Department for Work & Pensions

Making Disability Research Work for You

A Community Data Toolkit (Part 2)

Acknowledgments

This toolkit has been produced by Disability Analysis Division and the Office for Disability Issues, within the Department for Work and Pensions.

Note: although this Toolkit has been written as part of Fulfilling Potential, it is not just relevant to people/groups who are interested in disability issues, but to any local organisations who want to conduct research.

Making Disability Research Work For You

How to use research to improve people's lives

Do you want to improve disabled people's lives?

Do you want to understand the people your organisation works with?

Do you need better information to make important decisions, apply for funding and improve your services?

To improve the lives of disabled people, you need information to help make the right choices and do things that work. This will help your organisation:

- Understand the people who use your services.
- Know whether your services are working and what you could do better.
- Show funders that your services work, whether you are reporting to current funders or making a bid for new funding.

To do this, you can often use data that is freely available. Our previous document, Making Disability Data Work For You: A Community Data Toolkit (Part 1), tells you how to do this.

If the data is not available, you can do your own research to find the answers you need. This Community Data Toolkit tells you how to start doing this. It is not a complete guide to research, but it will help you get started.

We would welcome any feedback you have on using this Toolkit. Please send any thoughts, comments or queries you have about the Toolkit to fulfilling.potential@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Making Disability Research Work For You

Contents

Part I. Introduction

1. The Government's disability strategy, Fulfilling Potential – Making it Happen[1], takes forward the vision of a society that enables all disabled people to fulfil their potential and have an equal opportunity to realise their aspirations and play a full role in society. This disability strategy and its supporting Action Plan also show how we will be meeting our responsibilities under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People.

2. Disability can impact an individual's day to day life in many different ways. In section 4 of Fulfilling Potential – Making it Happen we identified six broad outcomes and a range of supporting indicators which we are using to measure trends in the areas where disabled people face the most barriers. These are national indicators, and do not take into account the geographical variations in barriers, attitudes and day-to-day living.

3. We have, therefore, worked with disability organisations to create a series of Toolkits to complement national level data. These Toolkits will enable organisations to gather the information they need to make changes, improve outcomes and generally help the lives of disabled people.

4. The Toolkits will help organisations understand the most important local issues. They will provide organisations with the information they need to plan action, influence local decision making and have a stronger role in their communities.

5. We have taken a social model approach to developing these Toolkits to ensure they are used in a way that can achieve real outcomes for disabled people. The **social model of disability** suggests that it is the barriers in society which disable people, rather than their impairment. Having a focus on removing those barriers can mean the right questions are asked, the right people are involved, and a real sense of inclusion and participation is achieved in communities.

[1] Can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fulfilling-potential-making-it-happen-for-disabled-people

6. All organisations including local community groups need to know their target audience. For example, in order to provide a local service, a local community organisation needs to know who will use their services and if there are any specific large ethnic, religious or gender groups whose needs they will need to consider. The barriers faced by disabled people can depend on where they live. For example, someone who lives in a large city may face different barriers to someone who lives in a rural area.

7. The first Community Data Toolkit, Making Disability Data Work For You: A Community Data Toolkit (Part 1), aimed to show you what data was publicly available and how to use that data. Often, however, the information you need will not be available. With this in mind, this Toolkit focuses on doing research to collect your own data.

How to use this Toolkit

8. This Toolkit is designed to help you do your own research. There are five key stages in doing your own research, they are:

- Begin by planning your research and deciding what kind of research to do (Part II, page 10).

- Then think about ethical issues, especially your responsibility to people taking part in your research (Part III, page 18).

- Look through the various kinds of research you can do (Part IV, page 24).

    - You should always do a literature review (page 24), even if it is short.

    - You might also use monitoring data (page 26), if your organisation collects it.

    - Quantitative research (page 29) is good for measuring things, answering definite questions or researching things you understand well.

    - Qualitative research (page 35) is good for exploring issues, answering broad questions and researching things you do not fully understand, especially if they involve personal experiences.

    - Often, you will want to combine different kinds of research to get a fuller perspective.

- If you want to measure the effect of something your organisation is doing or know whether something is working, Part V (page 45) tells you how to do this.

- Finally, think about how to publish, present and tell other people about your research (Part VI, page 51).

Part II. Planning research

9. Before starting research, plan what you will do. It is easy to begin research, then find that:

    - There is not enough money or time to finish it.

    - There are other reasons, which you had not thought of, why the research can not be finished (for example the people conducting the research are no longer available, or the reason for undertaking the research is no longer relevant).

    - The research does not give you the information you need.

10. Therefore, start planning as early as you can. If your research is about a change that your organisation is planning, then plan the research at the same time as you plan the change. Think through your research, from start to finish, before you begin.

11. When you do research, be ready to find things that you did not expect. Research should always be undertaken with an open mind and not influenced by preconceived ideas or assumptions. Do not do research to tell you something you already know. Do it to answer a question.

12. When planning research, you must think about many different things, including time, money, what sort of research you want to do and your research question.

Your research question

13. The most important thing to decide is: what exactly do you need to know? What question will your research answer? This is your research question. It should be clear, interesting and possible to research.

14. Your research question is not the same as the questions you will ask in your research. It is not the same as the questions on a questionnaire. It is a tool for helping you plan your research.

15. You will need to write and rewrite your research question, as Scenario A shows.

Scenario A Pritap runs a drop-in service that helps people with mental health conditions find employment. He wants to know how the service is working. He thinks his research question should be “How is the service working?”, but realises this question is so broad, that it will be impossible to give a good answer. He must be more specific.

Instead, Pritap decides that what he really wants to know is: does his drop-in service help people find work? He rewrites his question as “Is our drop-in service helping our clients find work?”. That is a better question, but still seems hard to answer. After all, what exactly does “helping our clients find work” mean?

Pritap then rewrites the question as: “Are people more likely to find work if they use the drop-in service than if they do not?”. This is a good research question. Pritap can give questionnaires to people who have used the drop-in service, asking whether they have found work. He can then give the same questionnaire to people who have not used the service and compare the answers.

Note that Pritap could have asked other research questions. For example, if he was interested in what clients thought about the drop-in service, his research question might be “What are the views and experiences of clients who have used our service?”. This would produce a different piece of research.

Remember that Pritap’s research question is not the same as the questions he will ask in his research. When Pritap does his research, he will ask lots of questions, such as “Do you have a job?” and “How long have you been working?”. These help him answer his research question, but they are not research questions.

16. As you write your research question, think about the following:

- **Is the question specific?** For example, the research question “How does our drop-in service affect people’s lives?” is not specific, so it is hard to answer. However, the question “What are the views and experiences of clients who have used our job support service?” is more specific, and so is easier to answer.

- **Do you have the time and money to answer the question?** For example, the research question “Are disabled people less likely to succeed in job interviews?” needs a big piece of research to answer. However, the question “How many of our clients succeed in job interviews?” could be answered much more easily.

- **Who will use the research results and what for?** Imagine your organisation runs a job advice service and you want to know how it is working. If you want to use the data to improve your service, you might use a research question like “What problems do people have in using our service?”. However, if you want to use the data to support a funding application, you might use a question like “How many people find work through our job support scheme?”.

- **What type of research will you do?** Think how you will answer your research question. Will you do a survey, interviews or focus groups? Once you have read the following chapters, you will have a good idea of which research method is best for which research question.

17. When writing your research question, small changes make a big difference. The following examples show how different research questions may lead to different pieces of research:

- **“Are people who use our service more likely to get a job than those who do not?”** You could answer this question with a survey. You would give a questionnaire to people who use your service, asking whether they had got a job, then compare them to people who had not used the service.

- **"When people leave our service, how confident do they feel about getting a job?"** You could answer this question with a different survey. You might give a questionnaire to people who have used the service, asking how confident they feel about getting a job on a scale of 1 to 5.

- **"When people leave our service, how do they feel about their employment prospects?"** This is a broader question: it asks how people feel. You could answer it using a focus group of clients who are leaving the service.

- **"When people leave our service, what barriers do they face in getting a job?"** This question could also be answered with a focus group of people who had used the service. You might interview local employers, too.

18. Sometimes, you might use more than one research question. For example, Process Evaluations (see Part IV) often use a set of questions, such as "How is the process working in practice? What is going well? What areas for improvement are there?" Similarly, if you are using qualitative and quantitative research, you might use different questions for each (see Scenario B). Use as few research questions as you can, keep them specific and use them to help you think about your research.

Quantitative and qualitative research questions

19. As you write your research question, think about **quantitative** and **qualitative** research.[2]

    - **Quantitative research questions** are about counting, comparing or measuring things. For example, "How satisfied are our clients with our service?"

        - To answer quantitative research questions, you use quantitative research methods. **Quantitative research methods** involve counting, comparing or measuring

[2] Quantitative and qualitative data was also explained in "Making Disability Data Work For You: A Community Data Toolkit (Part 1)".

things: a survey is a good example of a quantitative research method.

    - Quantitative research methods produce **quantitative data**. Quantitative data involves numbers, comparisons or measurements. For example, “78% of people are satisfied with our service” is quantitative data.

- **Qualitative research questions** are about describing things or understanding why different things happen (including reasons, feelings and motivations). For example, “How do our clients feel about using our service?”

    - To answer qualitative research questions, you use **qualitative research methods**. Qualitative research methods involve getting people to describe things: a focus group is a good example of a qualitative research method.

    - Qualitative research methods produce qualitative data. **Qualitative data** involves descriptions of things. For example, “People said our staff were friendly but distant” is qualitative data.

- Some research questions are not easily labelled as qualitative or quantitative. For example, “How confident are our clients about getting a job?”

    - To answer these questions, you could use either quantitative or qualitative methods and would probably use a **mix of both**. For example, you might do a survey combined with a focus group.

    - This would give you both **quantitative and qualitative data**. For example, you might find out that “23% of people were confident about getting a job” (quantitative data) and that “People found job interviews intimidating” (qualitative data).

