Narrative-based Methodology for Qualitative Health Research: Ensuring Quality, Rigor, Consistency and Efficiency in a Mixed-Methods Health Research Evaluation Protocol

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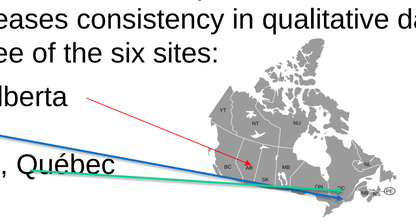
CONTEXT

- IMPACT is an international (Australia-Canada) multi-site research program that aims to improve access to care for vulnerable populations through locally tailored organizational interventions in Primary Health Care (PHC)
- Researchers worked with communities, clinicians and decision makers to design and implement 6 interventions in 6 different regions – 3 in Canada and 3 in Australia

OBJECTIVE

- To design a high-quality, rigorous and efficient qualitative methodology that ensures quality and rigor as well as increases consistency in qualitative data collection and analysis of interview data in three of the six sites:
  - North Lethbridge, Alberta
  - Ottawa, Ontario
  - Montérégie (region), Québec



METHODS

- Literature Review in Innovative Qualitative Methods:
  - Narrative analysis in qualitative research (QR)[1-2-3-4]
  - Tape-based analysis[5]
  - Framework thematic analysis[6-7-8-9]
  - Contact summary sheet[10]
  - CAQDAS (Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software)
- Design of "Narrative Summaries", a **qualitative data collection analytical method**
- Intercoder reliability test performed across all three sites and simultaneously with Australian team*

METHODOLOGICAL DESIGNED APPROACH

NARRATIVE INQUIRY[1-2-3-4]

- ELICITS UNDERSTANDING OF PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES THROUGH STORIES-MAKING PROCESSES

TAPE-BASED ANALYSIS[5]

- ANALYSIS TAKES PLACE AT THE AUDIO LEVEL
- WITH CAQDAS, ABILITY TO LINK AUDIO TO CODES
- CAN BE COMBINED WITH FRAMEWORK THEMATIC ANALYSIS APPROACH

NARRATIVE SUMMARIES

=

1st layer of analytical coding

FRAMEWORK ANALYTICAL APPROACH[6-7]

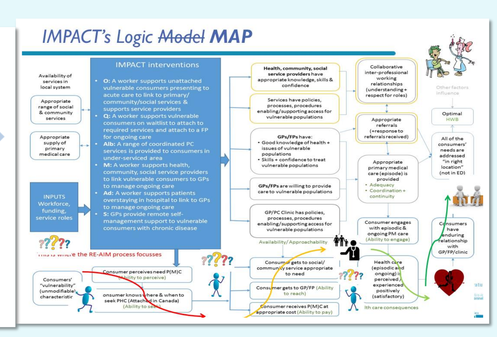
- THEMATIC APPROACH
- SYNTHESIZES DATA
- PROCEEDS FROM LARGE CATEGORIES/THEMES; THEN TO THEMATIC CODING

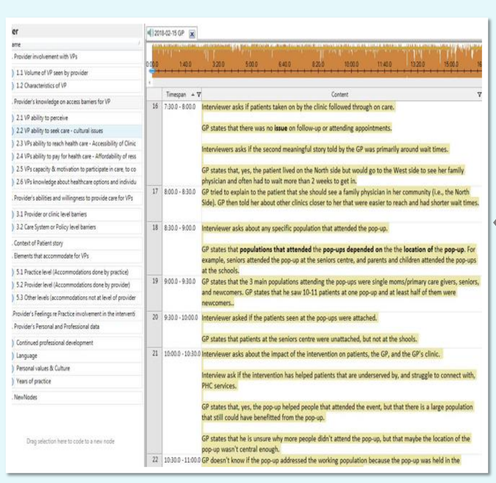
CONTACT SUMMARY SHEET[8]

