

Reflections on developing a public health intervention for prisoners in Scotland; exploring opportunities, challenges and unintended consequences of public health within prisons

4th October 2016

Session C12: The role of prisons in public health

LEPH2016 – Amsterdam

Matt Maycock, Cindy M Gray*, Alice MacLean & Kate Hunt

MRC|CSO Social and Public Health Sciences Unit,
University of Glasgow

*Institute for Health and Wellbeing,
University of Glasgow



Health in UK prisons

- The prevalence of overweight/obesity among male prisoners in the UK is 'unacceptably high' (Herbert K et al (2012)).
- Despite being given opportunities to eat healthily and take part in PA, many prisoners choose not to do so (ibid).
- Prisoners in the UK are less likely to achieve recommended minimum PA guidelines than non-incarcerated men (ibid).
- National recommendations suggest using prison settings to promote PA, healthy eating and wellbeing (Scottish Prison Service (2002))





Fit for LIFE

Developing a health promotion programme for male prisoners





The three prisons

Prison A

State run, high security, all male

Houses adult short and long term convicted prisoners

Four delivery phases



Prison B

Privately run, high security, all male

Houses adult short and long term convicted prisoners

Three delivery phases

Prison C

State run, open prison, all male

Houses adult short and long term convicted prisoners

One delivery phase

What is Fit for LIFE?

- A healthy lifestyle programme, 2 hour sessions delivered weekly for 10 weeks
- **Fit for LIFE** covers topics such as healthy eating, portion control, increasing physical activity, reducing sedentary time etc
- **Fit for LIFE** uses a range of behaviour change techniques, such as goal setting, self-monitoring etc
- **Fit for LIFE** is delivered by trained Prison officers and outside football/sports coaches
- **Fit for LIFE** is participative and focused on peer-supported learning
- **Fit for LIFE** encourages positive male banter to facilitate discussion and group bonding