20. The best research method depends on your research question. If your research question is about counting, comparing or measuring, use a quantitative research method. If your research question isn’t about counting, comparing or

measuring and needs a more descriptive answer, use a qualitative research method.

21. Often, it is best to use both qualitative and quantitative methods, which lets you see an issue from different perspectives: quantitative methods let you measure what is happening, while qualitative methods let you explore things in more detail. You might use two research questions to do this.

Scenario B After thinking some more, Pritap decides to use both qualitative and quantitative research methods to research his drop-in service. He will use two research questions. His quantitative research question, "Are people more likely to find work if they use the drop-in service than if they do not?", will help him measure whether the service is having an effect. His qualitative research question, "What are the views and experiences of people looking for a job after using our service?" will help him explore what is happening in more detail. By using the two together, he can get a broader picture of how the drop-in service is helping people get into work.

Logic models

22. When writing your research question it is useful to clarify exactly what your organisation's goals are and how it achieves them. A good tool to do this is a logic model. For more details on logic models, see Appendix 12: A logic model.

Looking at previous research

23. Once you have a research question or questions, think whether you can answer it using publicly-available data. For details on what data is publicly available, see Making Disability Data Work For You: A Community Data Toolkit (Part 1).

24. Then do a literature review (see page 24) to see whether someone else has done similar research. Even if it does not

answer your research question, it will help you understand the background to your topic.

Theories about behaviour

25. As well as using previous research, it can help to use theories to aid your understanding of the background to your topic, especially where not much previous research has been done.

26. Many topics relate to how people behave. In such cases, it can help to use theories or insights about how people behave, and why they behave as they do. Guides to this include a Behavioural Insights Toolkit and the MINDSPACE report.

27. These guides can help you think about what behaviours may relate to the topic you are interested in, including what things may be causing such behaviours. In turn, this can help you think about what questions to include in your research.

Planning your research

28. Now plan your research from start to finish. By reading the appropriate chapters in Part IV, work out everything you need to do for your research. Think about:

    - What resources (money, staff time, facilities) do you need?
    - What are your timescales?
    - Who will take part in your research? How will you get access to them?
    - What are the ethical implications (see Part III)?
    - How will you analyse the data you collect?
    - What will you do with the results of your research? Who will see them?

29. There are no fixed rules for how long research takes or how much it costs. Try thinking about everything you will need to do and everything you will need to pay for, then add extra time in case something overruns.

30. Do not do all this by yourself. Get people involved, both from inside and outside your organisation, especially:

    - People who are experts in the subject area.
    - People who will use the results.
    - People from the groups that the research is about.

31. If your research is about disabled people, involve disabled people in planning it. They can help with:

    - Choosing topics to research.
    - Designing the research, especially making sure that everyone can read and understand all the information you give people as part of the research.
    - Analysing the data, especially choosing themes to prioritise and thinking about what the results mean.
    - Thinking about how to publish the research and bring it to people's attention.
    - Thinking about how the research can be used.

Part III. Ethics

32. When you do research, you have a responsibility to the people who take part. Make sure that:

    - You do the research as well as you can, following all the guidelines you need to.
    - People genuinely agree to take part and know what they are agreeing to.
    - You make sure that everyone can take part.
    - You do not harm anyone.
    - Nobody can tell who took part in the research.

33. For full details, see Ethical Assurance for Social Research in Government, Involving Disabled People In Social Research and Data protection.

Good research

34. When you do your research, you must follow all the guidelines for the research method you are using. Use the right type of research for your research question. Do not do research that isn't needed and, when people take part in your research, do not make them do more than they have to. Follow any professional and ethical standards that apply to you or your organisation.

Agreeing to take part

35. When people take part in your research, make sure they agree to it and know what they are agreeing to. They mustn't feel pressured: if they do not want to take part, they do not have to. If you want to record someone speaking, get their permission before you start recording and let them know what the recordings will be used for. If you want to take photographs, make sure you get people's permission first.

36. Make sure you tell people everything they need to know about the research: why you are doing it, what kind of research it is, who is doing it, who asked for the research to be done, who is funding it and what you are planning to do with the research. Tell people that they can refuse to answer questions. They can also drop out of the research and they do not have to explain why.

37. Some people, such as children and some disabled people, might not be able to understand what they are agreeing to. If you want people to take part in your research, think how you communicate your ideas to get them involved: see Involving Disabled People In Social Research for more information.

38. You might give people a leaflet to tell them all this. If you do, remember to write in formats appropriate for those you wish to work with, different formats may include Easy Read, pictures, Braille and plain English.

39. Think how you will let people know about what your research finds out. For example, you might want to email or telephone them once the research is published, asking in which format they would like the report.

Helping people take part in research

40. Design your research so that everyone can take part. Work with disabled people and the organisations that represent them to think about what might stop disabled people taking part and what you can do about it. For example, you could help people with the costs of childcare or provide transport. For people with hearing impairments who use British Sign Language (BSL), you could provide a BSL interpreter. Consider providing information in accessible formats, providing accessible seating and toilets, helping people with travel costs or providing personal assistants to help with writing. Before people take part in your research, ask for their specific requirements.

41. Many people cannot concentrate for more than 20 minutes without a change of pace or activity. Interpreters need regular

breaks too. Certain people, such as those with speech impairments, may need more time to complete activities.

42. Think especially about how you can include people with mental health conditions and identify their requirements: for example, by providing quiet areas, including breaks in sessions, providing personal assistants or doing one-to-one interviews instead of focus groups.

43. When you print things, use a large and clear font (often Arial 14 point, which is the font used in this Toolkit).

44. Think about collecting your data in more than one way, so that people can take part in your research by speaking, writing or using visual aids. Remember that you may need to adapt the way you do things to make your research accessible to disabled people with different requirements. For example, pictures may help people with learning difficulties understand a topic, but may not be accessible to a visually impaired participant.

45. Think whether you are accidentally stopping people from taking part in the research. For example, if you only involve local people, who are mostly from one ethnic background, you might accidentally be excluding people of other ethnic groups.

46. If you want to explore disabled people's experiences in depth, qualitative research may be the best option.

47. After your research, consider how you supported disabled people who took part and whether you could do better next time. To do this, ask any disabled people who took part and work with disabled people's organisations. Note any issues raised and ensure that they are taken into account when planning future research.

Not harming anyone

48. Make sure your research doesn't harm anyone. Think about whether you might harm people physically (for example making them tired), socially (for example damaging their

reputation) or psychologically (for example making them worried).

49. Do not be intrusive: do not ask about personal things that you do not need to know. Do not get people's hopes up: do not let them think that your research will change things if it will not. Be careful you do not get people too worried or upset and do not make interviews and focus groups too long. Think about whether you can get the information you need another way.

50. Think, too, about how to protect the researchers from physical, social and psychological harm. For example, think about where they will interview participants or whether participants might be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Make sure your researchers have been through any checks that they need to (such as checks from the Disclosure & Barring Service).

Anonymity

51. Make sure that nobody can find out who took part in your research, even if you think the people who took part might not mind. Store people's personal details securely, keeping names and addresses separate from any data they provide (such as interview transcripts). See also the information on Data Protection (paragraph 60).

52. When you write your research, do not write anything that might let someone discover who took part. Think about all the ways that you might accidentally do this and guard against them. For an example, see Scenario C.

Scenario C Pritap has interviewed several people who used his organisation's drop-in service. In one interview, someone said "My father moved to Birmingham after he lost his job as an accountant". There is probably only one service user who moved to Birmingham when he lost his job as an accountant, so Pritap should not publish this quote.

One of the people Pritap interviews is a wheelchair user who lives in a housing trust. There are probably

not many wheelchair users who live in local housing trusts, so Pritap should probably not mention this in his research since it might identify the person involved.

53. Do not use personal information or the data you collect for marketing, advertising or any other purpose.

Giving people incentives

54. You may want to give people something for taking part in your research, to encourage them to take part, to repay them for their time or just to say “thank you”. It is common to provide refreshments, but you might want to give something extra, such as money or vouchers. There are no definite rules on this, but here are some guidelines.

55. First, think about how much time and effort people are giving to your research. If they are just filling in a survey, you might not feel you need to give them anything. If they are giving up a day to take part in a workshop, you might feel you should give them something for their time.

56. If you give people something for taking part in your research, ask yourself: will it change who takes part in the research? For example, if you run a financial advice service and you give money to people who take part in your research, you might find the people who take part are those who need the money most. That might change what you find from your research, since you are mainly talking to people who really need the money. With this in mind, you might give something else apart from money.

57. Now think about the ethics of giving people something to take part in your research. For example, if you run a financial advice service that encourages people to be responsible for their own money, you might think it is unethical to give people money for taking part in your research. Similarly, if your service users often have health issues, you might think twice before providing sugary refreshments or giving vouchers for a fast food chain. You may also wish to check whether giving people money will affect people’s entitlement to benefits.

58. Sometimes, you might want to give people cash for taking part, but sometimes, you might want to give shopping vouchers. One advantage of cash is that people can spend the money on whatever they like, while shopping vouchers might require them to travel to a particular shop. However, you might feel there are disadvantages to giving people cash: for example, if you feel it might make people more vulnerable when travelling home, or there may be tax or benefit entitlement implications.

59. In any case, you must follow all the other ethical rules given above. In particular, if someone decides to withdraw from the research, they should still get given the same reward as everyone else who takes part.

Data protection

60. When you collect information about people, you must follow the Data Protection Act. You must:

- Use the data fairly, without breaking the law.
- Only use it for the reason you say you are using it.
- Do not hold more data than you need.
- Keep the data accurate and up to date.
- Do not keep the data for longer than you need.
- Respect people's rights when you hold data about them.
- Make sure the data is secure.
- Be careful about sending data outside Europe.

61. For more information, see the Information Commissioner's guidance on Data Protection.

Part IV. Doing research

62. There are many ways to do research, which are called **research methods**. In the chapters below, you will learn about:

    - **Literature reviews**.
    - **Monitoring information**, which is not actually a research method, but is useful in research.
    - **Quantitative methods**, such as surveys and censuses.
    - **Qualitative methods**, such as focus groups and interviews.