- FIELD DEBRIEFING NOTES AFTER THE INTERVIEW
- ANALYTICAL PURPOSE AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT OF DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

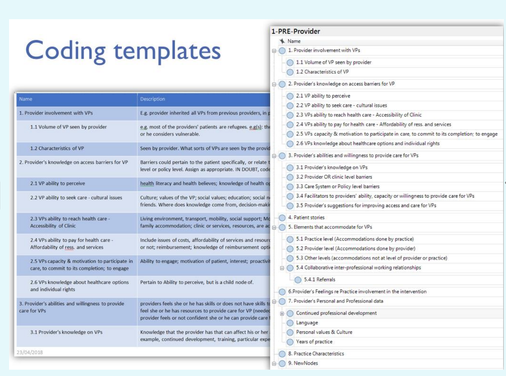
DESIGN RESULT (PART 2)

Levesque JF, Harris MF, Russell G. Patient-centred access to health care: conceptualising access at the interface of health systems and populations. Int J Equity Health. 2013 Mar 11;12:18



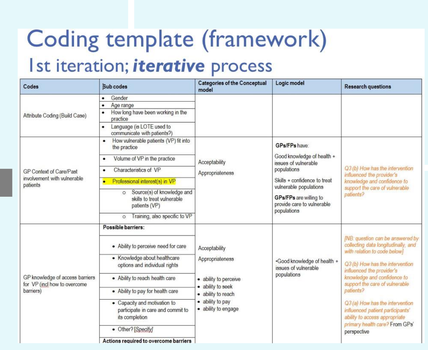


Coding templates



Coding template (framework)

1st iteration; ***iterative*** process



DESIGN RESULT (PART1)

IMPACT LOGIC MAP

- 1 logic model for all 6 interventions that embeds Lévesque et al (2013) conceptualization of **Access**[9]

Modified framework analysis using nVIVO

- Narrative inquiry approach = conceptualizes as **map**
- Telling the **story** of the participant into the map, their **journey**
- Summarizing answers of participants to dimensions of the logic map in nVIVO

"Narrative summaries" analysis

- Tape-based analysis strategy
- Ready for next steps of analysis (Framework thematic & longitudinal analysis)

Timespan	50403prET	Keywords/Notes (Coder1)
0:00.0 - 0:30.0	The interviewer explains that the purpose of the project is to improve primary care access to resources for the vulnerable population through instituting a navigator within the practice to assist patients in getting to community based resources. **Main issues affecting access to community resources for the health of the people seen by provider**	
0:30.0 - 1:00.0	GP states that it is "hard to be aware of all the resources that are available", and then "finding them as the biggest issue". He states that "they are a training environment and that trainees have a limited understanding what the needs of the patient are because it is coming from second hand information".	
1:00.0 - 1:30.0	GP goes explains that "trainees cannot really appreciate from the synopsis that they receive from residents what the requirements for support are". He agrees with the interviewer that "they might not be aware of the breadth of resources and those that might be most effective".	

CONCLUSION & INNOVATIVE CONTRIBUTION

- Narrative **summaries** provide a combination of **high-quality qualitative rigor, appropriateness,** and **efficiency** to data analysis, especially for evaluative research.
  - Embed analytical considerations at the earliest stages & iteration between various analysts to ensure consistency, quality and efficiency
- To ensure consistency across sites in data collection and analysis, three major instruments were developed:
  1. Narrative-driven coding templates tailored to the IMPACT logic model as journey to access care for vulnerable populations
  2. Combined approach of tape-based analysis & narrative analysis to perform **1st layer of coding**
- Suited for **evaluative research**
  - While design appears **deductive**, framework is open and provides solely a **way to see**, to organize "the real" (data)
  - Narrative inquiry approach ensures local analysts are interested to capture the **story/journey** of participants, and accompanied by the logic map, but not determined by it.
- Narrative inquiry in Qualitative Health research is gaining interest and attention
  - Particularly suited for knowledge mobilization and translation with policy- & decision makers.

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