Five Phase Approach

Phase 1
HMP A
Feb-Apr 2013
Delivered by PEIs
Supported by SPFL clubs



Phase 2
HMP A
Oct 2013 – Jan 2014
Delivered by PEIs
Supported by SPFL clubs



Phase 3
HMP A
Sept 2014 – Dec 2014
Delivered by PEIs
Supported by SPFL clubs



Phase 4
HMP A
Sept 2015 – Dec 2015
Delivered by PEIs
Supported by sports clubs



Phase 5
HMP A
Mar 2016 – June 2016
Delivered by PEIs
Supported by sports clubs



Phase 2
HMP C
Jan – Apr 2014
Delivered by PEIs
Supported by SPFL clubs



Phase 1
HMP B
Feb-Apr 2014
Delivered by SPFL club
Supported by PEIs



Phase 3
HMP B
Jan 2015-April 2015
Delivered by PEIs
Supported by SPFL clubs



Phase 4
HMP B
Oct 2015 – Dec 2015
Delivered by PEIs
Supported by sports clubs



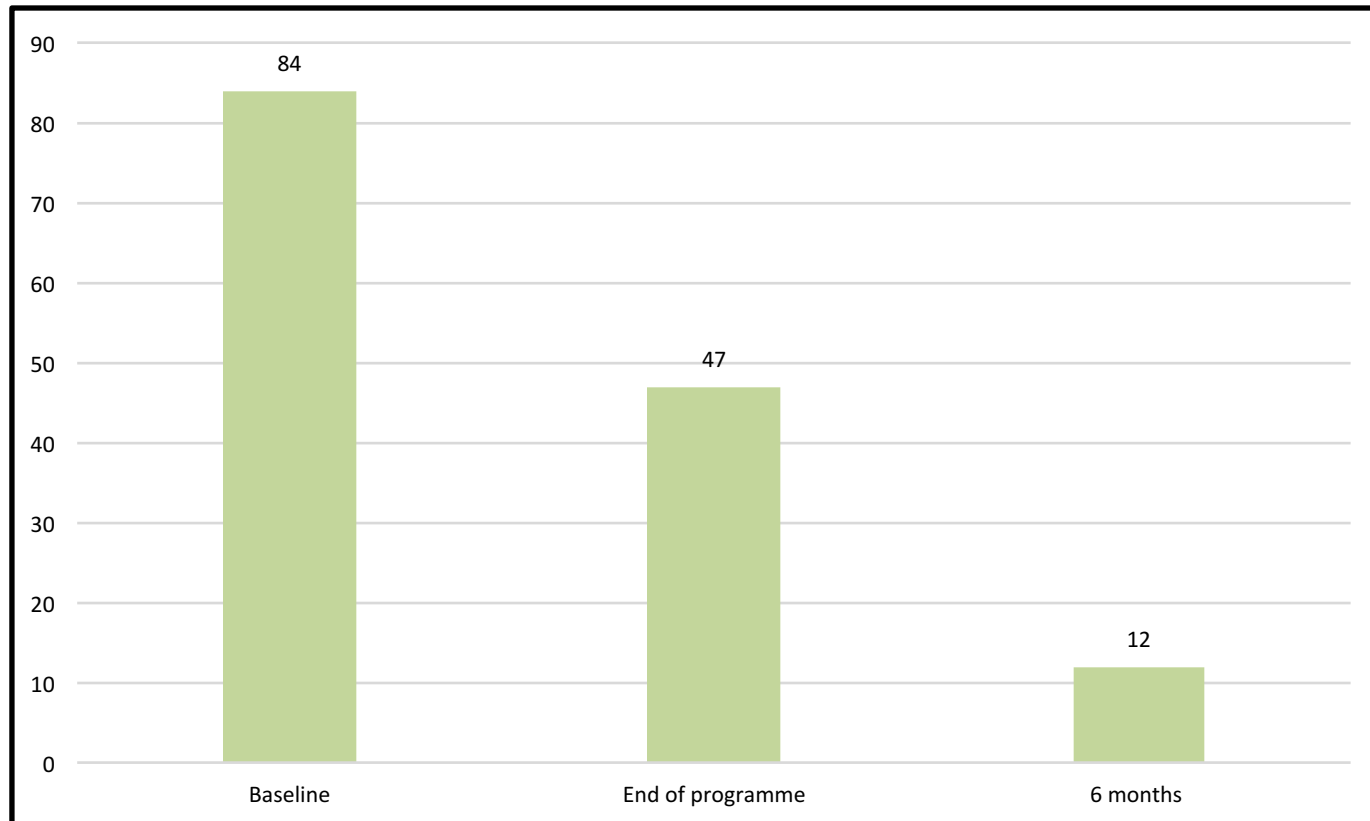
Phase 5
HMP B
Mar 2016 – June 2016
Delivered by PEIs
Supported by sports clubs



Methods

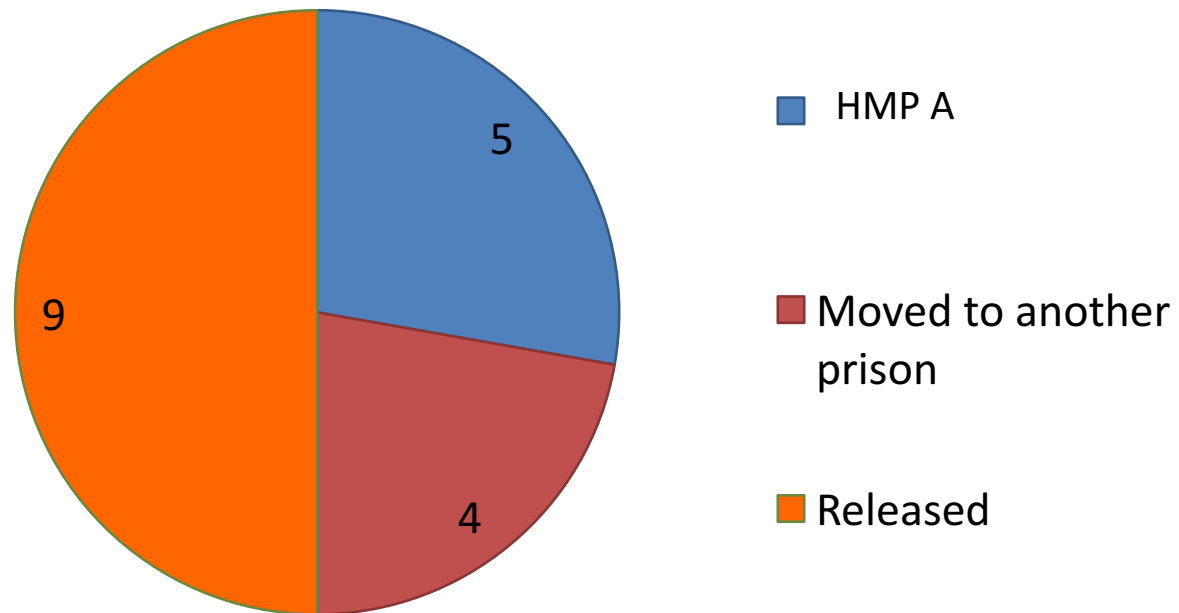
- Method 1. **Scoping review** to identify lifestyle programmes on healthy living interventions (weight loss, PA etc...) with prison populations.
- Method 2. **Observations** of session deliveries of the prototype Fit for LIFE programme.
- Method 3. **Focus groups/interviews with prisoners. Participants who completed/did not complete the programme were asked for their views**
- Method 4. **Interviews with staff** who delivered programme.
- Method 5. Independent **before-and-after measures**, questionnaires, bloods and urine with follow up to 12 months

Challenges for evaluation: Attrition over three phases at prisons A+B



Participant location at 12 months...

