Football Fans in Training (FFIT): a randomised controlled trial of a gender-sensitised weight loss and healthy living programme for men – end of study report

Sally Wyke,¹* Kate Hunt,² Cindy M Gray,¹ Elisabeth Fenwick,³ Christopher Bunn,¹ Peter T Donnan,⁴ Petra Rauchhaus,⁴ Nanette Mutrie,⁵ Annie S Anderson,⁶ Nicole Boyer,³ Adrian Brady,⁷ Eleanor Grieve,³ Alan White,⁸ Catherine Ferrell,² Elaine Hindle² and Shaun Treweek⁹

¹Institute of Health and Wellbeing, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, UK
²Medical Research Council/Chief Scientist Office Social and Public Health Sciences Unit, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, UK
³Health Economics and Health Technology Assessment, Institute of Health and Wellbeing, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, UK
⁴Division of Population Health Sciences, University of Dundee, Dundee, UK
⁵Moray House School of Education, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK
⁶Centre for Public Health Nutrition Research, University of Dundee, Dundee, UK
⁷Cardiology Department, Glasgow Royal Infirmary, Glasgow, UK
⁸Centre for Men’s Health, Leeds Metropolitan University, Leeds, UK
⁹Health Services Research Unit, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, UK

*Corresponding author

Declared competing interests of authors: Professor Peter Donnan has received research grants in the past from GlaxoSmithKline, Pfizer, Otsuka and Amgen Inc. He is also a member of the New Drugs Committee of the Scottish Medicines Consortium. Dr Adrian Brady has received research grants from Merck, Servier, AstraZeneca and Bayer, has provided consultancy to Merck USA and Bayer Germany, and been awarded lecture fees and/or honoraria from Merck, Servier, AstraZeneca, Boehringer Ingelheim, Pfizer and Bayer. Eleanor Grieve has received unrestricted research funds from Cambridge Weight Plan.

Disclaimer: This report contains transcripts of interviews conducted in the course of the research, or similar, and contains language which may offend some readers.

Published January 2015
DOI: 10.3310/phr03020
Plain English summary

Football Fans in Training (FFIT)
Public Health Research 2015; Vol. 3: No. 2
DOI: 10.3310/phr03020

NIHR Journals Library www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk
Obesity in men is rising but few men take part in existing weight management programmes. We developed a men-only weight management programme, Football Fans in Training (FFIT), which was specifically designed to be delivered in Scottish professional football clubs by club community coaches. In the 12 weekly sessions, men learnt about diet and healthy living for weight loss, how to set goals and monitor their eating and physical activity, and top tips for making long-term changes. The FFIT programme also included a pedometer-based walking programme, group physical activity sessions at the club and some minimal ongoing support including a reunion session at the club.

We evaluated whether or not FFIT was effective and good value for money, whether or not coaches delivered it as intended, what made men want to do FFIT and whether or not men and coaches enjoyed it. The study was the first randomised controlled trial of a health programme in a professional sports club setting. Out of 747 men who wanted to do FFIT, 374 were picked at random to do the programme immediately and 374 to be in a comparison group who did FFIT a year later.

Men who did the programme lost 4.94 kg more weight than men in the comparison group. They also had lower waist size, lower percentage body fat and blood pressure, reported higher levels of physical activity, better diets and felt better about themselves.

The programme was good value for money, was well-delivered by the coaches and attracted men at high risk of ill health. The club setting was a crucial factor in attracting men to FFIT.
Criteria for inclusion in the Public Health Research journal

Reports are published in Public Health Research (PHR) if (1) they have resulted from work for the PHR programme, and (2) they are of a sufficiently high scientific quality as assessed by the reviewers and editors.

Reviews in Public Health Research are termed ‘systematic’ when the account of the search appraisal and synthesis methods (to minimise biases and random errors) would, in theory, permit the replication of the review by others.

