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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Focus group interviews examining attitudes towards medical research among the Japanese: A qualitative study  Asai et al.  2004  *Bioethics* 18(5): 448-470  Japan  General medical research  LN  1 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To explore and compare lay persons and physicians’ attitudes and experiences of clinical research  **Relevance**  No previous exploration of the views of the Japanese public on this matter  Historical issues of tissue being used for research without consent, thought to be a reason for poor recruitment to clinical research in Japan |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  References previous work by the same team looking at the use of archived information and samples without informed consent  Data from current study collected during same focus group |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Convenience sample of 7 physicians, recruited by authors – no discussion of how this might influence their responses  Physicians based at different institutions  Physicians had to be 35-55 years and involved in clinical practice and research  **Any discussion around recruitment**  All physician participants were male – why where there no females?  Described as ‘physician’ – no description of clinical specialties  Recruitment of members of the public discussed in greater detail |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justification**  Osaka-based institution with experience in this type of research  Does not state where the physician focus group took place  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  3 separate focus groups, 1 for physicians  Run by two trained facilitators  Topic guide included  Audio recorded, plus note taking  **Any modification during study**  Not discussed  **Data saturation**  Discussed the theory, but funding restraints limited to 3 focus groups |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Research questions formulated from literature, authors discuss potential bias given their own pro-research position  Data collected by independent company |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Invited to discuss their views  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Participants paid an honorarium – amount, and potential influence not discussed  **Ethical approval**  Yes |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Read transcripts line by line, identified core concepts for each sentence  Team met to discuss which interview statements were typical/representative  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Looking for consensus – did not specifically explore the exceptions  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Mention having meetings to discuss the analysis, but role of each author not discussed, nor whether the initial coding process was conducted independently  No discussion of authors’ influences on the interpretation of the findings, but do discuss their potential influence on choice of questions |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Referenced discussion section to support findings  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Discuss focus groups as a method of generating, rather than testing a hypothesis  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes – public and physicians have differing views of medical research |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  First study of the views of Japanese lay and physician views on clinical research  Discussed in light of the literature and proposed recommendations |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Experiences of randomization: Interviews with patients and clinicians in the SPCG-IV trial  Bill-Axelson et al.  2008  *Scandinavian Journal of Urology and Nephrology* 42: 358-363  Sweden  Oncology – prostate cancer  LN  2 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To investigate patients’ and clinicians’ experiences of randomisation with the aim of facilitating future trial recruitment  **Relevance**  Idea that randomisation contributes to low recruitment rates – hope to make the process more acceptable for stakeholders in the future |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Companion study to a randomised controlled trial of radical prostatectomy and watchful waiting  Appropriate design |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Convenience sample of 5 randomising clinicians – does not specify how they were recruited  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Recruitment of patients discussed in greater detail |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justification**  Companion study to RCT  Clinicians interviewed at work  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  One to one interviews – topic guide provided  Interviews conducted by cancer specialist nurse with psychotherapy training and independent from the RCT  Audio recorded  **Any modification during study**  Not stated  **Data saturation**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Not discussed  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  No  **Ethical approval**  Yes |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Content analysis  Grouped statements according to study purpose and labelled – no further description  Main data analysis by principal author, confirmed by 2 others  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Compared similarities and differences  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  No |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Yes, highlight where their findings converge and diverge from the published literature  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Accept that it is an exploratory study and that findings are hypothesis generating and do not allow direct clinical inference  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes – main issues for patients was an unwillingness to let chance decide their treatment and for clinicians, maintaining equipoise over time |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Comparison of clinicians and researchers views on a specific aspect of research participation |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Research assistants’ perspective of clinical trials: results of a focus group  Cambron & Evans  2003  *Journal of Manipulative Physiological Therapeutics* 26: 287-92  USA  Musculoskeletal  LN  3 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To understand the experiences and problems faced by research assistants involved in clinical trials  **Relevance**  Research assistants play an important role in the day to day running of clinical trials, but their views and experiences have not been previously explored |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes – good justification for the use of