

ShowCase

Fit Fans

Topic: Obesity

Organisation: NHS Hull

Location: Hull (Yorkshire and Humber)

Dates: March 2009 to March 2011

Budget: £490,570 (Fit Fans programme and single point of access); £127,000 (communications campaign)

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Overview

Launched in March 2009 by NHS Hull, Fit Fans is a free weight management service designed primarily for men aged 40 to 65 who want to lose weight. This is because rates of overweight and obesity amongst middle-aged men in the city is particularly high, at around 75 per cent, and this group was failing to access support in managing their weight.

Fit Fans offers a structured 12-week programme covering important nutritional information and exercise advice, with the opportunity to participate in exercise sessions. The programme is sports-related and professionally delivered by experts linked with two of the big sports clubs in the city, thereby giving participants the chance to receive the same fitness expertise given to their sporting heroes.

Results for 2009/10:

- 413 men completed the 12-week programme
- 78 per cent of participants were obese or morbidly obese at the start of the programme, dropping to 64 per cent at the end of the programme
- 50 per cent of male participants who completed the 12-week programme achieved a 5 per cent or more drop in weight; of these, 77 per cent maintained this weight loss for a further 12 weeks

1. BEHAVIOUR

- At least 730 clients accessing Fit Fans between April 2009 and March 2010
- At least 80 per cent completing the 12-week programme
- At least 30 per cent attaining a 5 per cent drop in weight

2. CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

- Literature review
- Stakeholder consultation
- Focus groups and depth interviews with local residents
- Survey of almost 300 residents in Hull

3. THEORY

- **Goal-Setting Theory:** People need clear and specific goals
- **Stages of Change Theory:** Aims to move people from pre-contemplation of a new behaviour, through contemplation, towards action and maintenance

4. INSIGHT

- Carrying a bit of weight is more manly
- Dieting is for women
- It needs to fit my lifestyle – sport is a major ‘pull’ factor for men
- Health professionals and family members are key influencers

5. EXCHANGE

Barriers:

- Lack of time and willpower
- Financial costs
- Shift working patterns
- Someone else does household cooking
- Belief that it is okay for men to carry extra weight
- Perception that weight loss groups are for women

Benefits:

- Improve overall health and reduce the risk of illness
- Feel fitter and lose weight
- Train like your heroes
- Free social experience

6. COMPETITION

- Trying to lose weight independently
- Apathy
- Current services in the local area
- Peer and social norms
- Accessibility of cheap fast food and alcohol

7. SEGMENTATION

Target audience

- Men aged 40 to 65
- Classified as overweight or obese
- Routine and manual workers, low paid or unemployed
- Living in the most deprived wards in Hull
- Have an unhealthy or poor diet and excessive alcohol consumption
- Participate in little or no physical exercise
- Family history of heart disease or diabetes
- Reluctant to attend GP or other health services when in poor health

8. METHODS MIX

- **Fit Fans:** Free, structured 12-week weight loss programme specifically developed for men in Hull; Combines classroom sessions and physical activity sessions
- **Single point of access:** To coordinate and promote existing weight management services in Hull; Phone line, website, one-stop drop-in centre in the city centre
- **Communications campaign:** Incorporates sporting interests; Posters, leaflets, billboards, bus and washroom panels, community events, radio ads