Effectiveness of European Fans in Training (EuroFIT): randomised controlled trial in England, Portugal, the Netherlands and Norway

Sally Wyke, on behalf of the EuroFIT consortium

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Each week, across Europe, around 20.2 million people, mostly men, attend football matches in the top 50 leagues; Allegiance to Club/team is often lifelong and cross-generational.

*The idea:* attract people to a improve their physical activity and sedentary time through the power of football.
Attract overweight and obese men to a weight management and healthy living programme delivered in professional football clubs in Scotland

12-week, group-based, evidence-based behaviour change and gender-sensitised in content, style of delivery and context
RCT, process evaluation, two subsequent qualitative studies and follow up

- FFIT is popular
- Attracts high risk men and engages men in behaviour change
- FFIT is effective and cost effective in supporting substantial long term weight loss
EuroFIT sought to extend FFIT by...

- More **explicit** behavioural & social science theory
- Focus on **lowering sedentary time**, in addition to improving physical activity
- Developing **new technology** for self-monitoring time spent sitting and standing
- Eating well brought in later in 12 weeks; less emphasis on **weight**

- Appealing to an even **wider audience** across Europe
- **Objectively measuring health and PA changes**, in 4-country RCT
- Researching **models** for long term *implementation and roll out*
Core Components
(12, weekly-90 min, group sessions, delivered in clubs by trained coaches)

Club ‘magic’: behind the scenes, coaches, materials

Group learning: banter, sharing experience, creating norms

BCT Toolkit: self-regulation skills and strategies

Physical activity sessions: experience, enjoyment, banter

Gender-Sensitized: setting, style of delivery, content

Self-Monitoring Technology
Objective

Determine the effectiveness of EuroFIT in relation to primary outcomes physical activity and sitting time at 12 months; and secondary outcomes diet, weight, biomarkers, wellbeing and cost-effectiveness
Pragmatic, two-arm, RCT

Setting
- Four countries
- Fifteen professional football clubs

Inclusion criteria
- Men
- Age 30-65
- BMI $\geq 27$ kg/m$^2$
- Passed PARQ+
- No other program
- 4 days activPAL
Self-assessed eligibility
\( n=3285 \)

Randomized
\( n=1113 \)

Allocated to EuroFIT
\( n=560 \)
- Post program measurement
  - Attended \( n=508 \) (91%)
  - Valid activPAL \( n=464 \) (83%)
- 12 month measurement
  - Attended \( n=492 \) (88%)
  - Valid activPAL \( n=451 \) (81%)

Primary outcome analysis
\( n=451 \) (81%)  

Allocated to Comparison
\( n=553 \)
- Post program measurement
  - Attended \( n=510 \) (92%)
  - Valid activPAL \( n=471 \) (85%)
- 12 month measurement
  - Attended \( n=508 \) (92%)
  - Valid activPAL \( n=470 \) (85%)

Primary outcome analysis
\( n=470 \) (85%)  

Excluded \( n=2172 \) (66.1%)
- BMI < 27 Kg/m\(^2\) \( n=922 \) (42.4%)
- Outside Age Range \( n=74 \) (3.4%)
- Not male \( n=1 \) (0.0%)
- Failed PARQ+ \( n=91 \) (4.2%)
- Other health program at club \( n=5 \) (0.2%)
- No consent to participate \( n=90 \) (4.1%)
- Not approached/reached \( n=853 \) (39.3%)
- No Baseline Data \( n=133 \) (6.1%)
- Invalid ActivPAL Data \( n=3 \) (0.1%)
Men across SES spectrum, but most in paid work, with > 12 years in education. High baseline step counts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean age</th>
<th>45.7 years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In paid work</td>
<td>85.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participants and parents born in study country</td>
<td>89.6%</td>
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</tbody>
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Baseline steps (mean/SD) | 8372 (3172)
BMI (mean/SD) | 33.2 (4.6)

Years in education %

- <12 years: 23.3%
- 12-15 years: 38.4%
- >15 years: 38.2%
Results

Results will be published in late 2018. Contact Healthy Stadia for more information.
Combing evidence from FFIT and EuroFIT: Engaging men in physical activity through programs that work with existing constructs of masculinity AND offers evidence based approach is a promising route for promoting men’s health
Thank you for your attention!