qualitative methods |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Yes – discuss evidence base for focus groups and appropriateness for study |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Directors of 18 chiropractic colleges were approached for access to research assistants and asked interested research assistants to contact one of the study investigators  Convenience sample of 8 research assistants recruited  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Participants were recruited from 2/18 colleges, unclear why no one recruited from elsewhere  Demographics provided |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  Location of focus groups not discussed  Mentioned all participants seated in a circle and investigators tried to create a comfortable, supportive environment  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  One-off focus group – topic guide included  Questionnaire for demographics  Video recorded  Unclear who chaired the focus group  **Any modification during study**  Not mentioned  **Data saturation**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Invited to contact investigator by director of college – unclear how the study was described  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Specifically mentions consent to be video recorded and anonymisation of data  **Ethical approval**  Yes |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Analysis based on pre-determined questions – no mention of any new concepts arising  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Report that focus group participants reported similar experiences  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Minimal discussion in relation to the literature  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Not discussed  **Findings relate to original research question**  Only discussed in terms of pre-determined issues – unclear whether other concepts were mentioned by focus group participants |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Focus group participants able to learn from the experience and identify areas for future research assistant training and development  Suggestions for improved data collection and consent processes |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Chapter 3: Case studies of trials that appeared to have particularly interesting lessons for recruitment  Campbell et al.  2007  *Health Technology Assessment* 11(48): 19-48  UK  Cardiovascular, Oncology, Respiratory  LN  4 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To describe the characteristics of exemplar trials and explore the factors that are relevant to recruitment  **Relevance**  Less that 31% of UK based multi-centre trials recruit within the allocated time frame  Compare disparate, but successful trials – a positive approach to the issue |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Design clearly explained, but not explicitly justified |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Trials recommended by funding bodies  45 interviewees, purposively sampled from each study, with initial snowballing to identify relevant candidates after speaking to PI  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Increased sample size from original plan to include individuals with different roles  Definition of exemplar study  Not possible to calculate response rate  Substituted one of the studies first recommended because PI wanted to conduct in-house review of their recruitment strategies |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  Telephone interviews – for logistical reasons  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  Telephone interviews, tape recorded  Semi-structured – topic guide provided in appendix  All conducted by one of the authors  **Any modification during study**  Recruited more participants than originally planned to take in to account differing roles  **Data saturation**  Discussed in terms of ensuring representative sample, rather than purely data saturation |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Yes  Discusses the interview responses as a construct of the questions asked  Accepts potential influence of researchers’ pre-existing knowledge |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Accessed through PI – no clear description of how the study was explained  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Discusses issues with obtaining R&D approval for each of the sites and prohibitive impact on future research  **Ethical approval**  Yes |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Initially coded based on combination of interview schedule and insights from interview  Codes expanded and collapsed until no new codes were introduced  Conducted by one researcher, reviewed by two others  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Explored and possible reasons suggested  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Yes – using adaptive theory |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Discussion not referenced – part of larger report with combined discussion section elsewhere  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Yes – interviewer’s role and  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Generally descriptive findings to identify the key factors thought to be responsible for successful trials  Positive, rather than negative stance |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Improving enrollment in cancer clinical trials  Connolly et al.  2004  *Oncology Nursing Forum* 31(3): 610-614  USA  Oncology  LN  5 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To identify successful strategies for clinical trial recruitment (pilot)  **Relevance**  Suboptimal recruitment and retention of patient for clinical trials |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes – as part of a mixed methods study also using quantitative surveys |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Justify the separate sections of the study and why the complemented each other |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Initial focus group to devise survey recruited – 6 research nurses from institutions with ongoing clinical trials, but unclear how the 6 were selected  List of cancer clinical research nurses in the region created and surveys mailed (84)  Contacted all nurses who completed the survey and agreed to be telephone interviewed (33 contacted, 14 interviewed)  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Follow up by telephone for survey non-responders  Response rates for survey and telephone interviews reported |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  Focus groups tape recorded and summarised  Telephone interview responses typed during the interview and summarised according to common themes  Is this acceptable data collection strategy?  **Any modification during study**  Not discussed  **Data saturation**  Not discussed – limited by the number of survey responders who agreed to be phone interviewed |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Not discussed – identification of potential participants mentioned, not how they were approached  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Not other issues discussed  **Ethical approval**  Yes |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Brief description only – data summarised according to common themes, but the steps of this process are not reported  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Report inconsistent findings  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  No |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Short unreferenced discussion section  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Focus group used to inform survey  No inclusion of supporting quotes  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Mixed methods study of the factors influencing recruitment  Makes suggestions for successful recruitment strategies |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Pharmacists’ participation in research: a case of trying to find the time  Cvijovic et al.  2010  *International Journal of Pharmacy Practice* 18: 377-383  Canada  Pharmacy  LN  6 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To explore how pharmacists involved in a study of adverse reactions to natural health products perceive the barriers and facilitators to participating in clinical research  **Relevance**  None of the pharmacies involved in the study had collected as much screening data as expected |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes – to understand the pharmacists’ perceptions of research recruitment |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Case study approach with data triangulation including observation, interviews and measures of how much screening data collected  Methodological theories discussed |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Initial convenience sample, then purposively sampled within this to find good and poor recruiters  Pharmacy managers approached initially  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Discuss that the sample may not be representative of other pharmacists  Unclear whether any individuals refused to be interviewed |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  Place of work – necessary for observation, but location of interviews not stated  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  Semi-structure interview with research assistant  Topic guide not provided  Methods justified  **Any modification during study**  Not discussed  **Data saturation**  No |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Discussed potential influence of the research on how participants may have responded to the interview questions |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  No discussed  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Not discussed  **Ethical approval**  Yes |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Content analysis by two authors independently  Coded and constant comparison method  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Identified areas of consistency and contrast  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not in terms of their influence on the data analysis process  Notes that the pharmacists tried to present their participation in a good light |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Referenced discussion section  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Triangulation discussed  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Identifies potential reasons for poor involvement from clinicians  Suggest areas for further research |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Attitude of primary care physicians toward cancer-prevention trials: A focus group analysis  Frayne et al.  2001  *Journal of the National Medical Association* 93: 450-457  USA  Primary care (cancer)  LN  7 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To assess primary care providers’ attitudes towards the recruitment of low-income and minority women towards cancer prevention trials  **Relevance**  Difficultly recruiting to cancer prevention trials  Low-income and minority groups often underrepresented in clinical trials |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Describe the methods, but don’t clearly explain why focus group design was chosen |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Convenience sample of local primary care physicians across of range of settings  10 approached, 7 agreed to take part  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Approached by telephone |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  Medical centre  Focus group took place during accrual for a particular cancer prevention trial  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  Focus group facilitated by a physician with training in focus group research  Topic guide included  Audio taped and transcribed verbatim  **Any modification during study**  Not discussed  **Data saturation**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Mentioned that it was discussed over the phone, but not how the study was described  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Not discussed  **Ethical approval**  Yes |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Four reviewers independently reviewed transcripts  Consensus approach to determine key categories  Reanalysed each transcript to assign phrased to each category  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Yes  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  No, but analysis not carried out by an single individual |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Referenced discussion section  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Link to previous conceptual model  Acknowledge as small, hypothesis generating study  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Issue not previously explored  Provide recommendations for further research and improvements to research practices |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Barriers and facilitators to enrollment in cancer clinical trials  Grunfeld et al.  2002  *Cancer* 95: 1577-1583  Canada  Oncology  LN  8 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To seek the views of clinical research associates on the barriers and facilitator to accrual in cancer clinical trials  **Relevance**  Clinical research associates spend time with the patient explaining the details of the trial, but their views not previously explored |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Focus groups explained, but justification for this method no specifically discussed |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Cancer centres chosen purposively to include physical geography and demographics  Unclear how participants were