63. For a guide to which research method to use, see ‘How to use this Toolkit’ (page 9). Remember, it is often best to use different methods together, especially qualitative and quantitative methods.

Literature reviews

What is a literature review?

64. In a literature review, you look for previous research to help answer your research question. A literature review can be a piece of research by itself or the start of a bigger piece of research.

65. To do a literature review, simply look for research that might answer your research question. Using a tool such as Google Scholar, do a search related to your topic area and the kind of research you are looking for. For example, if your research question was “How do disabled people experience job interviews?”, you could search for “disabled job interviews”, “disabled job interviews qualitative”, “disabled people employment” and so on.

66. There are other ways to find research. You could look for research that is referenced in other research that you find (this is called “snowballing”). You could also try asking experts in

your topic area to recommend research, perhaps using an Internet forum or email list. These ways may give you a one-sided view, but will help you find important research quickly.

67. As you find research, think about how good it is. Ask yourself:

    - How well does this research answer your research question?

    - How well does the research follow the rules of “good research”? That is, how well does it follow the instructions, given in later chapters, for each kind of research?

    - How well does the research apply to your situation? Who took part in the research: are they like the people you are interested in? Where did the research take place: is it like your local area?

    - How recent is the research? Depending on your research question, you might think that old research is less relevant than newer research.

68. Stop looking for research when you are not finding anything new: that is, when you are only finding research that tells you more or less what you knew already. You may also have a practical reason to stop looking: for example, you may only have a certain amount of time or money to spend.

69. Now go through everything you have found, paying more attention to good research (as defined by paragraph 67 above). Taking all of it together, what does it say? What conclusions can you draw? You may find it helps to group what you have found under topic headings.

70. To answer specific questions, it may be useful to do a Systematic Review (see Appendix 1: Systematic reviews).

For more information

71. There are many good resources for doing a traditional literature search: simply search the Internet and see what you find. Systematic reviews are newer and there is less

information available, but you might try, Systematic Reviews In the Social Sciences: A Practical Guide by Petticrew & Roberts.

Monitoring information

72. Monitoring information (sometimes called “performance management data” or “management information”) shows whether an organisation is meeting its goals. It is not research, but it can give valuable information for research. It consists of things you measure while providing a service.

73. For example, an advice service might record: how many advice sessions had been held; how many sessions had been missed; how many clients were seen; how many people completed the full course of sessions; how many incidents and complaints there were; how the client heard about the service; details of waiting lists and times; and similar information. This information tells managers whether the service is doing what it should.

74. Scenario D gives a real-life example of collecting management information.

Scenario D Colin’s organisation receives funding to run an advocacy service. He wants to collect data to show how well the service is working.

He decides to collect data on: the number of times that advocates work with clients; how long each advocate works with each client; and how far advocates travel when they work with clients. He also records which issues clients seek advice on. All this information gives a picture of how the organisation is working with clients and how much resource is spent on them.

In addition, Colin decides to collect data on how clients heard about the advocacy service. This helps Colin know how well the organisation is promoting the service.

Later, the funding for the advocacy service is put out to tender. By using the information he has collected, Colin can show exactly what his organisation has done to support clients through the advocacy service.

75. To decide which monitoring information to collect, do the following.

- **Say what your objectives are**. For example, if you run a training course to teach British Sign Language, then your objective is probably "Teach people British Sign Language".[3]

- **Create an indicator** to measure how well you are doing with this objective. For example: to measure how well you are teaching people British Sign Language, your indicator might be the number of people who gain a British Sign Language qualification after completing your training course.

- **Set a target**, which says how high this indicator should be and when. For example: By July 2015, 80% of people who have completed the training course will have a British Sign Language qualification.

- **Think about what other information you might need**. This may include:

    - **Contact details**, so that you can contact people if you need to. If you plan to do other research, you can use these details to get in touch with people and ask whether they want to take part.

    - **Information on people's specific needs**, especially for disabled people and those whose first language is not English.

    - **Demographic information**, such as age, gender and ethnicity. This helps you know whether your service is reaching everyone it needs to reach.

[3] You can make your objectives clearer by using a Logic Model (see Appendix 12: A logic model).

- Financial information, such as how **much money you have spent** and what you have spent it on.

- Information that shows **how efficiently things are working**, such as attendance records.

- Data related **to other outcomes**, apart from the target: for example, how satisfied people are with the course.

- Consider **who should collect this information** and what they will need to do it. Are staff who work directly with customers the best people to collect information or might this lead to biased data?

- Think about **who should check the information** and what they will need to do this.

- Consider **how often you need to collect the information**. Can you make this fit with other schedules, such as for audit purposes?

- Consider **what format the data should be in, how it will be stored, how you will make sure it doesn't get into the wrong hands** and **any ethical considerations**.

76. Think also about the practicalities. Will collecting the data stop people performing their day-to-day tasks? Will it overburden staff? Only collect information that needs collecting, rather than anything that seems interesting or helpful.

77. It is often best to ask people directly for their age, ethnicity and gender, rather than asking staff to collect this information. Scenario E gives an example of what can go wrong.

Scenario E Cerise wants to monitor whether her organisation is serving people from the local Bangladeshi community. To do this, she collects data on the ethnicity of service users. However, when she checks the data, there are obvious mistakes: one client is marked both as "White" and as "Black British". It turns out that, when staff filled in the forms to collect the data, they guessed the ethnicity of service users.

Cerise changes the procedure, so that service users are asked to specify their own ethnicity, and over the coming months the data becomes more reliable.

For more information

78. The Magenta Book, is a book published by HM Treasury that gives guidance on evaluation, has a useful section on planning monitoring information for evaluation.

Quantitative research: Surveys and censuses

What are surveys and censuses?

79. In a survey or census, you ask people a list of questions, then use the answers to work out information. For example, if your organisation provides a service and you wanted to know how satisfied people are with it, you might ask:

- Overall, how satisfied are you with the service, where 0 is 'not at all satisfied' and 10 is 'completely satisfied'?

80. You can then work out how satisfied people were on average with your service: the answer might be 7.2. Alternatively, you could work out what percentage of people were completely satisfied with the service: the answer might be 8%.[4]

81. Scenario F gives a real-life example of this.

Scenario F Colin works for a charity that provides services for people with mental health conditions. He wants to know how people's mental health changes when they use these services. Does it get better, get worse or stay the same?

He decides to use two standard questionnaires (which you can find on the Internet) to measure the state of people's mental health: GAD-7, which asks about anxiety, and PHQ-9, which asks about

[4] For more about averages and proportions, see Appendix 2: Proportions and averages.

depression. Colin asks people to fill in these forms when they start using the service, when they finish the service and three months after they finish using the service.

This lets him compare clients' mental health at each stage of using the service. From this information, Colin can work out whether their mental health improves after using the service and whether this improvement is still there after three months.

Surveys and censuses

82. Sometimes, you can ask questions to everyone you are interested in. For example, if your organisation runs a small advice service, you could ask everyone that uses that service how satisfied they are with it. This is called a **census**.

83. However, you cannot always ask everyone you are interested in. For example, if your organisation runs lots of services nationwide, it might be expensive to ask everyone who uses your services. If so, you can pick a smaller group of people (called a **sample**), out of all the people you are interested in (called the **population**). This is called a **survey**.

84. To keep things simple, this chapter will mainly talk about surveys. To do a census, follow the same instructions, but skip the parts about finding and choosing a sample.

Errors and biases

85. Surveys never give exactly the right answer: there is always an **error**. For example, let's say that 35% of people are satisfied with your service. A survey probably won't give exactly this answer: it might give 33% or 37% instead.

86. Some errors will always make the answer bigger or smaller than it should be. For example, let's say you run a financial advice service and you email people who use the service to ask how worried they are about money. Many poorer people, who are likely to be worried about money, will not get the

email because they do not have access to the Internet. This means that your survey will give a smaller answer than it should, because the people who answer are less worried about money. This kind of error is called **bias**.

87. You can not avoid all errors and biases, but try to avoid as many as you can. For example, to avoid the bias described above, you might telephone your service users rather than emailing them. When you tell people about your research (see Part VI), be honest about any errors.

Finding a sample

88. First, you need a way of contacting people to take your survey. Choose the way that gives you the best chance of contacting everyone you are interested in (i.e. your population). This will usually be some sort of list. For example:

    - If you are interested in your service users, use your **internal records**.

    - If you are interested in people on a local estate, use **a map of the estate**. This counts as a list, because it gives you a list of addresses you could visit.

89. If there is not a good list of people, then use the best list you can. For example, if you are interested in people who use a local community centre, you could start from a **list of days when the community centre is open** or a **list of room bookings**.

90. If you are doing a **census**, you must try to interview everyone on the list. If you are doing a **survey**, work out how many people you need for your sample (see Appendix 4: How big should your survey sample be?). Then choose that number of people randomly from your list.[5]

91. If you can not do this, then choose randomly as best you can. For example, if you are starting from a list of room bookings,

[5] The best way to do this is randomly, but while making sure that all the important groups are included. For more details, see Appendix 5: Selecting a sample using stratification.

then you cannot actually choose people at random, but you could choose room bookings at random. If you are starting from a list of days when a community centre is open, you could visit on random days and even at random times of the day.

92. In general, you should be careful that people who answer your questions (the sample) represent the people you are interested in (the population). They should be about the same age, from similar ethnic backgrounds, there should be the same number of men and women and so on. Here are some examples:

- If your survey is about people who use your services, do not simply put a survey on your website. You can not be sure that people who visit your website are like your service users in general.

- If your survey is about people who use a community centre, do not simply ask people you know who use the community centre. You can not be sure that people you know are like people who use the community centre in general.

Writing survey questions

93. Now you can write your survey or census. First, turn your **research question** into a list of **survey questions**: the questions you will actually ask in the survey.

94. To do this, think about everything you need to know to answer your research question. See Scenario G for an example.

Scenario G Pritap runs an advice service and his **research question** is "How satisfied are our clients with the advice they get?"

