

Appendix 1. Five step rehabilitation program. The aim of the program was to investigate feasibility and safety of return to professional football, establish potential limits of sports participation, acclimatize athlete, club healthcare providers and the athlete's medical team, and the athlete's social context with sports participation at all levels, ranging from low-intensity, short duration to full participation in elite-level sports.

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Duration	6 weeks	6 weeks	6 weeks	12 weeks	4 weeks
Content	Individual training with trainer/ physiotherapist, with low intensity aerobic exercise to a maximum of 70% of the athlete's maximum heart rate. No body contact or football training.	Individual training with trainer/ physiotherapist with gradual progression of training intensity to maximum heart rate and high intensity strength training. No body contact or football training.	Individual training with trainer/ physiotherapist with a variation of low and high intensity aerobic exercise and strength training. Solo football training on the pitch.	Fitness training together with the team. Modified football training with a gradual introduction of body contact.	Fitness training together with the team. Full football training and training matches with the team
Final examination	MDT including athlete Meeting with the athlete and treating physicians to evaluate symptoms, general health including mental status and results from the cardiac monitoring.	MDT including athlete Meeting with the athlete and treating physicians to evaluate symptoms, general health including mental status and results from the cardiac monitoring. Examination with echocardiography and cardiopulmonary exercise test	MDT including athlete Meeting with the athlete and treating physicians to evaluate symptoms, general health including mental status and results from the cardiac monitoring.	MDT including athlete Meeting with the athlete and treating physicians to evaluate symptoms, general health including mental status and results from the cardiac monitoring. Examination with echocardiography and cardiopulmonary exercise test	MDT including athlete Meeting with the athlete and treating physicians to evaluate symptoms, general health including mental status and results from the cardiac monitoring.