recruited from each site  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Included certified clinical research associates and data managers |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  Focus groups held at 6/8 tertiary cancer centres within the province  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  Same facilitator ran all focus groups  Semi-structured topic guide, derived from the literature – not provided  Audio recorded and independently transcribed  **Any modification during study**  Not discussed  **Data saturation**  Yes – focus groups continued until saturation of data |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Not discussed  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Discuss anonymity and secure data storage  **Ethical approval**  Yes |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Content analysis – coded and categorised  Performed by two authors independently then compared and revisited to reach consensus  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  No specific mention of contradictory findings  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not specifically discussed – two individuals involved in the analysis |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Referenced discussion section  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Discuss that findings not likely to be generalisable  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Provide suggestions for further research  Views of clinical research associated not previously explored |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Ethical aspects in placental perfusion studies: Views of the researchers  Halkoaho et al.  2011  *Placenta* 32: 511-515  Finland  Placental perfusion studies  LN  9 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To explore the views of scientists involved in human placental perfusion research on the ethical aspects of this research  **Relevance**  The views of the researchers on this issue have not previously been explored – same team previously looked at the views of the mothers asked to donate their placenta for research |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Yes – justified the choice to conduct focus groups and provide references  Mixed methods, open ended questionnaires and focus groups |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Researchers with research experience in human placental perfusion studies – unclear how they were identified and approached to participate in focus group  Open ended questionnaire emailed to researchers and research groups known to be involved in this research  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Follow-up emails sent to questionnaire non-responders  Participants from 7 nationalities, locations not discussed |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  Location for focus groups not specified  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  **Any modification during study**  **Data saturation**  Reached during third focus group |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Questionnaire invite included information about the study and explained that participation was voluntary  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Not discussed  **Ethical approval**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Focus group conducted in English, so no translation required  Thematic analysis using interview themes – themes provided  Repeated until no new concepts emerged  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Aimed to give a diversified description  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Referenced discussion section  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Referenced methodology  Similar findings from open ended questionnaire and focus groups  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  First study to look at the views of this population – new perspective  Suggest improvements to research teams |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Views of midwives about ethical aspects of participation in placental perfusion studies  Halkoaho et al.  2012  *Midwifery* 28: 131-137  Finland  Placenta perfusion studies  LN  10 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To describe the ethical aspects of the participation of midwives in placental perfusion studies  **Relevance**  Little know about the role of midwives in recruiting mothers to donate their placenta for perfusion studies |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Interviews  Described, but justification not provided |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Head nurses contacted by researchers, study presented at ward meeting and fact sheet provided - unclear how the researchers chose which hospital to approach  Interested midwives contacted the researchers  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Demographics presented |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  Interviews conducted in two university hospitals  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  Semi-structured interviews – topic guide included  Field notes taken and transcribed during or after interview – mention comparing transcription to original recorded data, but don’t specifically state that interviews were audio recorded  All interviews conducted by one author with experience as a midwife  **Any modification during study**  Not discussed  **Data saturation**  Saturated reached at 18 interviews, confirmed with an addition 2 |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Mention that interviewer had work experience as a midwife, but not how this might influence their approach to data collection and analysis |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Yes – head nurse as gatekeeper, study presented at ward meeting  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Yes – anonymisation and secure data storage discussed  **Ethical approval**  Yes |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Thematic analysis repeated until no new themes arose  Crossed checked with original data  Analysed by single researcher, but discussed as a team  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  General views and divergent opinions discussed  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Discuss rigour of analysis, but don’t specifically mention how the researcher’s role may have influenced the analysis |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Referenced discussion section  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Credibility discussed in terms of data saturation and rigorous analysis  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Recommendations made to improve recruitment practices |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Inclusion practices in lung cancer trials  Jaspers et al.  2006  *Nursing Ethics* 13:649-660  Netherlands  Oncology (radiotherapy)  