

# **‘It brings the lads together’: A critical exploration of older men’s experiences of a weight management programme delivered through a Healthy Stadia project**

**Lorena Lozano-Sufrategui, Andy Pringle, David Carless, Jim McKenna**

Leeds Beckett University

Email: [L.Lozano@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:L.Lozano@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)



- Obese older men (OM):  $\geq 50$
- Higher risk of developing poor lifestyle behaviours and non-communicable diseases
- Barriers to attend lifestyle improvement interventions<sup>1</sup>: insecurity, fear of falling, lack of energy
- OM: key priority group for Public Health<sup>2</sup>

1. NICE (2008)
2. Rutherford et al. (2014)



# Healthy Stadia

- A stadium that ‘promotes the health of visitors, fans, players, employees and the surrounding community. It is a place where people can go to have a positive, healthy experience playing or watching sport’<sup>1</sup>
- Delivery of PA interventions for HTR groups through sports clubs<sup>2</sup>
- ‘Divisive social practices’?

1. Crabb and Ratinckx (2005)

2. Johnman, Mackie and Sim (2013)



# Methods

- Intervention context:
  - Tacking the Pounds: a WMP that works in partnership with the Wigan Borough Healthy Stadia to deliver health and wellbeing messages for men
- Research context:
- 14 men, mean BMI = 32.4kg/m<sup>2</sup>
- Thematic analysis
- How do sports settings relate to the needs of OM?

# Ageing

Well for me I was just getting older and I could tell that I wasn't a teenager anymore so it was just look after yourself [...] as a young man you are indestructible you can do anything, eat anything (Adam)

Physical  
limitations

Physical  
activity  
paradox

Irreversibility

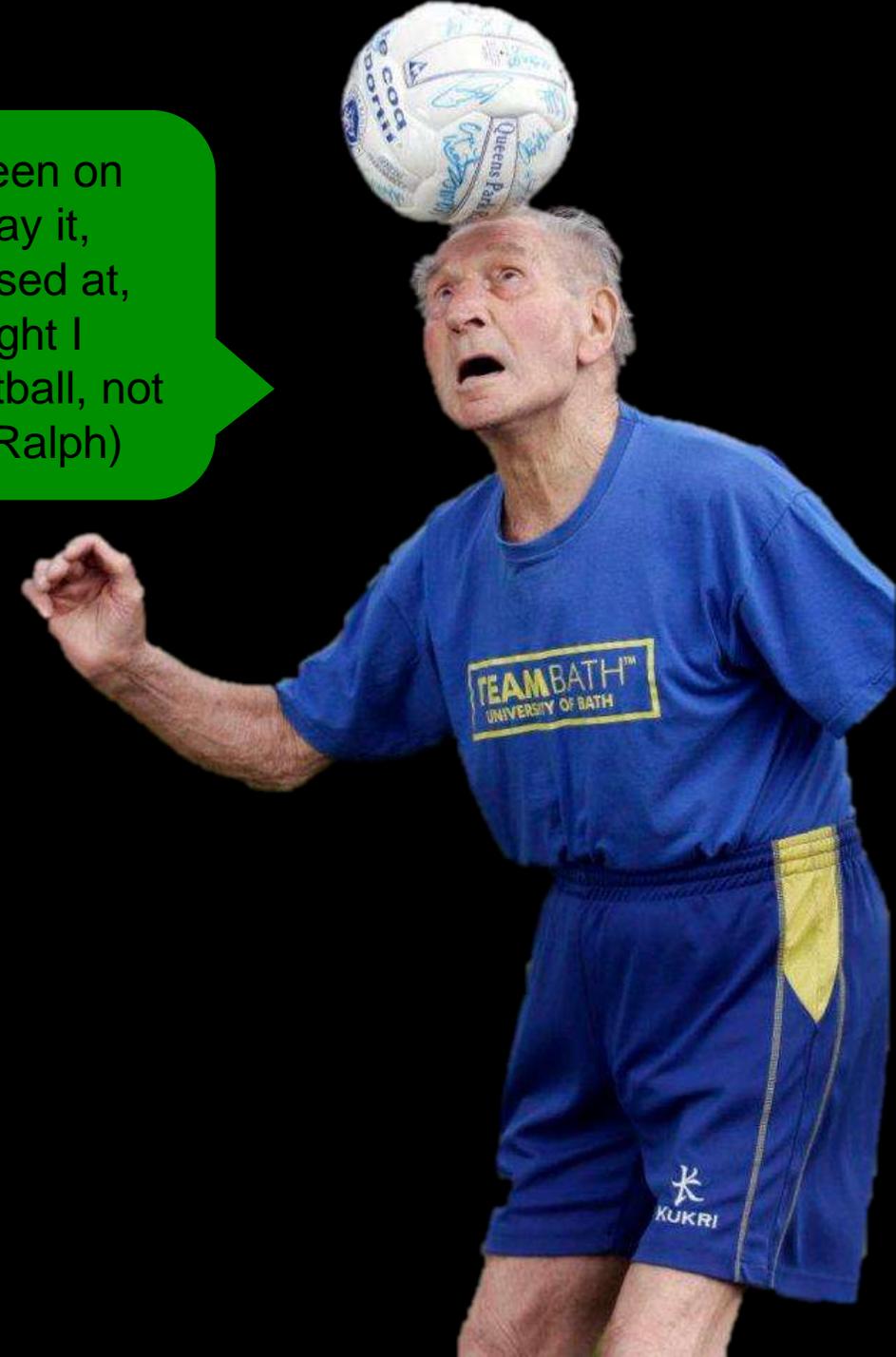
Imperishable  
body vs  
Vulnerable body



