

Online Supplementary Material – Research methods and protocol

Participants and recruitment

There were two routes for participant recruitment:

(1) *General neurology clinics for those referred to secondary care.* A headache specialist explained the study to patients who were consulted on an agreed day. If the patient was interested, a researcher was available in the waiting room immediately afterwards to answer questions. Patients were provided with an information sheet and asked to contact the researcher at a later date if they wanted to be involved with the study.

(2) *For those given direct access via their GP to a neuroimaging department.* The researcher coordinated with staff to know whether any patients referred by GPs would be getting a scan for headache. The researcher was available in the waiting room to speak with potential participants about the research. Any interested patients received an information sheet and could provide their details if they wished to be contacted by a researcher about the study.

Protocol amendment

In designing the original study protocol, having not received MRI results was an exclusion criterion. We planned to interview participants approximately two months after receiving an MRI, assuming their results would have been communicated to them. However, because of a delay in launching the new GP access MRI facility fixed contracts of research workers, we were granted an ethics amendment. This exclusion criterion was omitted, and four PC pathway participants who had not received their scan results after two months were included with the study. The interview schedule was accordingly amended to include any eligible patient two months after their MRI.