LN  11 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To discuss the ethical aspects if inclusion practice for radiotherapy patients taking part in clinical research  **Relevance**  Little literature about the ethics of radiotherapy research |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Semi-structured interviews  Justify the need for explorative research in this area |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Patients randomly selected from a list of those approached to participate in a specific clinical trial  Convenience sample of radiation oncologists involved in recruiting lung cancer patients in clinical trials– 7 approached, 5 interviewed  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Reasons for declining participation reported  Participant demographic provided  Research nurses not included because few worked at this location |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  Doctors interviewed in their office for convenience  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  Semi-structured interviews – topics reported  Audio recorded and transcribed  Analysed after each interview to identify any additional themes  Observation, review of internal documents  **Any modification during study**  No new themes arose during the sequential analysis process, so the topic guide remained unchanged  **Data saturation**  Mention that after 5 interviews in each group no new or deviant information was expected to be found |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Not discussed  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Patients who might be harmed by participation in the interview were excluded on the advice of a radiation oncologist were excluded  **Ethical approval**  Yes |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Sequentially coded  Triangulation with observation, documents and team research team reflection  Within and between group comparisons made  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Divergent views discussed  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Referenced discussion section  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Experienced researcher  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Recommendations for future research, including the exploration of research nurses views  Suggest improved ethical guidance and regulation |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Key challenges and ways forward in researching the ‘good death’: qualitative in-depth interview and focus group study  Kendall et al.  2007  *BMJ*  334(7592): 521  UK  Palliative care  LN  12 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To understand the key challenges in researching end of life issues and to identify ways of overcoming these  **Relevance**  Lack of research into ‘what is a good death’  Research needed to support palliative care as an evidence-based speciality |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes - justify qualitative methods to learn about experience, perceptions and practices |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Interview and focus groups justified |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Purposive sample of 34 researchers – identified from previous systematic review – included range of researcher grades and experience  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Two declined for personal/travel reasons – no discussion about how participants were approached |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  Interview and focus group topic guides included in appendix  Telephone or face to face interviews with researchers (plus focus groups with service users)  **Any modification during study**  Not mentioned  **Data saturation**  Not mentioned |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Discussion potential for bias as qualitative researchers may have been over represented and researchers mainly from the UK |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Not discussed  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Ethical issues for end of life research discussed, but not specifically of this study  **Ethical approval**  Yes |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Coded thematically and analysed with an interpretive approach  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Different views explored for each theme  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Team discussion to agree on major themes |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Discussed with regard to the current literature  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Strengths and limitations discussed  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Most researchers with experience of end of life and other areas of research felt that research shouldn’t be seen as a special case as the challenges are equally relevant elsewhere. Key themes: 1 design of EOL studies, 2 recruiting participants, 3 ethical conduct, 4 the emotional challenges faced by the participants, researchers and transcribers |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Clinicians’ attitudes to recruitment to randomised trials in cancer care: a qualitative study  Langley et al.  2000  *Journal of Health Services Research & Policy* 5: 164-9  UK  Oncology  LN  13 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To explore clinicians’ attitudes to, and problems experiences with, recruitment into randomised controlled trials in cancer care  **Relevance**  Patients may be willing to participate in trials, but this depends on their relationship and communication with their clinician |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Interviews to discuss concerns that participants had raised in the questionnaires completed as part of an initial study by the same team |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Sampling frame for questionnaire study – clinicians working in bladder, breast, lymph, lung ovary, head and neck in south west UK  **Any discussion around recruitment**  All sent postal questionnaire which also asked if they would be willing to participate in interview studies – purposive sample selected from these to cover geography, type of hospital and involvement in trials |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  Does not mention where the interviews took place  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  One to one interviews – using issues raised from their questionnaire as topic guide  **Any modification during study**  Not mentioned  **Data saturation**  Not mentioned |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  No discussion of limitations or the researcher’s role in the process |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Mentioned in the questionnaire  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Not specifically discussed  **Ethical