

EAHP Academy Seminars 2019



® An ACPE application based activity

Qualitative research methods

About Qualitative research

What is qualitative research? Why is it used? How is it performed? When we evaluate hospital pharmacy services or develop new ones, what do we need qualitative research for? Qualitative research aims to answer the questions what, how and why. What do patients think of their medicines? Why patients do not use their medicines as intended? How do they take them instead and why? Qualitative research can be used on its own or alongside quantitative research to answer research questions. A multitude of different qualitative methods and approaches to qualitative analysis exist and it is important to know their advantages and disadvantages to select the most appropriate for a certain health services or pharmacy practice research question.

The Educational Need

Topics of EAHP events are fixed both in a **top-down** manner by the Scientific Committee and directly arising from the fields the members daily are moving in, such as:

- Politics
- Practice
- Education
- Current research and development
- New professional opportunities
- New technology
- New medicines
- New methodologies
- New treatments
- Research and development

and in a **bottom-up** manner by

- Proposals from members
- Surveys
- National associations based on their national strategies
- Focus groups
- Joint commissions
- Mandated members of the Scientific Committee.

Generally, topics will be approved by the EAHP Board. Educational need and gaps between best and current practice and actual versus desired skills respectively can be easily screened by the Scientific Committee from

- EC resolutions
- EAHP surveys (by Survey Monkey® or Adobe Acrobat® form generator)
- FIP statements
- Current agenda of the Board
- The Scientific Committee Meetings
- The General Assembly
- Evaluation of submitted abstracts for poster or oral presentation
- Past congresses' evaluations
- Existing data such as surveys, questionnaires, et cetera

The aim of this Academy Seminar is to provide tools which improve the position of the hospital pharmacist in Research & Development activities adapted to the own institution's environment.

Target audience

Delegates nominated by their national associations should fulfil specific requirements such as

- be hospital pharmacists recommended by each country's national association president;
- **be hospital pharmacists who wish to be involved in the planning and using qualitative research methods to advance the development of services in their hospital;**
- be fluent in English;
- attend all seminar sessions;
- complete seminar evaluation form;
- give presentation and/or demonstrate knowledge gained during workshops and seminar concluding session;
- must be able to accurately disseminate the knowledge obtained during the academy seminar within their country via seminars or workshops and provide documentation that dissemination was done (i.e. national workshop agendas). The national associations then need to report back on how this was accomplished to the EAHP via the country report which is presented each year during the EAHP General assembly.

Links to the EAHP mission & goals and to the European Statements of Hospital Pharmacy

The main EAHP goal covered by the Academy Seminar on Qualitative research is to promote role of hospital pharmacists in using and producing qualitative research to inform the development of hospital pharmacy services.

In addition to the European Statements of Hospital Pharmacy, the need is also arising from the EAHP Scientific Committee's experience when evaluating submitted abstracts.

Educational needs are linked to the European Statements of Hospital Pharmacy, Section 4.8 and 6.4.

Assessment of Learning Success

To evaluate the learning success as requested by ACPE and as defined by teaching goals and learning objectives, a Survey Monkey® driven online questionnaire will be used. This form can be completed online on day 2 after the Academy Seminar. The link will be communicated to the delegates. A participation certificate will be delivered by link after anonymous submission of the completed questionnaire.

Educational needs, Contents and Learning Objectives of the lectures

The Academy Seminar and Workshops show a main track from a general overview to national clinical implications. The focus is put and centred on the patient and on processes.

To clarify terms and obtain a commonality of understanding, some definitions might be outlined as far as they are needed to exclude misunderstandings. However, a broad discussion and philosophy on the terms is excluded.

Learning objectives of Academic Seminar

Participants will be able to:

- describe qualitative research and when it should be used;
- describe different methods used in qualitative research;
- conduct qualitative research ethically;
- apply methods used in qualitative interviews, including focus groups;
- apply methods used in qualitative analysis; and
- review the quality of qualitative research.

Link to Hospital Pharmacy Statements

The following chapters of the Hospital Pharmacy Statements are applied within this topic: Section 4.8 and 6.4.

Service evaluations and qualitative research

Dr Ulrika Gillespie ^[1], Uppsala University Hospital, Sweden

Jonathan Underhill ^[2], National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), United Kingdom

Linked to EAHP Statements

- Section 4: Clinical Pharmacy Systems (4.8)
- Section 6: Education and Research (6.4)

Abstract

When we perform pharmacy practice research (e.g. prospective clinical trials) or evaluate existing hospital pharmacy services – why should we always consider including qualitative research?