HMP A Phase Two - Participant Location at 12 month measure





University
of Glasgow



Some qualitative results from prisoners interviews



Opportunities to improve health via Fit for LIFE

And I ended up doing all the weights and all that. But when I hit Prison A that's when I started doing the CV. It's just a case of when I get out of here continue it. [PA-Ph2-P5]

[Fit for LIFE] encouraged you into that sort of mindset where you're happy to do exercises in the cell. I've lost a lot of weight here. [PA-Ph2-P4]

And the activities we done was...you know like the different sport sections and all, was pretty good. Because it's sort of helped bond us all together as well, you know? And as we're leaving we're talking about the things like that, you know? So...so that was good. So there were not really any aspects of the course that I didn't... disagree with. [PA-Ph3-P7]



Group dynamics within the context of the Fit for LIFE programme

I think it was a part of—**it was being a part of a group**. On the outside I'm a lone person. I'm not part of any group. So see learning in a group, and **interacting with people, and speaking to people in the group that kept me motivated as well.**

[PA-Ph2-P11]

it was important for me to, for me to do my thing and for me to tell people that they was doing good at their thing, and **encouraging them** and pushing them and stuff like that. *[PA-Ph2-P3]*

Well you're having a laugh with people and it's like you are losing a little bit of weight, it's just you're not coming and you're not like if you're coming to the gym, it's like you're not the fattest person in the gym. **So you're here and you are all kind of fat, you are all here for the same reason.** *[PB-Ph2-P3]*



Barriers to improving health via Fit for LIFE

There are barriers in prison. **The food is obviously number one.** But you could ask the prison all day long to change it – they won't change it. *[PA-Ph2-P5]*

It's all fatty stuff and just... you do get healthy stuff, but the **'healthy' stuff is pure shite.** *[PB-Ph3-P12]*

But we were **locked up all morning** this morning so I didn't even get a chance to do any exercise. But that was my intention this morning, so it was. I mean, I spend quite a bit of **money** doing that every week – spending a \$7 or \$10 on fruit. But they are squashed and they're fucking disgusting *[PB-Ph2-P4]*



Just at the weekends, because exercise is so early at weekends *[PA-Ph2-P3]*

Unintended consequences of taking part in Fit for LIFE

Even if you went to the work sheds, you walk a few hundred yards, sit down, and do your work. You're sitting down doing your work, I don't think the steps – **that guy who says he gets 30,000.** It's amazing [PA-Ph4-P6]



'Cause he said to me 'will you look after me? **'Cause I'll get bullied in here.**' And he tried to come through to the weights one day and one of the PTIs just got stuck into him and I said "that's..." I said to him "that's the reason, you know, I wouldn't go to a gym, is people like you." [PA-Ph2-P4]

At one point I **lost too much weight,** and I felt weak, and I actually just said to myself, 'here wait the now P11 you're losing too much week,' because I went like. I looked gaunt, I looked white, and I felt lethargic. [PA-Ph2-P11]



Conclusions

- **Fit for Life has the potential to facilitate engagement with a cohort of hard-to-reach and disadvantaged men** – prisoners who are not yet using prison gyms
- Programmes such as Fit for Life have the potential for participants to form new friendships and potentially reduce isolation within prison.
- Long-term there are issues with sustaining (and measuring any) behaviour change, we have limited insight into what happens when prisoners are released or are moved to another prison.
- Although Fit for LIFE programme is successful in attracting some men to engage in positive lifestyle change within a prison setting, barriers to making and sustaining change remain challenging in this context.
- We are in the process of evaluating a Train the Trainer package that has been co-developed with Prison Officers who have delivered Fit for LIFE. This will be rolled out throughout the Scottish prison estate in 2017.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Participants, PEIs, Coaches, MRC/CSO SPHSU Population Health Research Facility, Sally Wyke, Nanette Mutrie, Bill Mullen, Jason Gill

Collaborators Alice MacLean, Cindy M Gray, Kate Hunt

Programme Delivery Scottish Prison Service Physical Education Instructors, Coaches from SPFL and local sports clubs

Programme Funding Scottish Prison Service, NHS Ayrshire and Arran

Research Funding This research was funded by CSO grant - CZH-4-886 and Gender and Health Programme core funding

matthew.maycock@glasgow.ac.uk

Kate.hunt@glasgow.ac.uk

Cindy.gray@glasgow.ac.uk



Prisoners line up with staff and fitness course deliverers and Richard Gordon, centre, to show off the certificates gained.