approval**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Constant comparison  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Split into high and low recruiters to analyse and discuss findings  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Team analysis, differences resolved by discussion |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Link to literature  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Link to literature  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Yes – make recommendation for further research. Suggest action is needed to promote awareness of RCT underway to ensure that trials address important issues and support is available for participating centres |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Understanding the outcomes of multi-centre clinical trials: A qualitative study of health professionals experiences and views  Lawton et al.  2012  *Social Science & Medicine* 74: 574-81  UK  Diabetology  LN  14 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To explore health professionals’ views of trial participation and experiences of trial delivery from inception to completion  **Relevance**  Variety in trial participation and outcomes between different sites – need to explore why |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Justification of qualitative methodology |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Investigator and research nurses from each site running the 4-T trial  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Participants recruited from 11/58 sites – chosen for a range of geographical location, clinic size and history of trial involvement |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  Time and location of participant’s choosing  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  Interviews took place at the end of the trial, but before the final data had been published  **Any modification during study**  Not discussed  **Data saturation**  Used to guide recruitment |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not explicitly discussed |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Not discussed  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Mention specifically that timing of the interviews chosen so that participants did not know the performance of their site compared to others  **Ethical approval**  Yes |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Grounded theory  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Specifically looked for recurring themes and deviant cases  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Interview transcripts independently reviewed by the team – agreement reached |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Some discussion  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Compares to literature  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Highlights differing recruitment practices and protocol adherences within the same multi-centre trial. Different strategies used by the research nurses and consultants  Key themes identified: 1 agenda for hosting/participating in clinical trials 2, recruitment, 3 delivering patient care during the trial, 4 implications of recruitment/retention strategies |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | The role of the multidisciplinary team in recruiting to cancer clinical trials  Maslin-Prothero  2005  *European Journal of Cancer Care*  UK  Oncology  LN  15 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To explore the factors influencing the recruitment of patients into two clinical trials from the perspective of the clinicians and make recommendations in how recruitment might be improved  **Relevance**  To identify the factors that influence the recruitment of patients into two different breast cancer trials and recommend how recruitment might be improved |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes, part of larger scale piece of research |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Justified used of semi-structured interviews |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  21 participating sites chosen – unclear how they were selected  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Surgeons contacted to give approval for MDT to be interviewed  Do not mention who the MDT consisted of (? Just nurse and surgeon) or how many people in total were interviewed over the sites  Centres classified according to low, med or high levels of recruitment |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  Specific location not discussed  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  Semi-structured interviews, individual or group settings  Topic guide directed by previous questionnaires, piloted and amended  **Any modification during study**  Not discussed  **Data saturation**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Mention choosing location to avoid interruption |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Not discussed  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Anonymity and confidentiality assured – participants encouraged to speak freely  **Ethical approval**  Not mentioned |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Inductive classification of the information, constructing a hierarchy of categories  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Interpretive and creative process to ensure results represent the participants world as they see it – External verification to be mindful of bias when generating themes |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Some issues discussed  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Discussed with reference to the literature  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Yes – make recommendations for improving recruitment and repeating the study in light of the nation cancer research network initiative |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | A qualitative study exploring practice nurse’ experience of participating in a primary care-based randomised controlled trial  Potter et al.  2009  *Journal of Research in Nursing* 14: 439-446  UK  Primary care (diabetes)  LN  16 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To explore the experiences of practice nurses participating in research and learn how this may have influenced recruitment for a primary care based randomised controlled trial  **Relevance**  Research for primary care research is problematic. No studies known to have explored practice nurses’ experience of recruiting |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Semi-structured telephone interviews – reasoning not discussed |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  From GP sites participating in an RCT for people with type 2 diabetes – purposive sample based on location of the surgery, number of participants recruited and whether the nurse had dedicated time for research  **Any discussion around recruitment**  10/12 