communicate through ePACT.
- ▶ If/when an athlete received care on race day, their ePACT account was accessed so medical staff could provide the best possible treatment (e.g. provide the right medications if there was an allergy or existing medical condition, review medical history if the athlete was unable to personally communicate).
- ▶ When an athlete was receiving extended care (either in the Medical Tent or being transported to hospital), ePACT was used to connect with emergency contacts.

Benefits of Use:

- ▶ **Easy administration & extensive adoption** - athletes were invited to use ePACT only three weeks in advance of the Challenge race day. Although it was not mandatory for all athletes, over 80% registered and provided their information. The Challenge staff were able to quickly and easily collect the critical information that helped support the athletes on race day, and athletes were happy to complete the process as they understood the importance of providing their details in case of a crisis.
- ▶ **Preparation versus Triage** - most extreme and large scale events with onsite Medical Tent/medical personnel are forced to treat medical care as reactive triage given limited emergency information available. With ePACT, medical staff were able to adjust treatment options and plan proactively as they could see medical history in advance of athlete's requiring care. Whether they were ensuring specific medications were on hand for athletes with pre-existing conditions, or simply switching out rubber gloves when athletes came into the tent with latex allergies, medical staff felt more confident about the level of care they could provide.
- ▶ **Better quality information** - many events and races collect basic medical and contact details on paper forms, on the back of an athlete's BIB, or through online registration. This information is typically limited to two fields: an emergency contact and 'urgent' medical considerations. ePACT allows athletes to connect with and share as many emergency contacts as they'd like, given it is their personal support network. The system also collects detailed medical data that clearly helps to provide better care - there is no guessing at what is considered 'urgent' - e.g. is a bee allergy urgent, should all medications be included in an 'urgent' field, etc.
- ▶ **Available anytime, anywhere** - ePACT was accessible for authorized medical personnel via iPad, computer and hard-copy print offs, ensuring records were accessible anytime, anywhere no matter where care was provided along the course.
- ▶ **Connectivity & Communications** - ePACT provided immediate access to emergency contacts ensuring greater support for athletes and peace of mind for friends and relatives unable to locate athletes.

