PC4

GUIDE TO REVIEWING CONCEPTS AND APPLICATIONS

Nikki Davis, member of the PC4 **Community Advisory Group (CAG)**, has shared her tips and insights into reviewing research for new PC4 Community Network members.

Nikki Davis

Lived Experience

Participating in your first concept development workshop probably feels a little bit daunting. Keep in mind that the lived experience that you'll be bringing to the workshop is incredibly valuable and valued. You won't be expected to have the answers to everything, and if anything isn't clear to you, don't be shy to ask questions of the researchers.

As my role as a PC4 CAG member involves representing people from the wider cancer community, I always have to think about how a study may benefit or present a problem for others besides myself. Listening to and being aware of other people's stories plays a big part in this. In the early days of our community advisory group, we found peer support helpful. It might be helpful for you to work with each other on this concept.

When reviewing a study, my focus is on what may impact patients or carers. Some information is more relevant to researchers, and I've given examples of this below.

Seven questions to ask myself when revieiwing

Is it clear why this research is being conducted?

Does this project meet an important need in the community?

Would patients/people involved in the project find it burden some/take too much time?

Are there any problems that might arise for participants?

Are there any obvious barriers that might stop people from wanting to participate?

Are there any ways to improve this project that might make it easier to participate?

Would I join this study? — why or why not

Terms and Acronyms

There are a few basic research terms in this study that would be helpful for you to familiarise yourself with if you're not already. A Google search will produce some simple definitions:

- Qualitative vs. quantitative research
- Pilot study
- Randomised controlled trial
- Systematic review
- Focus group

Like all studies, there are quite a few acronyms. In written proposals you'll see the term in full the first time it is mentioned, along with its abbreviated form, e.g., prostate cancer (PCa). It can be a bit different in the concept development workshop, so if the acronyms are flying around and

Research proposal sections
(and how to review them)

Overview / Background / Rationale

-Do I recognise the issues described?
-Do I recognise the current failings in managing the issues described?
- Is this study novel in some way because the researcher has discovered a gap?
- Does this study consider the wider group of people affected by the issues described?
- Do I understand the intervention model described? (Important as it underpins the study)

Research proposal / Study design

Recruitment
- Do I have any ideas about ways to recruit study participants, other than the ones already described?
- Is there anything about the recruitment process that might impact participants in a negative way?
- Do I have any ideas about ways to recruit study participants, other than the ones already mentioned by the researcher?

Outputs
Do they contribute to the value of the study?
Data analysis
Researcher territory. I just give this a quick read.
Outcome measures
Researcher territory. It's good to be aware of the measures that investigators use but I don't concern myself with them.

Outcomes and Significance

Do they contribute to the value of this study?
Support for proposed research
Useful to read as it gives an idea of the collaborations involved in studies.
Research Environment
Just as I want to know about input from people with lived experience (as mentioned under in the background or development work undertaken section), so too do those who make decisions about grant funding for studies. The inclusion of your lived experience panel here is important.
References:
I flick through these for interest only.

Don't forget you can always ask the PC4 Office what sections you need to read if it isn't clear and you can always ask the researcher questions if you are unsure of something.