nurses approached agreed to participate |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  GP centres involved in the study  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  Telephone interviews, recorded and transcribed verbatim  **Any modification during study**  Not discussed  **Data saturation**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Participating sites invited, method not discussed  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Not discussed  **Ethical approval**  Yes |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Framework analysis – carried out independently by two researchers  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Lots of quotes provided – contradictory views discussed  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not specifically discussed |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Contradictory findings explored  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Many quotes to support findings  Discuss with reference to the literature  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Yes – main findings : 1 clinical interest in research topic linked to increased recruitment, 2 would like dedicated time to support recruitment, 3 clinicians can act as gatekeepers and inadvertently cause sample bias  Recommendations made |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Recruitment of older women – lessons learned from the Baltimore hip studies  Resnick et al.  2003  *Nursing Research* 52: 270-73  USA  Orthopaedic (rehabilitation)  LN  17 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To identify the experiences of research nurses recruiting older women into exercise intervention studies  **Relevance**  Older female patients are less likely to participate in research – need to explore why |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Written diary and reflective activities – specific justification not discussed  Nurses asked to write about their experiences at yearly intervals – no reference provided for this methodology |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  8 nurses working on the studies – unclear how they were recruited  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  Clinical area justified – participants recorded their experiences independently of the research team  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  Nurses asked to write about their experiences – 3 main questions: 1 what are the thing you do to successfully recruit older women, 2 what negatively influences recruitment, 3 what would you recommend to someone else attempting to recruit this population  **Any modification during study**  Not discussed  **Data saturation**  Not discussed |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Not discussed – unclear whether the researchers for this study were part of the study under investigation |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Not mentioned  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Not discussed  **Ethical approval**  Not specifically mentioned |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Content analysis – using the participants own words to capture the idea  2 reviewers checked codes – codes made and revised and grouped  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Themes grouped to reflect similarities and differences  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role** |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Issues discussed with reference to the literature  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  Additional material including quotes provided in the appendices  Comparison made with existing literature  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Suggestions made for recruitment strategies for this population  Less common data collection strategy for research in this area |

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| **Title**  **Author**  **Year**  **Journal**  **Country of origin**  **Clinical specialty**  **Reviewer**  **Paper number** | Factors that influence the recruitment of patients to phase III studies in oncology: the perspectives of the clinical research associate  Wright et al.  2002  *Cancer* 95: 1584-91  Canada  Oncology  LN  18 |
| 1. **Clear statement of aims** | **Goal of the research**  To explore the factors that influence the decision of patients with cancer to take part in clinical trials, from the perspective of the clinical research associate  **Relevance**  Little research on the views of research associations on this issue |
| 1. **Qualitative methodology appropriate** | **Seeks to illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of participants**  Yes |
| 1. **Research design appropriate for aims** | **Justification for the design**  Focus groups to acquire in depth descriptive information and discuss complex experiences and the reasons behind actions, beliefs and values |
| 1. **Recruitment strategy appropriate and clearly defined** | **How participants were selected**  Letter to clinical research department – convenience sample  **Any discussion around recruitment**  Response rate unclear |
| 1. **Data collection addresses research issue and clearly defined** | **Setting justified**  Not specifically disucssed  **How was data collected, and is the method explicit**  External focus group facilitator  **Any modification during study**  Not discussed  **Data saturation**  Yes, no new content areas after second focus group, therefore no more conducted |
| 1. **Relationship between researcher and participants adequately discussed** | **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Review of literature guided focus group topics  No other issues discussed |
| 1. **Ethical considerations** | **Is there sufficient detail of how the research was explained to participants**  Details of invitation letter discussed  **Discussion of any ethical issues**  Focus group facilitator external to the Department of Clinical Trails  **Ethical approval**  Not mentioned |
| 1. **Data analysis sufficiently rigorous** | **In-depth description of the analysis process**  Independent coding by two researcher – consensus reached and intercoder triangulation  **Are contradictory findings taken into account**  Discuss contradictory findings  **Does the researcher critically examine their own role**  Worked as a team to reduce bias |
| 1. **Clear statement of findings** | **Adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researchers’ arguments**  Some discussion  **Discussion of the credibility of the findings**  No quotes provided  Discussed in relation to the literature  **Findings relate to original research question**  Yes |
| 1. **Value of the research** | **Contribution to existing knowledge**  Yes and need for further research  List plans for future work |

Adapted from:

Critical Appraisal Skills Programme, 10 questions to help you make sense of qualitative research