# Opportunity

- Loss of opportunities
- 'Real' sport
- Competitiveness (confrontational and oppositional activity) vs. participation ('having a kick around')

To be honest I'm not keen on football but at least I play it, which I am quite surprised at, you know. I never thought I would have played football, not at my age, but I did it (Ralph)



# Inclusive competition

- Cooperation and collaboration
- 'Everybody is involved' – bond
- Different degrees of inclusion
- Enjoyment
- Younger men 'caring' for others by balancing forceful contacts, game intensity and speed

When we play football, I try to take it easy on the older guys. I don't play as well as I would if I was against similar people. I don't want the other guys to think: 'Oh, I am not going there next week because there is this one guy, half our age, he takes it too seriously, runs round tackling, hurting people'



# Caring interpersonal relationships

- Opportunity to 'do' things together
- Supportive atmosphere enabled the men to demonstrate competence
- Participation in sports became meaningful (regardless of the sport!)



# The role of staff in promoting engagement

- Originality, creativity and variety
- Adapt games, e.g. 'walking football' to reduce discordances
- Humour promotes engagement and inclusion



# Practical implications

- Practitioners' ability to navigate men's needs
- Consider FITT
- Build mediators for change<sup>1</sup>
- Competition is a 'work of inclusion'
- Deliverer's personality

1. Pringle et al. (2014)



# Thank you for listening



Email: [L.lozano@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:L.lozano@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)



Twitter: [@LorenaLozano86](https://twitter.com/LorenaLozano86)



ResearchGate: Lorena Lozano-Sufrategui

# References

- Crabb, Judy, and Linda Ratinckx. 2005. *The Healthy Stadia Initiative: A Report for North West Public Health Team*. London: Department of Health.
- Johnman, Cathy, Penelope Mackie, and Fiona Sim. 2013. "The Beautiful Game." *Public Health* 8 (127): 697-98. doi: 10.1016/j.puhe.2013.07.008.
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. 2008. *Occupational Therapy and Physical Activity Interventions to Promote the Mental Wellbeing of Older People in Primary Care and Residential Care. NICE guidelines [PH16]*. Accessed July 23 2015. <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph16>.
- Pringle, Andy, Stephen Zwolinsky, James McKenna, Steven Robertson, Andy Daly-Smith, and Alan White. 2014. "Health Improvement for Men and Hard-to-Engage Men Delivered in English Premier League Football Clubs." *Health Education Research* 29 (3):503-520. doi: 10.1093/her/cyu009.
- Rutherford, Zoe, Brendan Gough, Sarah Seymour-Smith, Christopher R. Matthews, John Wilcox, Dan Parnell, and Andy Pringle. 2014. "'Motivate': The Effect of a Football in the Community Delivered Weight Loss Programme on Over 35-Year Old Men and Women's Cardiovascular Risk Factors." *Soccer & Society* 15 (6):951-969. doi: 10.1080/14660970.2014.920628.