



Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods

9-13 January 2012

While qualitative research methods are increasingly used in health services research, healthcare researchers and professionals can lack familiarity with these methods because of the long standing traditional emphasis on quantitative methods within healthcare. This course, run by the Health Experiences Research Group, aims to provide an overview of the use of qualitative methods using a combination of practical workshops, group discussions and formal lectures.

Who should attend?

This one week course is aimed at health professionals, researchers and postgraduate students with little or no understanding of qualitative research methods. It aims to provide hands on practical experience of different qualitative methods including in-depth interviewing, focus groups and ethnography.

It is particularly suited for people who are starting work on a project with a qualitative dimension, doctoral students at the beginning of their projects or those who are thinking about using qualitative research methods.

Course content

The course will cover the following areas: overview of qualitative research and philosophical traditions, conducting a literature review, the principles and practice of qualitative data analysis (including an introduction to the use of CAQDAS), criteria for assessing qualitative research and writing up.

The course is very much weighted to practical sessions and students will have the opportunity to practise interviewing techniques, observation and facilitating focus groups. There will also be optional evening sessions covering the use of videos in interviewing, and a course dinner.

"This course has been an inspiration for me, I have felt uncertain at times about the direction of my academic career and now I am so excited."

"This was a fab course and I really enjoyed it. It had a great balance between practice and theory which is often lacking in uni courses."

"Everything, all the info, the exercises & teaching has been brilliant. All sessions were really good."

"The entire week is one single highlight! I would wholeheartedly recommend this course to anyone who would like to undertake/has started qualitative health research."

"The practical nature of the course was great, good to hear how others have done things. Good balance of theory and practice. Really helps to focus on my project, the way that the facilitators incorporated this was great."

"Overall excellent 5 days, so much better prepared now for qualitative aspect of my study. Thank you."

Learning outcomes

By the end of the course participants will:

- have an understanding of different methodological approaches including grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography and narrative research
- be able to search effectively for online resources using sensitive or specific search filters
- understand the key issues around sampling in qualitative research
- have gained practical experience of writing an interview schedule
- have gained practical experience of in-depth interviewing, observation and focus groups
- have gained practical experience of qualitative data analysis
- be able to appraise the quality of qualitative research
- understand the process of writing up qualitative research

The course is designed to engage with students' research projects and we will ask participants to write a brief summary of their proposed projects in advance of the course. During the week, different aspects of these projects will be discussed where relevant, enhancing student learning.

Course tutors

The course is run by the Health Experiences Research Group, based in the Department of Primary Health Care, University of Oxford and the course tutors include Jenny Hislop (co-ordinator), Laura Griffith, Louise Locock, Sara Ryan, and Ruth Sanders.

The Research Group has been running successful research methods courses for the past eight years drawing on the wide range of expertise within the group which includes the disciplinary areas of medical sociology, anthropology, oral history, public policy and discourse analysis.

The Research Group conducts qualitative research focusing on the personal experiences of health conditions. The research findings, together with supporting video, audio and text extracts from the qualitative interviews, are published at www.healthtalkonline.org. The unique Oxford database of over 2000 qualitative interviews provides interesting, informative and contemporary teaching materials to support the course content.

Costs and Booking

This one week course will cost £995

We also offer one place for a full time, unpaid student at the rate of **£500**, but you must first obtain agreement for a reduced-cost place from Francie Smee.

Places are strictly limited and early application is strongly advised.

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