Now, the service provides advice in three different ways: one-to-one counselling, brochures and by telephone. So Pritap needs at least three **survey questions**: "How satisfied are you with the advice you get in counselling?", "How satisfied are you with the advice in the brochures?", and "How satisfied are

you with the advice you get on the telephone?"

Pritap also decides that, to know whether clients are satisfied, he needs to know three things: whether they understand the advice they receive, whether they are happy with it and whether they use it. This suggests even more survey questions: "How satisfied are you with the advice you receive?", "How well do you understand the advice you receive?" and "Have you used the advice you received?".

95. Now choose your survey questions. If you can, use a question that has been used already. For example, you could use a harmonised question from the Office of National Statistics, a question from an existing survey (for example the Labour Force Survey) or from an established questionnaire (for example, the GHQ-12, which can be found via the UK Data Services question bank).

96. If you cannot find a question that has been used already, write your own. Use plain English and follow the tips in Appendix 6: Writing survey questions.

97. Before running your survey, you should test it. See Appendix 7: Testing your survey.

Running the survey

98. If other people will help you do the survey, get them together first. Explain the research background, go through the survey and ensure everyone is clear. Remind them that they should ask the questions exactly as they are written.

Checking your data

99. Once the data is collected, check it for mistakes. Some will be obvious: for example, if your data shows that a participant was 1000 years old, that is obviously a mistake. Other mistakes are less obvious. For example, if your data shows that a participant was 14 years old and self-employed, that is probably an error, but might be correct. Correct any obvious

mistakes and note down the rules you are using to correct them: for example, “When someone’s age is given as over 100, delete that person’s data”.

100. Decide what to do when someone misses a question. One way is to enter an answer that is the average of everyone else’s answer to that question. There is no perfect solution[6], but be clear about what you are doing.

Changing over time

101. When you want to measure how something changes over time, you may want to do lots of surveys. This is called **longitudinal** research. You can use the same sample every time or choose a new one. Using the same sample lets you see how specific people change over time. However, people will drop out over time and, after a while, your original sample will not represent your population as well.

102. Longitudinal surveys which follow specific people over time can be very expensive. If your organisation cannot afford to carry out such surveys, one option may be to see if existing longitudinal surveys such as Understanding Society, the UK Birth Cohort Studies or the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing can help you answer the research questions you have.

Adding qualitative data

You can also use surveys to gather qualitative data. For example, at the end of your survey, you could ask “Do you have any other comments?”. Since people can answer this however they like, it produces qualitative data. For more details on qualitative data, see

103. Qualitative research: Interviews and focus groups (paragraph 105).

[6] For more solutions to this problem, including some better ones, see Groves et al (2009).

For more information

104. This chapter has given you an overview of how to do a survey. For more information, try any good guide to survey research, such as Survey Methodology (Groves et al, 2009).

Qualitative research: Interviews and focus groups

Introduction

105. Qualitative research helps you explore topics that are not easily described by numbers, especially things that are personal, sensitive or that you do not fully understand. For example, qualitative research could help answer these research questions:

- What do our clients think our organisation's priorities should be?
- How do people find our new advice service?
- How do people who use our service manage their finances?

106. In qualitative research, it is important to let people speak for themselves. Keep an open mind throughout the research: do not assume what people will tell you or impose your own theories or ideas.

107. When you do qualitative research, you do not need to follow the rules for quantitative research. For example, in qualitative research, you do not need to choose people randomly or ask questions exactly as written.

108. This chapter explores two common types of qualitative research, both of which are about having conversations with people: interviews and focus groups. However, there are other kinds of qualitative research, for which the same kind of ideas are often useful. For more details, see Other kinds of qualitative research and data (paragraph 138).

Research questions

109. Begin by writing your research question (see paragraph 13). Make sure it explores a subject, rather than testing whether something is true. For example, “How do disabled people experience online shopping?” is a good question, but “Do disabled people prefer online shopping?” is not.

110. Remember that different wording will lead to different pieces of research. For example, the questions “How do people feel about our organisation?” and “How do people experience our advice sessions?” would produce different research: the first would look at everything about the organisation, while the second would only look at the advice sessions. Be clear about what you want to know.

Interviews and focus groups

111. In a one-to-one interview, you interview each person taking part in the research. This is good for exploring people’s experiences in depth, especially when exploring sensitive or emotional issues, and for talking about things that happened over a period of time.

112. In a focus group, you lead a group discussion with a small number of people. This is useful if you think it is important for people to interact and build on each other’s experiences.

113. When choosing between interviews and focus groups, think about your research question. Are you exploring a sensitive area? Is it valuable for people to discuss their experiences together? Do you think people will talk more openly on their own or in a group?

114. Sometimes you may feel that focus groups are a cheaper way of interviewing more people, and so want to choose them instead of one-to-one interviews. It is important to remember that if your research is exploring sensitive or emotional issues, or involve talking about things which happened over a period of time, focus groups are unlikely to work.

115. Scenario H gives an example of choosing between interviews and focus groups.

Scenario H Ajit runs a financial advice service, which has recently changed from being a face-to-face service to being run over the telephone. He thinks it might be valuable for people to discuss their views and experiences of using the new telephone service. This includes their reasons for accessing the service, how they found the telephone call, and what happened as a result of them accessing the service. However, because the topic is potentially very sensitive (being about people's money and finances) and it relates to things which happen over a period of time, Ajit decides to conduct one-to-one interviews.

Choosing a sample

116. When you choose who to invite to take part in the research, ask yourself: "Who do I need to talk to, so I fully understand the thing I am researching?"

- Do you need to interview people of different **ages, genders, ethnic backgrounds**, from different **locations** and with different **types of impairment**?

- **Are some groups particularly important for your research?** For example: if your advice service provides special materials for visually impaired people, then they are likely to have a different experience of your advice service to others, so you should interview them.

- **Should anyone be excluded** from the research, either because they might find the subject distressing or for other reasons? For example, should children be excluded? Should people with terminal illnesses be excluded?

117. Scenario I gives an example of deciding who should take part in qualitative research.

Scenario I For his focus groups, Ajit thinks about all the different sorts of people he will need to talk to. He thinks that

men and women might have different things to say about the group advice sessions. Similarly, he thinks that people of different ages and ethnic backgrounds might have different viewpoints. Finally, he wonders whether new users of the service might have different opinions from long-term users.

So Ajit's sample should include people of different ages, genders and ethnic backgrounds, together with a balance between new and long-term users of the service.

118. Now think about how you will find people to take part in your research. You could:

- Use your internal records.
- Go somewhere that contains the people you want to talk to, such as a community centre, and ask people whether they want to take part.
- Find one person who wants to take part. Interview them, then ask them if they know anyone else who might like to take part. (This, like the research-finding method described above, is called **snowballing**).

119. You must also decide how many people to talk to. Samples for qualitative research are often smaller than for quantitative research: you might interview over a hundred people for a survey, but you would rarely interview that many for qualitative research. When deciding how many people to talk to, think about:

- **Does your sample include everyone who should be included** to fully answer your research question?
- **If you interviewed more people, would you learn anything new?** For example, if you interviewed 20 people about a new advice service, how much would you learn by interviewing another 5 people?

- **How much time and money do you have available for this research?** How many people does that let you talk to?

- **Are there any other constraints that would limit people's availability?** For example, transport difficulties, lack of available support staff.

Writing a topic guide

120. Now write the questions you will actually ask in your interviews or focus groups. To do this, think of all the questions you need to ask to fully answer your research question.

121. Make these open questions, which people can answer in detail (for example, "How do you feel about shopping?"), rather than closed questions, which can be answered with very short answers (for example, "Do you enjoy shopping?").

122. Scenario J gives a short example of writing questions for qualitative research.

Scenario J Rosario runs a small charity for people with mental health conditions. Her research question is "What are our clients views and experiences of looking for a job?".

To answer this question, she decides that she needs to understand her clients' experiences at each stage of looking for a job. So she writes open questions for each stage of the process: "How do you find going to a Job Centre?", "How do you find writing your CV?", "How do you find going to job interviews?" and so on. She avoids closed questions, such as "Have you had any job interviews?"

123. Put these questions together into a **topic guide**, which lists everything you will say during your interview or focus group. For an example, see Appendix 8: Example topic guide. Keep your topic guide short, it should be less than four pages.

124. In your topic guide:

- Start by **telling people about the research** and saying **anything else you need to say**. This should include ethical issues (see Part III). It might also include housekeeping issues, such as where the toilets are and what to do in case of a fire.

- Begin with an **opening topic**, to ease people in and get people talking.

- You could also **collect information to save time later**. For example, you might want to ask what people's impairments are, so they do not have to explain later.

- Now **list the topics you need to cover**. Use simple language, avoiding jargon. It is good to:

    - Start with general topics, then move to specific ones.

    - Start with topics that people are likely to be comfortable with, then move to more sensitive topics.

    - Start by asking about definite topics, such as things people have done, then move to less definite topics, such as how people feel about things.

    - If you are talking about something that happens in a particular order, such as attending advice sessions, then talk about each step of the process in order.

- You could add a **final question**, such as "What else would people like to tell us that they think is important?"

- End your topic guide with **anything you need to say or do**, such as reminding people that what they said is confidential.

Preparing for your research

125. Think about how you will record what people say. The best way is often to make an audio recording and transcribe it later (see Appendix 9: Recording and transcribing). If you can not do this, choose another way of recording things. For example,

you could ask a colleague to take notes. Alternatively, you could also ask people who take part in the research to write things down on flipcharts or index cards (see Scenario K for an example).

126. Before doing the interviews or focus groups, gather everyone involved in the research together. Talk about what you are trying to find out and the background of the topic you are working on. Read the topic guide together, until you are familiar with it. Think what responses people might give or what direction the conversation might go in.

127. After you have conducted your first interviews or focus groups, it is good to meet again to see how things are going. At this meeting, ask: is the research meeting its aims? How is the topic guide working? Make any changes you need to.