Qualitative research is used increasingly alongside quantitative trials of complex interventions to explore processes, contextual factors or intervention characteristics that may have influenced trial outcomes. Interventions that aim to improve the organisation and delivery of healthcare often involve complex socio-behavioural processes and are frequently 'made up of various interconnecting parts' that act both 'independently and inter-dependently', and that may be highly context-dependent. There is growing acknowledgement of the contribution that qualitative research can make to both the development and evaluation of these complex interventions, and randomised trials of such interventions are increasingly including qualitative components. Indeed, trials using only quantitative research methods generally yield limited insights into intervention mechanisms, barriers and facilitating factors, and qualitative methods are therefore needed to understand how the intervention was delivered and why it achieved the outcomes that it did. What were the experiences of the patients and health care professionals involved?

Learning objectives

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- describe why the inclusion of qualitative research in the evaluation of (complex) interventions and services is important.

Educational need addressed

It is of critical value to understand the importance of including research questions that ask “how” and “why” a service was or was *not* effective when designing a trial. These research questions can be answered using qualitative research methods.

Keywords: intervention mechanisms, process evaluation, service evaluation.

What is qualitative research?

Dr Marika Pohjanoksa-Mäntylä [3], *Clinical Pharmacy Group, Department of Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapy, Finland*

Linked to EAHP Pharmacy Statements

- Section 6: Education and Research (6.4)

Abstract

Qualitative research methods have increasingly been used in health services and pharmacy research. Qualitative research methods are commonly used to understand processes, structures and meaning that inform the action, and describe, explain, and explore, for example, patients’ experiences, perceptions, and feelings. Qualitative research methods used in pharmacy research include observation, interviews, focus groups, qualitative questionnaires, and document analysis. Is a qualitative approach appropriate to your study or should you use quantitative approach or maybe mix both? Understanding differences between qualitative and quantitative research, as well as familiarizing with different qualitative research methods is important when considering the method of choice to your own research.

Learning objectives

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- describe qualitative research and how it differs from, and can be combined with, quantitative research;
- describe use of interviews in qualitative research.

Educational need addressed

Knowledge of different methods used in qualitative research is essential for conducting good research.

Keywords: qualitative research, qualitative research methods, mixed methods, triangulation, Interviews.

Focus groups and observation studies

Dr Katri Hämeen-Anttila [4], *Finnish Medicines Agency (FIMEA), Finland*

Linked to EAHP Statements

- Section 6: Education and Research (6.4)

Abstract

Clinical pharmacy services are never integrated in the health care system simply because they seem needed for patient care or professional development. There is need for evidence of their place and usefulness. Pharmacists have a longstanding tradition for counting things – be it costs, side effects, drug-interactions or medication errors. Less emphasis has been put on truly understanding how costs affect priorities taken, how side effects influence patients' quality of life, or how and why healthcare personnel make medication errors, to mention a few examples. Focus groups and observational studies are two versatile qualitative methods. Focus groups can, for example, be used to explore challenges in communication or how cultures affect how procedures are followed. Observational studies can be used to get an insight in how work is “really” performed, and not how it should have been done.

Learning objectives

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- reflect upon if you have research questions or evaluation needs where focus groups or observational studies are useful methods;
- reflect upon your target group for focus groups or observational methods.

Educational need addressed

The ability to ask research questions which can be answered by either focus groups or observational studies.

Keywords: focus groups, observational studies.

Guidance to interviews in practice and ethics in qualitative research

Dr Jennifer Newbould ^[5], RAND Europe, United Kingdom

Linked to EAHP Statements

- Section 6: Education and Research (6.4)

Abstract

The conduct of the qualitative interview can have a great impact on the quality of the data obtained. The environment within which the interview is conducted, the behaviour and appearance of the interviewer as well as what is said need attention. Ethical considerations when undertaking qualitative research are essential to avoid patient or professional harms.

Learning objectives

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- consider interview environment and its impacts on research;
- understand the foundations of good ethics in qualitative research.

Educational need addressed

Consideration of how interview data is collected and of ethics are fundamental to good qualitative research.

Keywords: qualitative research, interviews, ethics.

How to analyse qualitative data?

Prof Dr Raisa Laaksonen [6], *Clinical Pharmacy Group, Department of Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapy, Finland*

[Linked to EAHP Statements](#)

- Section 6: Education and Research (6.4)

[Abstract](#)

Depending on the research questions and aims, the researchers choose the most appropriate research design and methods, including the method of analysis, to answer the research questions and to achieve the aims. Qualitative analysis may be deductive which means that findings of previous research or theories are used to direct the analysis of the collected data. On the other hand, qualitative analysis may be inductive which means that the collected data itself directs the analysis, perhaps leading to building theories. When employing a descriptive approach to analysis, the findings are described, using words or summaries of words derived from the data, whereas when employing an explanatory approach to analysis, the findings are explained through concepts that are interpretations of the data. How do content and framework analysis and grounded approach fit to these approaches?

[Learning objectives](#)

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- describe different approaches to qualitative analysis;
- select an appropriate method of qualitative analysis.

