

**Final report on a conference on maximising the value of qualitative research in randomised controlled trials (RCTs), and a linked workshop to develop guidelines for process evaluations in RCTs**

1. The conference was held on 21 November 2012 in Sheffield with 91 attendees from England, Scotland, Wales, Norway and The Netherlands. 97% of 38 delegates returning the evaluation form said it was an excellent or good day. Their feedback was that they felt that the talks were inspiring and they wanted further events to offer training and discussion.
2. The workshop was held on 22 November in Sheffield with 9 members: Professor Pat Hoddinott (Stirling), Professor Bridget Young (Liverpool, NW Hub), Professor Kate Thomas (Sheffield), Professor Jenny Donovan (Bristol, CONDUCT Hub), Dr Joy Adamson (York), Dr Simon Lewin (Norway), Dr Yvonne Jansen (The Netherlands), Dr Graham Moore (Cardiff) and Professor Alicia O’Cathain (Sheffield). The discussion focused on developing guidance for the use of qualitative research in feasibility studies for trials because the MRC has already funded a group to develop guidance for process evaluations.
3. The following events arose as a direct outcome of this project:
  - a. Professor Jenny Donovan applied for a symposium at the Society for Clinical Trials in Boston, USA. Professors Jenny Donovan, Bridget Young, Pat Hoddinott and Alicia O’Cathain and Dr Nicola Mills gave this symposium on using qualitative research to revolutionize trials on 22 May 2013 to 70 delegates from the USA and Europe.
  - b. Professor Alicia O’Cathain accepted an invitation to join the scientific committee of the Clinical Trials Methodology Conference to be held in November 2013 in order to lead a theme on the use of qualitative research with trials. Currently, 22 abstracts have been submitted to the qualitative research theme and abstracts are being selected for oral and poster presentation.
  - c. Professor Alicia O’Cathain accepted an invitation to join an MRC funded project writing guidance for undertaking process evaluations with trials. Professor Jenny Donovan accepted an invitation to be an external advisor on this project.
  - d. Workshop and symposium members are writing a journal article ‘O’Cathain A, Adamson J, Donovan J, Hoddinott P, Jansen Y, Lewin S, Mills N, Moore G, Thomas K, Young B. Guidance on using qualitative research in feasibility studies for randomized controlled trials.’ We have approached the editor of the journal *Trials* who has responded positively to the proposed submission. The first draft was discussed by symposium members and a further draft is underway. Discussions are also underway for an article on developing interventions, led by Professor Pat Hoddinott.
  - e. Professors Pat Hoddinott and Alicia O’Cathain joined the CONDUCT-II bid to strengthen the qualitative theme. This has been funded to start in 2014.

Professor Alicia O’Cathain, Professor Jenny Donovan, Professor Bridget Young (24 May 2013)