Running interviews or focus groups

128. When you do the interview or focus group, use your topic guide to remind you what to ask, but do not stick rigidly to it. Listen to people, encourage them to talk and avoid making judgemental comments or talking about yourself. Ask open questions (“How did you feel about that?”) and avoid questions that lead people towards a particular answer (“Did that make you feel bad?”). For more advice, see Appendix 10: Tips on running interviews and focus groups.

Finding themes in your data

129. Now, you must analyse the data you have collected to find the important themes. Plan a lot of time for this: as a rough guide, each interview or focus group will take at least a day to analyse.

130. First, if you did audio recordings, listen to these recordings several times. If the recordings were transcribed, read the transcripts. As you do this, jot down anything that seems important, without thinking about it too much: for example, if a participant says “Sometimes, I get home and the house feels empty”, write “House feels empty”.

131. You now have a lot of data. This data might be:

- Things you jotted down while reading transcripts.
- Notes that someone made during an interview or focus group.
- Things that participants wrote during a workshop.

132. Whatever data you have, bring it together into rough groups. Give each group a name. For example, if you jotted down “House feels empty”, “House feels too big” and “Thinking about moving”, you might bring these together into a group called “Feelings about house”.

133. Then bring these groups together into larger groups. For example, if you have groups called “Feelings about house”, “Feelings about home town” and “Do not know the neighbours”, you might make a bigger group, “Feels out of place”.

134. Keep doing this until you have a small number of themes, say three to five, which cover all of your data. For an example, see Appendix 11: An example of analysis

135. As you do this, try not to impose your own views on what people say. For example, if you wrote down “House feels empty”, “House feels too big” and “Thinking about moving”, do not bring these together into a group called “Loneliness”, unless the person actually mentioned being lonely. Make sure your groups and themes represent what people actually said: this is called being **grounded in the data**.

136. Give yourself time to do this. Keep going backwards and forwards: for example, if you find a theme called “Feels out of place”, go back to your initial jottings and make sure they fit this theme.

137. Think about what tool you will need to do all this. You could use index cards, spreadsheets or specialised computer programs, depending on what you prefer and your budget.

Other kinds of qualitative research and data

138. There are lots of kinds of qualitative data, including:

- Notes on flipcharts, made by groups during a workshop.
- Answers to survey questions (such as “Do you have any other comments?”).
- Photographs.
- Video diaries.

139. You can analyse this data in a similar way to that described in ‘Finding themes in your data’ (paragraph 129). For example, if your data consists of notes on flipcharts, you could bring these notes together into groups and work out the themes. If your data consists of video diaries, you could jot notes down as you watch them, then bring your jotted notes together into groups and work out themes from them.

140. There are also many kinds of qualitative research. For example:

- In a **paired interview**, you interview two people at once. This provides people with support (a “friendship pair”) and can sometimes make more sense: for example, when interviewing a disabled person and their support worker.
- The **critical incident technique** asks people to describe an event that was particularly important to them.
- **Action research** helps groups do research to solve a problem or improve the service they deliver.
- **Appreciative inquiry** helps groups find the things they do well, then build on those things to find new ways of working.
- **Seminars and workshops** can be a kind of research, if you record them, then use the records to produce themes.

141. To find out more, do a literature search (see Literature reviews, paragraph 64) to see what other researchers have done. For example, if you are interested in appreciative inquiry, search Google and Google Scholar for “appreciative inquiry”.

142. Scenario K gives a real-life example of a workshop that used qualitative research.

Scenario K

Kira runs a charity that supports local disabled people. She wants to find out what matters to them, so she can decide what things her charity should focus on doing.

She decides to run an event, to which she invites all the charity’s members. She arranges for food and drink to be provided, for transport for people that need it and also for a British Sign Language interpreter. There is also a “graphic facilitator”, who creates a drawing based on everything discussed at the event.

The event consists of various “workshops” based on topics from the UK Disabled People's Manifesto. Each workshop is facilitated by a disabled person, while another person takes notes. At the end of each workshop, each group is asked to write their “Top three demands”: that is, the three things they care most about.

By bringing all the data together (including workshop notes, the “demands” and the graphic facilitator’s drawing), Kira identifies important themes. She uses these themes to set the charity’s future priorities.

For more information

143. This chapter has given you an overview of how to do qualitative research. For more information on qualitative research, see Qualitative Research Practice (Ritchie et al, 2013).

Part V. Evaluation

144. How does your organisation know whether its services are working? How can you find what is working well and what needs improving? How can you show people, especially funders and service users, the effect that your services have on people's lives?

145. Questions like this are answered by **evaluation**. Evaluation brings together all the research described in Part IV to ask how a service[7] is working, what effect it is having and how it could be improved.

146. Scenario L is a real-life example of using evaluation research to support a funding application.

Scenario L Colin wants to evaluate a self-help service, which his organisation ran at a GP surgery.

To do this, he uses different kinds of research. He uses management information, including the number of clients seen, the number who completed the self-help service, the number of sessions offered, the number of people who attended and the number who cancelled appointments.

He also uses a survey (which was described in Scenario F) to tell whether clients' mental health improved after using the service. This survey also asks whether the client had visited their GP less as a result of using the service.

Later, Colin wants to apply for funding to roll out the self-help service throughout his local area. He uses the evaluation research, including the management information and survey results, to show the pilot was effective. In particular, he shows that the self-help service led to people visiting their GP less,

[7] You can use evaluations to study many different things: for example, a service provided by your organisation, a pilot project, a government policy or a change in the way your organisation does something. To keep things simple, all of these things will be called a **service**.

suggesting it saves the NHS money.

147. To evaluate a service, plan your evaluation when you plan the service itself. If you do not do this, you might find you cannot evaluate the service because you have not collected the data you need.

148. Think, too, about when you should do your evaluation. The timing of what you do in an evaluation is very important, because in many, if not most cases, you will want to know what is happening at particular points in time. For example, if you want to know what difference a new service has made, you usually need to collect data before you launch the service, as well as afterwards. If you only start collecting data after you have already launched the service, you will have left it too late.

149. The following chapters describe two kinds of evaluation. **Impact evaluation** asks: what difference is a service having? Is it having the effect it was intended to have? **Process evaluation** asks: how is a service working in practice? What things are working well and what is working less well?

Impact evaluation

Planning an impact evaluation

150. An impact evaluation shows what effect your services have on people's lives. This helps you know whether your services are doing what they should and show others what effect your services are having.

151. Start by doing a logic model (see Appendix 12: A logic model), to help you think about the service's goals and how it achieves them.

152. Now decide what you can measure to see whether the service is working. Look first at the outcomes and outputs in your logic model: these are often easier to measure than impacts. For example, imagine you are running a training course to help people find jobs. It is difficult to evaluate the course by measuring whether the local employment rate goes up (an

impact), because a training course is too small to affect the employment rate. However, after the training course, you could measure people's skills, knowledge and motivation (an output) and whether they get a job (an outcome).

Making comparisons

153. Imagine again that you run a training course to help people find work. 100 people attend the course. At the start, none of them have a job. At the end, 20 of them have a job. Does that mean that, because of the training, 20 people have found work?

154. No. The problem is: they might have found work anyway, even without the training course. To know whether the training course has helped, you need to know what would have happened if they had not taken the course. If 20 people would have found work anyway, then the training course has had no effect. If 30 would have found work, then the training course has had a negative effect: it has stopped people finding work.

155. So, when you do an impact evaluation, you must guess what would have happened without your service. This is called a **counterfactual**. Even if you cannot know exactly what would have happened, you must make the best guess you can.

156. The best way to do this is: compare people who used the service (the **service group**) with people who did not (the **comparison group**). For example, you could compare 100 people who did the training course (the service group) with 100 people who did not (the comparison group). If more people get jobs in the service group than in the comparison group, then the training course is having a positive effect.

157. If you can, choose these groups randomly. For example, you could toss a coin for each person, to decide whether they go in the service group or comparison group.

158. If you can not do this, then make sure the two groups are as alike as possible. Make sure that, in each group, you have about the same number of people of each age, gender, ethnic background and anything else you think might matter.

159. If you can not use two groups, then make the best comparison you can. For example, you could compare people who take your training course with people who took the training course last year. You could compare the employment rate of people who take your training course with the national average or the average for your region. This is not perfect, but do the best you can.

What data do you need?

160. Now decide how to measure the things you need to measure. You could use any of these or a combination of them:

- **Local data** (see Making Disability Data Work For You: A Community Data Toolkit (Part 1)).
- **Big surveys**, such as surveys from the Office for National Statistics.
- **Monitoring information** (see paragraph 72).
- Your own **survey or census** (see paragraph 79).
- Your own **qualitative research** (see paragraph 111).

161. Note that, if you run a survey, there are lots of different things you can ask to know whether your service is working. For example, you could:

- Ask whether people were satisfied with the service.
- Ask whether people think the service helped them.
- Ask whether people feel more confident about something (for example, looking for a job).
- Ask them how much they think they know about something (for example, looking for a job).

- Ask specific questions to test their knowledge (for example, asking them where the Job Centre is).

For more information

162. The best source for information on impact evaluation is The Magenta Book. For more guidance on logic models, see Logic mapping: hints and tips.

Process evaluations

163. Process evaluations help you understand how your organisation's services are working and how you could make them better. They answer questions like:

- What do people think works well? What do they think works less well?
- What is helping make the service work? What is getting in the way?
- What could be changed or improved?

164. First, think about your research question. Often, a process evaluation uses several research questions together, such as: "How is the service working in practice? What problems are there? What can be improved?"

165. Now think about what research you need to answer those research questions. Often, you will use different types of research together, combining qualitative and quantitative research. For an example, see Scenario M.

Scenario M Ajit's organisation has recently started offering a telephone advice service. He wants to know how this is working and how the call-takers and callers are finding it. He decides on the research questions: "How is the telephone service working in practice? What is working well? What is working less well?".

To answer these, he decides to do a focus group with the counsellors, together with a series of short telephone interviews with callers. In both the focus groups and the interviews, he will take people through the process of the telephone call and ask them about each stage of it. He will also gather monitoring information on how many calls have come in, when they have come in and how long the calls take.