[Educational need addressed](#)

Knowledge of different approaches to qualitative analysis is critical in undertaking qualitative research.

Keywords: qualitative analysis, deductive approach, inductive approach, descriptive approach, explanatory approach, content analysis, framework analysis, grounded approach.

Wrap-up: what to do next? How will I take this forward?

Dr Ulrika Gillespie [1], *Uppsala University Hospital, Sweden*

Jonathan Underhill [2], *National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), United Kingdom*

[Linked to EAHP Statements](#)

- Section 4: Clinical Pharmacy Systems (4.8)
- Section 6: Education and Research (6.4)

[Abstract](#)

At the end of any educational event, it is important to reflect on what you have learned and how you might take this back to your workplace to influence change. This session will consist of an action learning set to allow delegates some time and space to reflect by reading back through their notes and recalling the conversations they have had with tutors and other delegates, discussing this with the new contacts they have made during this seminar and, importantly, writing down what they intend to do with this learning on qualitative research methods. We will ask:

- What three things have you learned from this session;
- What three things you are going to do differently as a result of this seminar; and

- What success will look like for you in a year's time when you reflect again on what you have helped to change.

Learning objectives

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- review their learning on qualitative research methods
- express how they will take what they have learned back to their hospital
- construct an action plan for how they will affect change in their workplace as a result of this seminar

Educational need addressed

The ability to reflect on their learning and translate that into an action plan is crucial for the delegates to take the next steps in qualitative research.

Keywords: qualitative research, qualitative research methods, reflection, action learning.

Contents and Learning Objectives of the workshops

Linked to EAHP Statements

The following chapters of the Hospital Pharmacy Statements are applied within this topic: Section 4: Clinical Pharmacy Systems (4.8) and Section 6: Education and Research (6.4).

Learning objectives

At the end of these workshops, participants will be able to:

- develop and refine research questions related to qualitative research;
- choose appropriate methods to match research questions;
- develop a topic guide for interviews or focus groups;
- apply methods used in qualitative interviews, including focus groups;
- apply methods used in qualitative analysis; and
- review the quality of qualitative research.

Educational need addressed

To apply the theoretical knowledge of qualitative research in practice.

The contents of the workshops are as follows:

Workshop 1: Developing aims for research and choosing methods

Dr Marika Pohjanoksa-Mäntylä [3], Clinical Pharmacy Group, Department of Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapy, Finland

Linked to EAHP Statements

- Section 6: Education and Research (6.4)

Abstract

Developing aims for research is one of the first things to consider when planning research. The choice between different study designs and qualitative research methods depends fundamentally on the aims of the research and the practicalities related to data collection. Questions to consider are: Is there a clear

statement of the aims; and are the qualitative methods chosen suitable for achieving the aims of the study?

Learning objectives

At the end of these workshops, participants will be able to:

- formulate research aims and objectives of the study;
- justify the research design and methods.

Educational need addressed:

Developing aims for research and choosing suitable study designs and methods and among the first things to consider when planning research. The choice between different study designs and qualitative research methods.

Keywords: qualitative research, research aims, research methods.

Workshop 2a: Developing a topic guide

Prof Dr Raisa Laaksonen [6], *Clinical Pharmacy Group, Department of Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapy, Finland*

Linked to EAHP Statements

- Section 6: Education and Research (6.4)

Abstract

Depending on the research questions and aims, the researchers choose the most appropriate research design and methods, for example interviews, requiring developing a topic guide, to answer the research questions and to achieve the aims. What is a topic guide, and how to develop one? How to ensure that the developed topic guide works?

Learning objectives

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- develop a topic guide for interviews or focus groups.

Educational need addressed:

Developing a topic guide is critical for undertaking qualitative interviews or focus groups.

Keywords: interview, focus group, topic guide, interview schedule.

Workshop 2b: Focus groups in practice

Dr Katri Hämeen-Anttila [4], *Finnish Medicines Agency (FIMEA), Finland*

Linked to EAHP Statements

- Section 6: Education and Research (6.4)

Abstract

We will run a focus group based on the topic guide from workshop 2a. The participants work in groups of 5-6 delegates and actually run a focus group interview. Running a focus group is a team effort. The participant will take on the role as interviewer, secretary, responsible for recording the focus group, and playing actual participants.

Learning objectives

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- perform a focus group based on a topic guide;
- play and reflect upon the responsibility of the different roles in a focus group.

Educational need addressed

Practical and theoretical knowledge and skills in performing focus groups. Creating an atmosphere of confidence and anonymity for focus groups.

Keywords: first-hand experience with focus groups, topic guide, leadership.

