

Esports organisations look to optimise player sleep

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Esports has developed from relative obscurity into a billion dollar global industry, with an estimated 453 million viewers worldwide in 2019—and its set to get even bigger.

Despite [esports](#) rapid rise in popularity, there has been a notable lack of research available to support the needs of esports athletes but this is starting to change.

A study has used sleep tracking devices and mood measures (anxiety and depression) to determine how well esports athletes around the world sleep, and the effect this has on their mental health and well being.

Preliminary results have shown that esports athletes are not getting the sleep (7-9 hours p/night for young adults aged 18-25) needed to best support optimal mental health and performance.

Leading the way is a multinational sleep team that includes clinical psychologist and Ph.D. candidate Daniel Bonnar and Professor Michael Gradisar (Flinders University), Associate Professor Aly Suh

and Ph.D. candidate Sangha Lee (Sungshin University), Associate Professor Brandy Roane (University of North Texas) and Dr. Daniel Blum (Stanford University).

Daniel Bonnar says innovative esports organisations around the world are now starting to actively look at how they could better support the health needs of their players, with sleep being apart of that.

"Global esports giant Gen.G from South Korea, and Perth-based Ground Zero were the first two teams to sign up to our project, which really demonstrated their commitment to promoting player wellness and performance" says Daniel.

Other esports organisations now involved include Kanga Esports and Gravitass from Australia.

"The benefit of working with esports organisations from different countries is that it allows us to develop a global view of the sleep habits of esports athletes," Daniel added.

As to the study's findings, preliminary results have shown that esports athletes are not getting the sleep (7-9hrs p/night for young adults aged 18-25) needed to best support optimal mental health and performance.

"From the data we've collected so far, we can see a trend that many esports athletes obtain less than 7hrs of sleep p/night, have a tendency to want to sleep and wake very late, with mood impacted as a result in some players," says Professor Michael Gradisar. "Although these late sleeping patterns might be okay for some players, for others it could be an issue with conflicting daytime commitments encroaching on their sleep schedule."

Phase two of the project will be to improve players' sleep using a sleep intervention designed to address their specific sleep needs.

"If we can improve the sleep of esports athletes, this will translate into enhanced well being which can only be helpful for performance as well," says Professor Gradisar.

Gravitas team owner Sean Callanan says "I'm looking forward to Gravitas players understanding the importance of [sleep](#) and how it can affect their performance for practice and on game days. I know it's become a focus in traditional pro-sports, so esports should be following their lead."

More information: Daniel Bonnar et al, Risk Factors and Sleep Intervention Considerations in Esports: A Review and Practical Guide, *Sleep Medicine Research* (2020). [DOI: 10.17241/smr.2019.00479](#)

Provided by Flinders University

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