Part VI. Telling people about your research

166. Whether you are giving a presentation, writing a report or just sending an email, think about how you tell others about your research.

167. First, **think about your audience**. How can you best communicate to them? What will they want to know? Remember why you did the research in the first place: what did you want to find out? What did you actually find out?

168. Now **tell the story** of your research. First, you might need to get your thoughts together: when you do research, it is easy to focus on the details rather than the big picture. You might find the following structure helpful:[8]

- **Introduction**: Explain the background.
- **Methods**: Say what you did and where, when and how you did it.
- **Results**: Say what you found out.
- **Discussion**: Say what your results mean.

169. Give enough detail so that someone else could repeat your research. Explain where your research took place and give some details of the people who took part (but do not reveal who the people are; see Part III).

170. When you talk about your results, be honest about the limits of what you can say. In quantitative research, say how big you think the errors are. In qualitative research, be honest about how your own viewpoint may have influenced the research. Show all your results, not just the parts that say what you wanted them to say.

171. Think about different ways of displaying your data. In quantitative research, think about whether it will be clearest to use a table, a graph or just a number. In qualitative research,

[8] For a fuller explanation of a formal report structure, see "Appendix 3: How to read a research paper".

think whether to include people's quotes: these can bring a report to life but can also draw attention away from important themes. Photographs may also work well, although make sure you have people's permission before taking photographs of them.

172. Think about how best to help people become aware of your research, and understand and use it. For example, will a 'published report' on its own have the impact you want? Or would it help to also organise events or workshops to give people the chance to discuss your research findings, and think about how the findings can help them and their organisation?

Part VII. Evaluation of the Toolkit

173. This Toolkit has given an overview of how to do research. We need to evaluate how you have used it and what benefits it has had. As you will realise, this is a piece of research in itself.

174. On the next page is a short set of questions. Please can you email your responses to these questions to fulfilling.potential@dwp.gsi.gov.uk or post them to Office for Disability Issues, Department for Work and Pensions, Caxton House, Tothill Street, London SW1H 9NA.

175. We will regularly review the results and prepare a short evaluation which we will place on line. We will also be reviewing the results to ensure that the Toolkit meets the needs of users, and where appropriate will make updates available.

Evaluation Questions

1. How did you become aware of “Making Disability Research Work For You: A Community Data Toolkit, Part Two”?

2. How clear did you find the language (very clear, clear, not clear)? Please also provide any comments.

3. How useful did you find this document (very useful, useful, not useful)? Please also provide any comments.

4. Have you undertaken any research as a result of reading this document? If so:

- Please describe your research and indicate if you are willing to share your findings with others?

- Would you in the future be prepared to write a short case study that could be published, and used to help others?

5. Do you feel that there is something missing from this document?

6. Do you have any other comments you wish to share?

Finally, please provide name, organisation and contact details.

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Part IX. Appendices

Appendix 1: Systematic reviews

1. The problem with literature reviews is that it's easy to use them to back your own point of view, even if you do not mean to. To avoid this, you can do a systematic review. To do this, you go through the steps described under Literature reviews above, but follow definite rules.

2. First, be clear about your research question.

3. Now, say exactly what kind of research you need to answer your research question. For example, you might decide you need surveys and randomised controlled trials.

4. Say exactly how you will look for this research. For example, you might decide you will search Google Scholar using the search term "mental health employment", looking for surveys and randomised controlled trials.

5. Say exactly how you will decide how good the research is. You might use a number to say how good research is, for example, you might decide that randomised controlled trials in the United Kingdom are worth 2 points, but randomised controlled trials elsewhere are worth 1 point.

6. Say exactly when you will stop looking for research.

7. Put all the research you have found into a table.

8. Go through the research and summarise it.

9. All this can take a long time. An alternative is to do a Rapid Evidence Review, which is like a systematic review, but with a limit on the research you look at. For example, you could use the following limits:

10. You only spend one week looking at research and then you stop.

11. You only look at research from a particular time and place, such as research from the United Kingdom in the last 10 years.

Appendix 2: Proportions and averages

1. In quantitative research, we often talk about proportions and averages. This is what these words mean.

Proportions

2. In a survey, you might want to know “How many disabled people have a job?”. However, you might not really want to know the number of disabled people with a job: for example, “14,011 disabled people have a job”. You want to know something like “Half of disabled people have a job” or “Four out of ten disabled people have a job”.

3. This is a **proportion**. There are lots of ways to write proportions: “Half”, “One in three”, “Two-sevenths”, “0.34” and “34%” are all proportions.

4. One useful way to write a proportion is a **percentage**: for example, 47%. Percentages are a way of saying “How many out of every hundred?” For example, if 47% of disabled people have a job, then 47 out of every hundred disabled people have a job.

Averages

5. There are different kinds of **average**. The most common type is the **mean**. To get the mean, you add up a set of numbers, then divide by how many numbers you added up.

6. For example, let’s say that, in a survey, you asked “How many days have you been working in your current job?”. Five people answered the question and their answers were 6, 4, 8, 7 and 9. To find the average, you add these numbers up (to get 34), then divide by five, which is how many numbers you added up. The answer is 6.8. So, according to your survey, the average number of days that people had been working in their current job is 6.8.

7. Sometimes the mean is not a very good reflection of a set of numbers. This can happen where a set of numbers contain a

smaller set of numbers which are very different from the rest of the numbers. For example, if a set of numbers included 6, 4, 8, 7, 5, 4 and 8985, the mean would be 1288. This could make it seem that the numbers are mostly bigger than they are. To help avoid this, it can help to use the median instead of the mean.

8. To find the median, place any set of numbers in order and find the middle number. In our example, the order would be 4, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 8985. So the median would be 6, because it is in the middle. You may feel that 6 (the median) is a better reflection of the set of numbers than 1288 (the mean).

Appendix 3: How to read a research paper

1. Research documents (which are often called “papers”) are often written in a special way, which can be hard to understand. To help you understand a research paper, here is a quick guide to the headings that are often used.

Title

2. The research paper starts with a title, which is one or two lines long. This can be useful, but you should read the abstract to find what the research is about.

Abstract

3. Next, there is a short summary of the research, about 100 to 200 words long. This is called the “abstract” (although it does not always say “abstract” next to it).

4. A well-written abstract should tell you everything important about the research: why the research was done, what exactly was done, what the research discovered and what it means. Often, this will be enough to tell you what you need to know. However, not all abstracts are well-written! You may need to look at the other sections to find what you need to know.

Introduction

5. The introduction gives the background to the research. It often begins with an overview of the research area, then gets more specific. It is useful for finding out what other research has been done in the area.

Methods

6. The methods section explains, in detail, exactly what was done. It is useful when you need to know the exact details of

the research: for example, where was the research conducted and who exactly took part?

Results or Analysis

7. The results section explains what the research found. It contains numbers that explain exactly what the research discovered.

8. In qualitative research, there is often an “analysis” section instead of a “results” section. It is longer and explains in detail what the research found.

9. The results or analysis section is useful if you need to know exactly what the research discovered.

Discussion

10. The discussion describes what the research findings mean. It discusses how these findings fit with what other research has found. It might also discuss practical implications or what new research should be done.

11. The discussion is useful when you want to know what the research findings mean.

References

12. The paper ends with a list of other related research.

Appendix 4: How big should your survey sample be?

1. How many people should take part in your survey? The answer depends on how sure you want to be that your results are right.

2. First, remember that surveys do not give exactly the right answer: there is always an error. So, rather than just giving an answer (for example, 35%), many surveys describe a "margin of error". This is a way of saying: **"The answer is 35%. This is probably not exactly right, but we can be fairly confident the real answer is between 33% and 37%".**

3. Now, in fact, surveys do not say they are "fairly confident". Instead, they say how confident they are, like this: **"The answer is 35%. We cannot be sure this is right, but there is a 95% chance that the real answer is between 33% and 37%."** This means that, if the survey was repeated again and again, then 95% of the time (that is, nineteen times out of twenty), the answer would be between 33% and 37%.

4. So ask yourself: how confident do you want to be that your results are accurate? How much difference would it make if they were wrong by 1%, 3%, 5% or 10%? Try writing a sentence like this: **"I need to be ___% sure that the survey results are within __% of the real answer."**

5. For an example, see Scenario N.

Scenario N Ari wants to know what proportion of people who use his organisation's services have a job. He asks himself: how accurately do I need to know this? He decides that, if his survey gave an answer of 35%, it wouldn't make much difference if the real answer was 31% or 39%. So, Ari decides, he needs to be 95% confident that the survey results are within 4% of the real answer.

6. From this, you can work out how big your sample size needs to be. You need an equation for this, which is[9]:

7. $$n = \frac{p(1-p)}{SEM^2}$$

8. In this equation:

- n is the sample size, which is the number you want to know.
- p is your best guess of the survey results. In the above example, it might be “35%” (which you would express as a decimal, 0.35).
- SEM is the standard error. This is a way of describing how accurate your results are. You can find calculators for the standard error on the Internet, but as a rough guide: if you want to be 95% confident that your results are within X of the real answer, then the standard error is half of X. For example, if you want your survey results to be within 4% of the real answer then your standard error is 2%. Again, you express this as a decimal, 0.02.

9. For 0, the answer is:

10. $$n = \frac{0.35(1-0.35)}{(0.02)^2} = \frac{0.2275}{0.0004} = 568.75$$

11. So, if Ari wants to be 95% confident that his results are accurate to within 4%, he needs a sample size of 569 people (which is 568.75 rounded up).

12. You should know that different kinds of research need different calculations. For example, if you are comparing two percentages or doing an evaluation, you need a different calculation. Again, searching the Internet is the best place to start.

[9] This equation assumes a large population: that is, it assumes the total number of people you are interested in is large.

Appendix 5: Selecting a sample using stratification

1. When you select a sample from a list, you should:

   - Select people randomly from the list; and
   - Make sure all the important groups are represented.

