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## Furness kicks bad health into touch

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### Furness kicks bad health into touch

Posted on Monday 6th August 2012

Health experts in Furness are working with Barrow AFC bosses to promote the importance of staying healthy and happy.

NHS Cumbria's Furness public health team has developed a programme working with local organisations called 'Healthy Bluebirds' to deliver different types of health checks and health advice to bluebird fans attending football matches at Barrow AFC.

Traditional football fans are often men who attend matches with their friends and family. As men aged between 18 and 50 tend to be the lowest users of health services and are the least likely to go and see their GP if they have a health worry, health professionals have decided to go to them instead to spread important messages.

Working with organisations such as the Nuffield Trust, the Furness Community Safety Partnership, Mind in Furness and the local NHS, a range of activities and advice will be given to help improve people's health and wellbeing.

These include: health checks, such as blood pressure checks, information on cancer screening and advice on mental health, community safety and stopping smoking, to name a few.

The 'Healthy Bluebirds' scheme will run throughout the 2012/13 season.

Dr Geoff Joliffe is the lead GP for Furness. He said: "We could all do with a little reminder now and again to be a bit healthier, get a bit more exercise and eat healthily. That is exactly what 'Healthy Bluebirds' is about. Getting out there with football fans and offering them the chance to get their blood pressure checked, talk to someone about quitting smoking or being reminded about how easy it is to complete a screening test such as a bowel cancer home test quit when people are sent them.

"Most men can be a bit reluctant to go and see a doctor unless they can't put it off anymore. Therefore it's up to us as the NHS to make health advice easier to access, understand and available in the right places. Hopefully it might help a few people make simple changes to their lifestyle which will benefit their health in the longer term."

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