

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form ([see an example](#)) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below. Some articles will have been accepted based in part or entirely on reviews undertaken for other BMJ Group journals. These will be reproduced where possible.

ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Protocol of a qualitative study exploring the roles of Diffusion Fellows in bridging the research to practice gap
AUTHORS	Emma Rowley

VERSION 1 - REVIEW

REVIEWER	Dr Vicky Ward, Lecturer Academic Unit of Primary Care, Leeds Institute of Health Sciences, University of Leeds, UK
REVIEW RETURNED	16/11/2011

THE STUDY	<p>There are two points (p6 and p7) where the research question is mentioned. Whilst the question presented on page 7 is clear, the reference to the 'successes and failures' of the programme is perhaps misleading. If the evaluation seeks to understand and evaluate the successes and failures of the programme, then the methods described are inadequate. If, as I understand, the evaluation is designed to uncover more about the role of a knowledge broker, then the methods are a better fit. The author may wish to make some changes here to avoid any potential confusion. In terms of the methods, I would like to see more detail about the overall timeline of the evaluation (i.e. has it already started, how long will it last). Some details are provided, but these need to be presented more clearly. I would also prefer to see a clearer presentation of the topic guide for interviews and think readers will expect to see this. The addition of a bulleted list would help. In terms of the research design, it is difficult to see how the topics to be covered relate to the overall research question and theoretical understanding of knowledge exchange alluded to in the introduction. This is mainly a presentational issue, but needs to be made clearer to enable the reader to understand how the evaluation design will answer the research question.</p> <p>It is not clear whether the typologies in Table 1 will be used as a point of departure or as the basis for further elaboration. Do they have a wider (i.e. analytical) role in the study?</p> <p>Statistical methods are not appropriate for this study. There are no supplemental documents which are relevant.</p>
GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>I am impressed with the attention to detail in explaining the visual methods and creative mapping exercise and I like this protocol very much. My main concerns are around the presentation of the methods and the overall research design. I am confident that the work the authors have planned is appropriate, but this needs strengthening before publication.</p>

VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

In response to the reviewer comments from Vicky Ward:

Mention to the research question on page 7 has been amended to tally with that on page 6, to better represent the objective of the study: to uncover more about the role of a knowledge broker of the Diffusion Fellow role.

More detail has been included about the overall timeline of the evaluation (included when data collection started and is due to end).

A list of interview questions has been provided for all participant types (Diffusion Fellows / NHS Line Managers / CLAHRC study team representatives). An additional few lines has been added to clarify how the topics covered in the interviews and creative mapping exercise relate to the overall research question and theoretical understanding of knowledge exchange alluded to in the introduction.

I have chosen to delete the typologies (previously Table 1) and all reference to them; in hindsight, it seems at odds with the socio-contextual framework underpinning the CLAHRC-NDL approach to state the use of these typologies up-front. Rather, I may return to it in analysis, if the data suggests it will be relevant.

I am grateful for the attention you have both given to the paper.

VERSION 2 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Dr Vicky Ward, Lecturer Academic Unit of Primary Care, Leeds Institute of Health Sciences, University of Leeds, UK
REVIEW RETURNED	16/11/2011
GENERAL COMMENTS	The author has addressed my previous comments well and the protocol is much clearer as a result.