2. One way to do this is called **stratification**. Put simply, this means:
   - Splitting your list into the important groups.
   - Choosing randomly from each group.

3. Scenario O shows you how to do this.

Scenario O Pritap runs an advice service for disabled people and wants to know how satisfied his clients are with the advice they receive.

From his internal records, he has a list of users and their email addresses, from which he can choose his sample.

However, his advice service covers a diverse geographical region, containing three towns: the former industrial town of Renford, the affluent area of Stanbourne and the rural community of Telville. He thinks people from these different areas might answer the questions differently.

To keep things simple, let's say that Pritap's internal records contain 12 users. Pritap wants to choose 6 of these users for his sample. Here is the list.

User	Area where they live
AA	Renford
BB	Stanbourne
CC	Stanbourne

DD	Renford
EE	Telville
FF	Renford
GG	Renford
HH	Telville
II	Stanbourne
JJ	Stanbourne
KK	Renford
LL	Renford

To choose his sample, Pritap must first split this list into the important groups. So he must split it by area. He does this by writing people's names on pieces of paper, then dividing them into three piles: one for people from Renford (containing 6 names), one for people from Stanbourne (containing 4 names) and one for people from Telville (containing 2 names).

Now, Pritap must randomly select from each group. He wants to choose 6 people from a total of 12, so he must choose half of them. So Pritap should select half the people in each group: that is, 3 people from Renford, 2 from Stanbourne and 1 from Telford. He does this by randomly choosing pieces of paper from each pile.

Pritap has now selected the following people (listed in bold) for his sample:

Initials	Area
AA	**Renford**
BB	Stanbourne

CC	**Stanbourne**
DD	Renford
EE	Telville
FF	**Renford**
GG	Renford
HH	**Telville**
II	**Stanbourne**
JJ	Stanbourne
KK	**Renford**
LL	Renford

4. This is just a simple example. Things get more complicated when you are choosing, for example, 60 service users from 600 on your internal records. Nevertheless, the principles are the same: divide your list into the important groups, then choose randomly from each group.

5. To work out who the important groups are, ask yourself two questions. Firstly, which groups are often used for the people you are interested in? For example, if you run an advice service where there are different advisors for financial, legal and general problems, you might group people by the type of advisor they saw. Secondly, might certain people answer your questions differently? If, for example, you think that older people might answer your questions differently, then make sure you include people from different ages in your sample.

Appendix 6: Writing survey questions

1. If you write a survey question badly, people might give the wrong answer. For example, think about the question “How many times did you use our advice service last year?” There are many reasons why people might answer this wrongly:

   - People might **misunderstand the question**. For example, they might not know what “last year” means: does it mean “in the last twelve months” or “from last January to last December”? Or they might not know whether visiting the advice service’s website counts as using the service.

   - People might **not remember the answer**. After all, it is difficult to remember every time you have used an advice service.

   - People might **guess and get it wrong**.

   - People might **not tell the truth**. For example, if people are embarrassed about using the advice service, they might give a lower number. This might be true if they wanted advice about sensitive issues.

2. To avoid these problems, use the following guidelines when you write questions. They are adapted from Groves et al (2009), who in turn adapted them from Sudman & Bradburn (1982).

3. When you are asking about **things people do** and the **subject is not sensitive**, then do these things:

   - **Be specific**: for example, say “Since last Monday” rather than “This week”.

   - **Use plain English**, with words almost all respondents will understand.

   - If you offer a range of response options (for example, “What form of transport did you use?” might have the responses “Car”, “Bus”, “Taxi”), **include all the responses** that a person might reasonably give. You may need to include an

"Other" option, in case someone has a response that does not fit into your other categories.

- **Offer cues** to help people remember (for example, "How many times have you used public transport this week: for example, to travel to work or to go out in the evening?")

- **Consider asking individual questions about categories** (for example, "How many times have you travelled by car? How many times have you travelled by train?").

- **Consider asking people to keep a diary or refer to household records** to find the information.

4. When you are asking about **things people do** and the **subject might be sensitive**, the rules are:

   - **To find out how often someone does something, use open rather than closed questions**. For example, ask "How often do you have an alcoholic drink?" but do not give categories such as "Once a week", "Once a month" and so on.

   - **Use long questions**, rather than short ones.

   - **Use familiar words** (for example, "Have a drink" rather than "Consume alcohol").

   - **Phrase the question so that people feel comfortable with giving embarrassing answers** (for example, "Many people have a drink in the evening or earlier in the day. How often do you have an alcoholic drink…?").

   - **Ask about long periods of time first**. It is less embarrassing to admit that you did something once than to admit you did it recently. For example, "Have you ever had an alcoholic drink…?"

   - **Put the sensitive questions**.

   - Consider using a **diary or a questionnaire** that people complete themselves (rather than telling an interviewer).

5. When you are asking about **what people think of something**, the rules are:

- **Make it clear what you are asking about**. For example, in the question “How important do you think security is?” the word “security” could be interpreted different ways. It might refer to computer security, keeping confidential documents secure, wearing your security pass or something else.

- **Assess how strongly people feel, using a five or seven point scale**. Label every point on that scale and start at the least popular end of the scale. For example, you might ask “To what extent do you think your organisation’s recruitment policies are fair to disabled people?”, asking people to rate the answer on a five-point scale: “Not fair at all, Only a little fair, Somewhat fair, Mostly fair or Completely fair”.

- **Ask general questions first**, then specific ones.

- **When asking about several things, ask about the least popular one first**.

Appendix 7: Testing your survey

1. You should test your survey before running it. There are lots of ways to do this, with different advantages. Do as many as you can, with the time and money you have available:

   - **Give your survey to a panel of experts**. Invite people who are experienced in designing surveys or who know about the subject, then ask for their comments.

   - **Give your survey to people who are like the people you want to interview** (i.e. a group of your target population). Ask them for their comments.

   - **Do a field test**. Try your survey with a small number of people, then talk to the interviewers and interviewees to see how it worked.

   - **Do a "cognitive interview"**. Ask people to test answer the survey questions. As they do, ask them to talk through their thought process. This lets you discover any misunderstandings and correct them. For example, if you asked someone to think aloud while answering the question "How many alcoholic drinks have I had in the past week?", they might say "Well, I shared a bottle of wine with my husband last night: does that count as one drink or two? Then we had a drink after work on Tuesday…". You could then reword the question to avoid misunderstandings.

Appendix 8: Example topic guide for focus group

1. Here is an example topic guide for a focus group, for which the research question is “How do people experience group advice sessions?”. The research is being conducted in an organisation that gives personal finance advice and has recently changed from individual to group advice sessions. Comments in [Square brackets] explain how the topic guide was written.

How do people experience group advice sessions?

2. Aim: To get a picture of how people experience the new group advice sessions, compared to the previous individual advice sessions.

Introduction

3. [This section reminds the researcher of everything they need to say at the start. As you can see, it is in note form: the researcher will speak from these notes.]

- Say: who I am, name of organisation, what research is about, results will be used to improve services.
- Check for accessibility: that everyone can hear or see (if appropriate), that people can use tables, introduce personal assistants, that induction loop works and so on.
- Housekeeping: What to do if there is a fire, where the toilets are.
- Ethics: Consent, Anonymity, Confidentiality, Can leave at any time.
- Sign consent forms.
- Ask for permission to start recorder and start it.

Information

4. [The topic guide starts by gathering basic information, which will be important to set people's experiences in context. For example, when people talk about their experience of the advice service, it will be important to know when they attended and whether they experienced the change from individual to group advice sessions. Again, it is in note form: the researcher will ask each person "How old are you?"]

    - Age, where they live, when they started and stopped using the advice service, whether they previously attended the individual advice sessions.

Topics

5. [Ideally, the first topic would be a general one to get people talking. However, this is difficult when the topic is financial advice: a question like "How do you feel about your financial situation?" might be emotional and stop people talking. Instead, the topic guide goes through the stages of using the financial advice service, in chronological order.]

6. What brought them to the financial advice service?

    - What specific financial issues? [These notes are reminders to the researcher to cover certain points. Sometimes, they take the form of questions. Sometimes, they are simply notes of things the researcher should ask about]

    - How did they make the decision to come?

    - Was anyone else involved?

7. What was their first experience of the advice service?

    - Arriving at the centre.

    - Being booked in.

- What worked well? [Since the research aims to improve the advice centre's processes, the questions "What worked well?" and "What didn't work well?" are repeated a lot.]

- What didn't work well? What issues were there?

8. What was their first advice session like?

    - What was the facilitator like?

    - (If it was a group session) How did they find the other group members?

    - What worked well?

    - What didn't work well?

    - Any issues with attending, especially financial issues? [Since this is a financial advice service, it's especially important to be sure that it is not causing financial problems for people.]

    - Any access issues, including information in accessible formats, induction loops, venues and rooms, emergency exits, appropriate software and hardware on computers, and so on.

9. What were the remaining advice sessions like?

    - How did their experience change as the sessions went on?

    - What worked well?

    - What didn't work well?

10. How did they find the change from individual to group sessions? (For people that experienced this change.)

11. Why did they stop using the service? (For those that did.)

    - How did they find coming to the end of their advice sessions?

- What was their last session like?

12. How did they feel the advice helped them? Or didn't help them?

13. Anything else people want to say?

End

14. Thank everyone.

15. Remind them about confidentiality: Do not discuss what you've heard outside the room.

16. Stop recorder.

17. Give contact details in case anyone wants to get in touch.

18. Any final questions?

19. Ensure any taxis are booked as necessary.

20. Thank everyone again.

Appendix 9: Recording and transcribing

1. To make an audio recording, you need a good digital recorder. Choose one that can clearly record everything that people say. Think about where you will be recording and whether there will be background noise or music playing.

2. Before the interviews or focus groups, test the digital recorder and make sure you know exactly how it works. Try recording a conversation in the surroundings where you will be doing the interview or focus group.

3. After the interview or focus group, transcribe the recording. Either do this yourself or use a transcribing service. Do not underestimate how much time transcribing will take, especially for focus groups. As a rule of thumb, transcribing takes between four to ten times the length of the recording itself.

