

The role of sport in reducing social exclusion – example from the front line



Dr Kathryn Curran

@kathryn_curran

Homelessness



Homelessness

No home in the UK or anywhere else in the world available to occupy (Shelter, 2016).



There are several types of homelessness:

- Statutory homelessness
- People rough sleeping
- People in insecure or temporary accommodation
- People in supported accommodation such as hostels
- Hidden homeless (sofa surfing, squatting etc)



- 3,569 people sleeping rough
- 69,140 households in temporary accommodation
- 36,540 people in homelessness accommodation

(Department for Communities and Local Government, 2016).

Homelessness & Health

- **Lower life expectancy**
- Variety of **physical and mental health** conditions
- **Substance misuse** issues
- **Unhealthy lifestyles**
- Amongst the most **excluded** and **marginalized** groups in society
- **Stigma, discrimination** and **exclusion** as major barriers to health and quality of life

Football-led health interventions... What does the evidence tell us?



Football and Homelessness

(Elbe et al., 2012; Randers et al., 2012; Helge et al., 2014. Hulton et al., 2014)

- Lowered Blood Pressure & Cholesterol
- Improved Resting Heart Rate
- Improved V02 Max
- Improved Physical Fitness
- Improved Cardiac Function



Football and Homelessness

(Magee and Jeanes 2011; Sherry and Strybosch, 2012; Curran et al., 2016)

Positive improvements in Mental & Social Health



Why football clubs?

An aerial photograph of Liverpool, UK. The city is densely packed with red-brick buildings. In the foreground, the Anfield stadium is visible, surrounded by a large green park area. A large body of water is visible in the middle ground. The text 'Why football clubs?' is overlaid in the top left corner.

The brand/badge of the club

Accessibility



The aim of the project is to use the powerful brand of **Everton Football Club** as a vehicle to motivate and inspire hard-to-reach males in Liverpool, to engage in sport/physical activity and to make positive, healthy lifestyle choices



Target audience:

Males Aged 18-35 years, unemployed or low Incomes, range of health issues, football fans, local community.

- Delivery of exercise activities
- Health and exercise intervention with targeted groups
- Health themed match day events
- Health drop in services operating from football stadium
- Guided research to assess the effectiveness of the project (partnership with Liverpool John Moores University, School of Sport and Exercise Sciences)

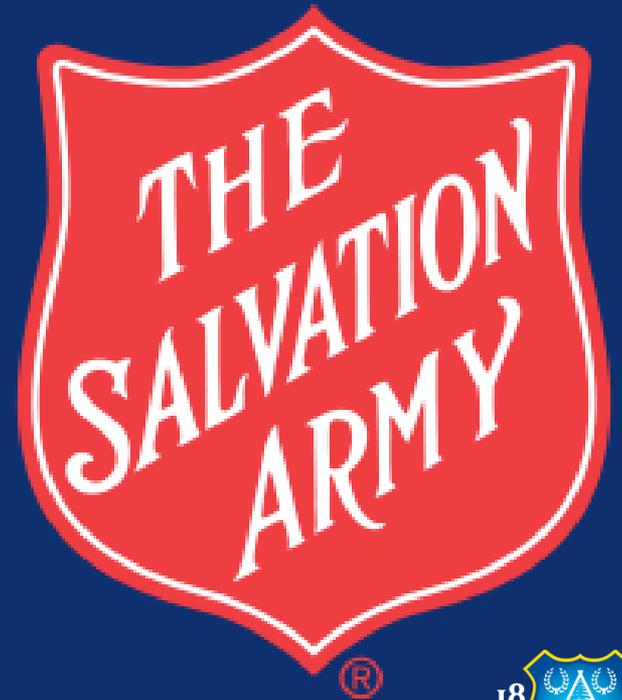


Research Aims

To explore the **barriers** to, and **impact** of, men's engagement in physical activity and health related behaviours through a Football in the Community programme.

