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Title

Stakeholder Acceptability of the Hockey Fans In Training Healthy Lifestyle Intervention

Priority 1 (Research Category)

Men's health

Presenters

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Abstract

Context: Canadian men have a higher likelihood of having excess weight or obesity than Canadian women, which puts them at a significant risk of developing preventable chronic diseases. To address this issue, we created the Hockey Fans In Training (Hockey FIT) healthy lifestyle program designed for middle-aged male hockey fans with overweight or obesity. Objective: In parallel to a cluster randomised trial of Hockey FIT, we conducted a process evaluation of the acceptability of the Hockey FIT program from the perspective of program participants, implementation partners, and program coaches. This included identifying areas to be improved for future delivery beyond this trial. Study Design and Analysis: Data was collected through virtual focus groups (n = 8) with Hockey FIT participants (n = 34) and interviews with local program coaches (n = 16) and implementation partners (n = 21). A process of deductive analysis by question and inductive analysis by response was conducted by multiple members of the research team until data saturation was reached. Setting or Dataset: Program sites included a major junior or professional hockey team paired with a local implementation partner (e.g., fitness facility). Population Studied: Hockey FIT participants (i.e., men, aged 35-65 with a BMI ≥ 27 kg/m²), coaches, and implementation partners. Intervention/Instrument: Hockey FIT was a 12-week, group-based healthy lifestyle program delivered to middle-aged male hockey fans who have excess weight or obesity. Outcome Measures: Acceptability of the Hockey FIT program, current strengths of the initiative, and recommendations for future modifications. Results: Eight overarching themes emerged regarding the acceptability of the program and areas to optimize for future delivery. The themes included participants' motivations for joining the program, the positive group dynamic, overall positive experience, the positive experience of program coaches, and the effective program components, such as the nutrition information. Opportunities for optimization and adaptation included incorporating more exercise earlier, greater connection to hockey, and improving the usability of app technology. Conclusions: Overall, the Hockey FIT program was perceived as acceptable with minor adaptations needed to improve delivery. The findings can inform future scale-up of the Hockey FIT program.