Appendix 10: Tips on running interviews and focus groups

Running an interview

1. If you are doing an interview, choose somewhere comfortable, where the person you are interviewing will feel free to talk. For sensitive topics, the person's home or office might be best. For less sensitive topics, a coffee shop might work well. Plan an hour or two for the interview, allowing extra time to meet the participant and deal with any problems (such as travel). Bring your topic guide, writing materials and digital recorder.

2. Think about people's access requirements. A deaf person may need a quiet environment, while a visually impaired person might not feel relaxed in a public space, because they cannot see who is present. Some people who are in pain or have concentration issues might want frequent breaks.

3. When you arrive, talk to the person and put them at their ease. Say what the research is about and anything you need to say about ethics (see Part III). If you are recording the interview, ask before starting the digital recorder.

4. Now start the interview. Use your topic guide: ask a question about each topic, then ask follow-up questions to explore people's answers. Do not follow the topic guide exactly, but be flexible: let your questions be guided by the way the interview is going. If you think something needs exploring in more detail, then explore it, and if something unexpected comes up, explore that too. Keep things informal: you should come across as a human being, not a scientist conducting an experiment!

5. As you talk, try to:

    - **Build a rapport**. Act naturally, as you would in a normal conversation. Be interested in what the person is saying. Smile and nod. Try not to look nervous: if you do, the person might pick up on this and be nervous themselves.

- **Listen.** Be sensitive to the person's tone of voice and body language. Ask open questions. If there is a moment of silence during the interview, do not worry or feel you need to fill it.

- **Do not judge.** Make it clear that there are no right or wrong answers. If you disagree with the person, do not say so: instead, explore why the person feels that way. Avoid correcting the person. Even simple comments can seem judgemental: for example, if you say "Why did you do that?", it might seem as though you are questioning what someone did.

- **Do not talk about yourself**.

- **Do not ask leading questions**. Do not phrase questions as if you are expecting a particular answer: for example, do not ask "Did that make you angry?". Instead, try "How did that make you feel?"

- **Encourage them to talk**. At the start of the interview, try using simple questions like "Why?" and "How were you feeling?" to get people to open up. They should get the message and talk more in the rest of the interview.

- **Manage the interview and the time**. Use your topic guide to ensure that you cover everything that needs to be covered.

6. People can get emotional during qualitative interviews, even about subjects that do not seem emotional. Be sensitive to how the person feels. If they get emotional, ask them if they want to take a break and, if they do, switch off the recorder for a while. Remember that it is your responsibility to protect the person from harm, including emotional harm (Part III. Ethics).

7. If you are discussing sensitive issues, remember that they have agreed to discuss them. Do not look uneasy or embarrassed. If necessary, reassure the person that the interview is confidential. However, remember again that you should not cause the person distress.

8. At the end of the interview, bring the conversation to a close. Switch off the recorder. Continue talking for a while afterwards. If the person has any negative feelings, give time for these to pass. Note that, at this stage, people can begin talking as if they were in the interview: if this happens, you can ask to switch the recorder back on and continue with the interview.

Running a focus group

9. For a focus group, you usually need two researchers and about six to eight participants. You might ask more people to attend, in case some drop out.

10. Find a room that is private, comfortable and large enough for all the participants. Put the chairs in a circle, with the researchers seated within this circle. There should be water and perhaps tea or coffee. Plan for the focus group to last 90 minutes to two hours, but, as with one-to-one interviews, allow extra time.

11. As people arrive, welcome them and make friendly conversation. When everyone is settled, introduce the research and cover any ethical points. Ask whether people are happy for you to start recording, then start the recorder.

12. Explain how a focus group works. Say that you are interested in everyone's thoughts and that it is useful if people talk to each other and answer each other's points. Tell people that, if they have something to say, they should say it, and not wait to be invited by the researchers to speak.

13. To begin, get everyone to introduce themselves and who they are. You might draw a small diagram of who everyone is and where they are seated.

14. Introduce the opening topic, which should be something fairly neutral and easy to talk about. As people talk, encourage people to talk and prompt everyone to say something. Try using body language to encourage people to talk: make eye

contact, lean forward or invite someone to speak with a gesture.

15. Be aware of how the group interacts. Groups often go through stages: “Forming”, as they get to know each other; “Storming”, as they conflict over how to proceed; “Norming”, as they find a way of working together; and “Performing”, as they begin to work well together.

16. Throughout, your role is to encourage open, interactive discussion, but also to keep the group focussed on the topics. Ask questions like “How do other people feel about that?” and “Can you say a bit more about that?” If topics emerge during the discussion that seem relevant to your research question, ask questions to explore them in more detail.

17. When you have discussed all the topics, end the discussion, thank the group and cover any final ethical issues. As with one-to-one interviews, allow some time at the end for talking and letting any negative feelings fade.

Appendix 11: An example of analysis

1. Here is an example of how to analyse qualitative data. It is short, so it is not totally realistic, but it will give you an idea.

2. First, here is the text which will be analysed. It is part of a transcription of a focus group. The research was about group advice sessions in a financial advice service. Two people, Misha and Danny, are talking.

MISHA: Yeah I remember sitting down with all these people looking at me. And I was like, is this like a support group, where we all talk about our money problems, because I just want information. I just want to know, I've got, I've got –

DANNY: You've got this thing –

MISHA: I've got this thing I need advice on, just information. I do not need a hug, you know –

DANNY: Yeah –

MISHA: You know?

DANNY: Yeah, see, I liked it, I liked all the people. But I held back saying stuff, because I do not want everyone to know my personal stuff. Then I talked to the guy afterwards, the facilitator guy, and he gave me a leaflet and that said what I needed.

3. As the researcher reads this transcript, she makes notes on it. These notes appear in square brackets below.

MISHA: Yeah I remember sitting down with all these people looking at me. [**All these people looking**] And I was like, is this like a support group, where we all talk about our money problems, because I just want information [**Just want information**]. I just want to know, I've got, I've got –

DANNY: You've got this thing –

MISHA: I've got this thing I need advice on, just information [**Just information**]. I do not need a hug [**Do not need a hug**], you know –

DANNY: Yeah –

MISHA: You know?

DANNY: Yeah, see, I liked it, I liked all the people [**Liked all the people**]. But I held back saying stuff [**Held back**], because I do not want everyone to know my personal stuff [**Do not want everyone to know**]. Then I talked to the guy afterwards, the facilitator guy, and he gave me a leaflet and that said what I needed [**Leaflet said what I needed**].

4. As you can see, these notes are simple: often, they just repeat what has been said. The researcher tries not to place her own interpretations on what is said. For example, it would be easy to interpret the statement “I remember sitting down with all these people looking at me” as “Embarrassed”, but this would probably be a mistake, since Misha does not actually say she was embarrassed.

5. Now, the researcher brings these notes together into small groups, like this:

    - Reactions to people
        - [Liked all the people]
        - [All these people looking]
        - [Do not need a hug]
    - Reluctant to talk
        - [Do not want everyone to know]
        - [Held back]
    - People just want information
        - [Just want information]
        - [Just information]

    - [Leaflet said what I needed].

6. The researcher then brings these groups together to form bigger groups.

- People find the sessions inhibiting
    - Reactions to people
    - Reluctant to talk
- People just want information, which the leaflets provide
    - People just want information

7. The researcher now has two themes: “People find the sessions inhibiting” and “People just want information, which the leaflets provide”. To check these, the researcher goes back to the text, where she finds the following quotes:

- “I held back saying stuff, because I do not want everyone to know my personal stuff.”
- “Then I talked to the guy afterwards, the facilitator guy, and he gave me a leaflet and that said what I needed”

8. The researcher thinks that the first quote matches well with the theme “People find the group sessions inhibiting”. However, the researcher thinks the second quote doesn’t quite match with the theme “People just want information, which the leaflet provides”. The quote suggests something more than “People just want information”: it suggests that the group sessions might actually prevent people getting information. The researcher renames this theme “Group session makes it hard to get information”.

9. So, starting from the text, the researcher has got the themes “People find the group sessions inhibiting” and “Group session makes it hard to get information”.

10. Again, remember that this is a short example. In a real piece of research, there would be many more notes and many more groups. The researcher would probably need to go

through three or four stages of grouping things together. She would also need to combine groups from several different transcripts of focus groups and look for overall themes.

Appendix 12: A logic model

1. A logic model helps you be clear about what your organisation wants to do and how it does it. It describes how something achieves its intended goals in five steps:

   - CONTEXT: What is the current situation? What issues need to be addressed?
   - INPUTS: What will be invested into a service to address these issues?[10]
   - OUTPUTS: What will the service produce directly?
   - OUTCOMES: What will be the short and medium term results of the service?
   - IMPACT: What will be the service's long-term outcome?

2. For example, here is a short logic model describing a training course to help people into employment:

   - CONTEXT: People who have been unemployed for a long time need help to get work.
   - INPUTS: Staff time, training materials and training venue.
   - OUTPUTS: Participants get the skills they need to find a job.
   - OUTCOMES: Participants get more job interviews. Participants get jobs.
   - IMPACT: The local employment rate goes up.

3. Draw one of these models for your service. Try holding a workshop, in which everyone involved in the research draws the model together. You might find it helpful to think about the stages in this order: Context, Impact, Outcomes, Outputs

[10] Some models use the following steps: Inputs, Activities ("What is the activity that will be carried out?"), Outputs, Outcomes, Impact.

and Inputs. That is: start by writing down the Context, then think about the Impact you eventually want to have. Then work backwards, thinking about what Outcomes you would want to see to know the Impact is on course to be achieved, then what Outputs you would need to see to know the Outcomes were on course.

4. As you draw the model, make sure you are clear about how your service works. Think about how each stage leads to the next. For example, in the model above, you might wonder: is the training course meant to give people the skills to find work or motivate them to find work? If motivation is important, put it in the logic model.

5. Further advice on how to develop a logic model can be found in Logic Mapping hints and tips guide.

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