



Best Practice Guidelines

Conducting Research



The following reflective questions are intended to be used within the research team to have open discussions about this process. We encourage you to use the empty box to make your own notes or reflections.

1

Does our research design and methodology allow us to extend our recruitment strategies to be more inclusive?

For example, are we biasing our research by only recruiting individuals in clinical ED services?

2

Are we actively engaging with under-represented groups and networks?

How can we use co-production to determine the best platforms, networks and community resources to recruit from? How can we develop meaningful, and longer term, relationships with these networks and community organizations beyond recruitment for this research project?

Conducting Research continued...

3

Are there unique needs or experiences of certain groups that we are seeking to recruit?

For example, in some ethnic minority groups it will be very important to consider the different dialogues around food and/or mental health presentations.

4

What are the communication needs of our target population?

How can we make sure we accommodate these needs and make recruitment and the research process as accessible as possible?

5

Have we factored in enough time?

This could be specific to our recruitment process to support meaningful engagement, as well as to allow time for individuals to process information and to support informed consent.

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6

Have we clearly communicated the purpose and intended outcomes of our research?

For example: what we are researching, why we are doing this and how the research could help the community?

7

Can we be visible and transparent with the research process?

How can we make the research team and processes that will take place transparent? Would this process lend itself to using different mediums (text, videos, maps or venues) to assist people in knowing what to expect?

8

Have we clearly shared all the information needed to collect informed consent?

Have we engaged with the co-production process when approaching this and considering multiple levels within consent? Have we discussed this with the participants and made sure that all questions have been addressed, and that expectations and boundaries are clear?

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9

How can we be consistent and clear in communication throughout the research process?

For example, have we considered whether we have a single point of contact, or the availability of different methods of keeping in touch with the research team (e.g., email, online, chat function or face-to-face discussions)?

10

What could the challenges or sources of tension with our methodology in the autism and ED community?

Are there any ethical concerns with this approach? Are there practical aspects of this technique or methodology that must be considered with this population, for example, environment and sensory stressors? Can barriers to research be reduced?



DON'T FORGET



Have we discussed or engaged with the overarching best practice principles?

- » Develop a shared understanding of the use of language.
- » Develop a shared research language.
- » Establish clear definitions of co-production.
- » Establish clear roles and expectations.
- » Ensure that peer researchers are reimbursed for their time.
- » Recruit, recognize and accommodate for the range of Autistic experiences of eating disorders.
- » Make sure there are well-being practices and supports in place.
- » Involve peer researcher in several co-production roles across all stages of the research process.
- » Conduct autism-affirming research.
- » Seek to improve trust and to foster a shared, collaborative relationship.