PHR programme

The Public Health Research (PHR) programme, part of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), evaluates public health interventions, providing new knowledge on the benefits, costs, acceptability and wider impacts of non-NHS interventions intended to improve the health of the public and reduce inequalities in health. The scope of the programme is multi-disciplinary and broad, covering a range of interventions that improve public health. The Public Health Research programme also complements the NIHR Health Technology Assessment programme which has a growing portfolio evaluating NHS public health interventions.

For more information about the PHR programme please visit the website: http://www.nets.nihr.ac.uk/programmes/phr

This report

The research reported in this issue of the journal was funded by the PHR programme as project number 09/3010/06. The contractual start date was in June 2011. The final report began editorial review in January 2014 and was accepted for publication in June 2014. The authors have been wholly responsible for all data collection, analysis and interpretation, and for writing up their work. The PHR editors and production house have tried to ensure the accuracy of the authors’ report and would like to thank the reviewers for their constructive comments on the final report document. However, they do not accept liability for damages or losses arising from material published in this report.

This report presents independent research funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). The views and opinions expressed by authors in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the NHS, the NIHR, NETSCC, the PHR programme or the Department of Health. If there are verbatim quotations included in this publication the views and opinions expressed by the interviewees are those of the interviewees and do not necessarily reflect those of the authors, those of the NHS, the NIHR, NETSCC, the PHR programme or the Department of Health.

© Queen’s Printer and Controller of HMSO 2015. This work was produced by Wyke et al. under the terms of a commissioning contract issued by the Secretary of State for Health. This issue may be freely reproduced for the purposes of private research and study and extracts (or indeed, the full report) may be included in professional journals provided that suitable acknowledgement is made and the reproduction is not associated with any form of advertising. Applications for commercial reproduction should be addressed to: NIHR Journals Library, National Institute for Health Research, Evaluation, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre, Alpha House, University of Southampton Science Park, Southampton SO16 7NS, UK.

Published by the NIHR Journals Library (www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk), produced by Prepress Projects Ltd, Perth, Scotland (www.prepress-projects.co.uk).
Public Health Research Editor-in-Chief

Professor Martin White  Professor of Public Health, Institute of Health & Society, Newcastle University and Honorary Consultant in Public Health with Public Health England

NIHR Journals Library Editor-in-Chief

Professor Tom Walley  Director, NIHR Evaluation, Trials and Studies and Director of the HTA Programme, UK

NIHR Journals Library Editors

Professor Ken Stein  Chair of HTA Editorial Board and Professor of Public Health, University of Exeter Medical School, UK

Professor Andree Le May  Chair of NIHR Journals Library Editorial Group (EME, HS&DR, PGfAR, PHR journals)

Dr Martin Ashton-Key  Consultant in Public Health Medicine/Consultant Advisor, NETSCC, UK

Professor Matthias Beck  Chair in Public Sector Management and Subject Leader (Management Group), Queen's University Management School, Queen's University Belfast, UK

Professor Aileen Clarke  Professor of Public Health and Health Services Research, Warwick Medical School, University of Warwick, UK

Dr Tessa Crilly  Director, Crystal Blue Consulting Ltd, UK

Dr Peter Davidson  Director of NETSCC, HTA, UK

Ms Tara Lamont  Scientific Advisor, NETSCC, UK

Professor Elaine McColl  Director, Newcastle Clinical Trials Unit, Institute of Health and Society, Newcastle University, UK

Professor William McGuire  Professor of Child Health, Hull York Medical School, University of York, UK

Professor Geoffrey Meads  Professor of Health Sciences Research, Faculty of Education, University of Winchester, UK

Professor John Powell  Consultant Clinical Adviser, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), UK

Professor James Raftery  Professor of Health Technology Assessment, Wessex Institute, Faculty of Medicine, University of Southampton, UK

Dr Rob Riemsma  Reviews Manager, Kleijnen Systematic Reviews Ltd, UK

Professor Helen Roberts  Professor of Child Health Research, UCL Institute of Child Health, UK

Professor Helen Snooks  Professor of Health Services Research, Institute of Life Science, College of Medicine, Swansea University, UK

Please visit the website for a list of members of the NIHR Journals Library Board:
www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/about/editors

Editorial contact: nihredit@southampton.ac.uk