Qualitative Evaluation of the National Early Warning Score (NEWS)- Interview Topic guide

Part A. Introduction, consent and background

- Thanks, introduce self, re-state purpose of the interview (to understand the use of NEWS in pre-hospital settings)

- Discussion of how interview will be recorded, right to withdrawal, issues of confidentiality, anonymisation and informed consent. (face-to-face written consent, telephone verbal consent). Verbal consent: switch audio recorder on – go through each point on written consent form.

Part B: The use of NEWS in pre-hospital settings

- Can you tell us about your professional background and about the role in which you have encountered NEWS?

- Can you tell us about your experience of working with NEWS
  - How long have you / your organisation been using the scoring system?
  - In your organisation ➔ Who uses it? (measures, communicates, responds)
  - How do you find using it ➔ easy/difficult
  - Could you give some examples of how it is used in your organisation?

- There are 6 different clinical parameters, how do you find each of these to score?
  - For Reference (no need to go through all of these one by one) i) respiratory rate ii) oxygen saturations iii) temperature iv) systolic blood pressure v) pulse rate vi) level of consciousness.
  - Are all the parameters appropriate in your setting?
  - Do you calculate a score? How do you use the score ➔ are there defined responses / protocols in your organisation linked to the score?
  - Do you think that the scores and the indicated actions work/are appropriate?
  - Have the scoring levels and resulting actions caused any problems?

- How did you previously assess the severity of a patient’s illness?
  - How did the NEWS tool integrate with established routines/practices in your organisation?

- How is NEWS used in your organisation
  - At ‘handover of care’ points?
  - As a tool to monitor clinical status in the day to day care of a patient?
  - As a tool in referral ➔ has it changed the way you / your organisation make referrals?

- Does the tool work effectively in your organisation? is it suited to your organisation?
  - How was the tool introduced?
  - Has the tool been adapted in any way to suit your particular organisation?

- What format is NEWS used - electronic or paper?
  - Is there a choice?
  - Which format would you prefer?
  - How does the format integrate with the clinical records systems that you use?

- How do other health care professionals that you work with get on with NEWS (within your organisation and / or with other organisations)?

- Have you had positive or negative experiences using the tool? Could you give examples of either of these?

- Can you think of ways in which the tool could be improved?
• Can you think of ways in which the tool could be used more effectively in your organisation and/or in other health care organisations?
• Would you like to see the tool used more widely?

**Part C: Winding up**
• Can you think of anyone else who it would be useful for us to talk to?
• Thanks for participating. I have covered my questions, is there anything that you would like to add?