

Neil Lennon speaks out on mental health

Neil Lennon has been appointed as ambassador for the SPFL Trust charity golf day in May at The Carrick by Loch Lomond.

The annual event, held in partnership with the Chris Mitchell Foundation, raises money for the provision of Mental Health First Aid Training for Scottish football clubs.

The training, part funded by the Chris Mitchell Foundation aims to reach the milestone of having two people at every SPFL club trained in mental health awareness within the next two months.

Neil said: "I am pleased to be in board as an ambassador for the SPFL Trust's charity golf day in May.

"It is vital that players and staff alike know they have support around them and can feel comfortable talking about how they are feeling.

"The provision of mental health first aid training to clubs is a positive step in that regard – it will help break down barriers and give people the confidence to open up with friends and colleagues."

"I've had my own personal experiences of it on a few occasions and I am not on my own. It's 64% now amongst Scottish football and it's an incredible stat.

"We know it's not an uncommon illness or condition and it affects everyone in many different ways and it gets my full support.



“In the modern game it’s becoming more and more prevalent because of the pressure. We live in an age where everything is instant. Social media can be intrusive and can be very destructive to an individual.

“Sometimes people don’t know or understand what they are going through. They think they are a bit off kilter and it deteriorates and the issues get worse. You are not in a lot of physical pain but there are physical symptoms at times but the mental pain can be very deteriorating.

“People speaking about it is the most important thing. What happens is that you become institutionalised in the way of life. you make targets and sometimes if you don’t reach those targets all of a sudden there is a dip.

“I’d advise any player to speak up and go to the club doctor or someone you can trust and just tell them what you are feeling and what you are going through. That’s a start”

So far, the mental health first aid programme has been delivered to 106 participants from Scottish football clubs.

In a recent survey of football clubs by PFA Scotland, 64% of respondents said either they or a team-mate had experience mental health issues, and almost 7% of those were identified as having significant issues.

SPFL Trust chief executive Nicky Reid adds: "We're delighted that Neil Lennon is to join us to support our SPFL Trust Golf Day 2018. We aim to raise valuable funds to support mental health first aid training in Scottish football, and his high profile support is warmly welcomed."