Interactive discussion 2c: Reflection on the focus groups

Dr Katri Hämeen-Anttila ^[4], Finnish Medicines Agency (FIMEA), Finland

Linked to EAHP Statements

- Section 6: Education and Research (6.4)

Abstract

From the exercise of running a focus group, the participants will reflect upon if this was a good method to answer questions in the topic guide. Depending on how the event actually went, the participants should reflect upon the following: Would another method have been more suitable? Were the questions well understood and answered? How was the dynamics between the participants? Did all participants contribute equally? What was your own contribution? Were some roles (interviewer, secretary, recording, actual participants) more challenging or maybe unnecessary? What will the participants like to further develop if they were to perform future focus group? Finally, what skills do they have to strengthen before doing this in the “real” world?

Learning objectives

At the end of these workshops, participants will be able to:

- reflect upon pros and cons of focus groups;
- reflect upon which skills they have to develop before running their own focus groups;
- reflect on their interaction with focus group participants;
- reflection on your own contribution in focus group.

Educational need addressed

Practical and theoretical knowledge and skills in performing focus groups.

Keywords: reflection, first-hand experience with a focus group.

Practical experience 2d: Interviews

Dr Jennifer Newbould ^[5], RAND Europe, United Kingdom

[Linked to EAHP Statements](#)

- Section 6: Education and Research (6.4)

Abstract

Conducting an interview involves the researcher learning how to ask questions, leave pauses, use prompts and elicit responses from the interviewee. In this workshop participants will practice the skill of conducting an interview with use of role play, building on their learning from previous sessions.

Learning objectives

At the end of these workshops, participants will be able to:

- conduct an interview;

Educational need addressed

Practice of conducting an interview is essential to developing the skill.

Keywords: qualitative methods, interviews.

Interactive discussion 2e: Reflection on the interviews

Dr Jennifer Newbould [5], RAND Europe, United Kingdom

[Linked to EAHP Statements](#)

- Section 6: Education and Research (6.4)

Abstract

From the exercise in conducting an interview participants will reflect upon their experience of interviewing. Participants will be encouraged to reflect on: What went well in the interview? What did not go so well? What are the strengths of an interview approach? What are the weaknesses? How is a rapport built with an interviewee? How can the rapport be compromised in an interview? What areas would participants like to focus on further before doing this in the 'real world'?

Learning objectives

At the end of these workshops, participants will be able to:

- reflect upon pros and cons of interviews;
- reflect upon which skills they have to develop before running their own interviews;
- reflect on their interaction with an interviewee.

Educational need addressed

Practical and theoretical knowledge and skills in performing interviews.

Keywords: reflection, first-hand experience with interviewing.

Workshop 3: How to start the analysis of qualitative data

Prof Dr Raisa Laaksonen [6], Clinical Pharmacy Group, Department of Pharmacology and

[Linked to EAHP Statements](#)

- Section 6: Education and Research (6.4)

Abstract

Depending on the research questions and aims, the researchers choose the most appropriate research design and methods, including the method of analysis, to answer the research questions and to achieve the aims. How does qualitative analysis work in practice? What is coding?

Learning objectives

At the end of these workshops, participants will be able to:

- apply coding of qualitative data.

Educational need addressed:

Application of coding of qualitative data is critical in undertaking qualitative analysis.

Keywords: qualitative analysis, coding.

Workshop 4: How to appraise the quality of qualitative research

Dr Marika Pohjanoksa-Mäntylä [3], Clinical Pharmacy Group, Department of Pharmacology and Pharmacotherapy, Finland

[Linked to EAHP Statements](#)

- Section 6: Education and Research (6.4)

Abstract

Critical appraisal of research has a key role in applying evidence-based approach in health care and pharmacy. A part of appraising the quality of qualitative research is assessing its validity, reliability, credibility, and trustworthiness. The quality can be assessed using multiple criteria based on the principles that characterize qualitative research. Multiple checklists have been developed to help researchers think critically and systematically when appraising qualitative research. These checklists can also be useful for those planning their own study protocol and reporting results.

Learning objectives

At the end of these workshops, participants will be able to:

- describe how to appraise quality of qualitative research;
- describe the concepts used in critical appraisal of qualitative research.

Educational need addressed

Critical appraisal of the research is important not only when reading others publications but also for conducting and reporting own research.

Keywords: qualitative research, critical appraisal, validity, reliability, credibility, trustworthiness.

Last update: 3 July 2019

Links

[1] <http://www.eahp.eu/content/dr-ulrika-gillespie-2> [2] <http://www.eahp.eu/content/jonathan-underhill-0> [3]
<http://www.eahp.eu/content/dr-marika-pohjanoksa-m%C3%A4ntyl%C3%A4> [4]
<http://www.eahp.eu/content/dr-katri-h%C3%A4meen-anttila> [5] <http://www.eahp.eu/content/dr-jennifer-newbould> [6] <http://www.eahp.eu/content/prof-dr-raisa-laaksonen#>