Recruitment

Recruited and engaged with men experiencing homelessness and men recovering from drug and alcohol addiction



addaction





 **Everton**
in the Community



CREATING CHANCES
premier league
health.



Methods

- Ethnographic: 3 years full time practitioner-researcher
- Engaged in casual conversation and active participation to develop relationships, trust and rapport with HTR men
- Social issues discussed with participants through informal client-researcher interactions
- Field notes and reflective diary
- One-to-one semi-structured interviews
- Relaxed and informal approach

DATA ANALYSIS

- Data was analysed using thematic content analysis (Nvivo 10)
- Data was analysed through abductive reasoning in order to extrapolate a meaningful understanding of the participants' behaviour and voices (Polkinghorne, 1988)
- Data is represented through a series of themed (SEM) narrative extracts that capture pertinent 'moments' from applied observations within the field

PRE-PROGRAMME BARRIERS

(Curran et al., 2014; Curran et al., 2016)



- Environmental
“There was dickheads all around me”
- Psychological
“Me head just used to go west”
- Sociocultural norms
- Addictive personality traits
- Pressure and stress of everyday life

MOTIVATIONS

(Curran et al., 2014; Curran et al., 2016)



- Wanting to change (self-image/identity rather than PA and health)
- Create new networks

Motivations: The Power of the Brand

That was big [finding out the programme was delivered by Everton], that was big, that was a big, big, big thing that. That was just like winning the world cup, the champions league an everything all in one. It really was.” (Craig, 34).

“If it was ran through the NHS or PCT or somethin’ you’d probably look at it and not think anything of it, but coz it’s run by Everton you take more notice, you get involved.” (Gary, 42)



The Power of the Brand

“Men come to the sessions regardless of colour allegiance, so we have both Everton and Liverpool supporters. However, what comes up again and again is that being able to say: ‘I train at Goodison Park’ is something that they boast about with their mates.”



IMPACT

(Curran et al., 2014; Curran et al., 2016)



Improved Mental & Social Health:

- Structure
- Social capital
- Creating a sense of belonging and identity
- Increased feelings of value and self-worth

“This programme hasn’t half helped Daniel* ya know. He was in a dark, dark place. We almost lost him” Ste, 37, Liverpool.

“I like it coz it’s like nothing I’ve ever done before. People actually care about me and me health” Mark, 23, Liverpool

“I’ve made some good mates, before this I just f*** sat in every day...all day. It was depressin’ but now I’ve got something to look forward to” David, 42, Liverpool.**

ONGOING BARRIERS

(Curran et al., 2014; Curran et al., 2016)

“ I do really enjoy coming. It’s sound, I love it but I can’t always get here. I’ve got other stuff going on. D’ya know what I mean?” Craig*, 25.

“ I’ve messed up again. Now I have to see my parole officer every Tuesday and I never feel like coming after that” Rob* 23

“ I can’t afford the bus fare. I want to come like, but just can’t always get up there” Gary* 31.



FEATURED IN THIS REPORT



World Health
Organization

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR Europe



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROMOTION IN SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED GROUPS: PRINCIPLES FOR ACTION

Policy summary

READING

Curran, K., Drust, B., Murphy, R., Pringle, A. and Richardson, D. (2016) The challenge and impact of engaging hard-to-reach populations in regular physical activity and health behaviours: An examination of an English Premier League Football in the Community Men's Health Programme. *Public Health*, 135, 14-22.

Curran, K., Bingham, D.D., Richardson, D. and Parnell, D. (2014) Ethnographic engagement from within a Football in the Community programme at an English Premier League football club. *Soccer and Society*, 15 (6), 934-950.

World Health Organization promoting physical activity in socially disadvantaged groups. Available at: <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/Transport-and-health/publications/2013/physical-activity-promotion-in-socially-disadvantaged-groups-principles-for-action.-policy-summary>.

Thank you for listening



Any questions?



Contact me:

k.m.curran@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

0113 812 3205



@kathryn_curran