

'Just one Interview': making visible the 'hidden' workload associated with qualitative research within the PICU Context.

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Background

- There is little guidance or published evidence to offer advice on the workload and staffing associated with qualitative research
- Ensuring studies are adequately resourced and costed is invaluable to ensure studies can recruit and retain participants.

Aim

- To illuminate research nurse activity within a sub-study conducted on PICU and review planned workload versus actual workload.



Method



- All parents approached for a multi-centre RCT were subsequently approached to participate in a qualitative sub-study (see *Figure 1*)
- Anticipated research nurse activity/Points of Contact (POC) were identified from the protocol/HRA statement of activities, and compared to actual documented activity
- Anticipated vs actual time / participant compared

Figure 1

Multi-centre double blind RCT



Single site qualitative sub-study
(Consenters /Decliners to RCT)
One interview: discuss research decision-making .
Interview within 6 wks hospital discharge



Audit: Research nurse workload anticipated vs actual.

Results

- **RCT:** 38/ 46 families consented (83% consent rate)
- **Qualitative sub-study:** 38 eligible, 26 participants (**23 families**) interviewed (68% consent rate)
- **Anticipated research activity:** 3 POC, 1.72 hours/participant; total 51.6 hours (equivalent of 6.88days research nurse work) (see *Table 1*)
- **Actual research activity** for all 38 approached patients median 5 (IQR 4-8) points of contact with 99.15 hours spent on recruitment/retention activities.
- **Working time:** Research nurse activity was 47.65 hours in excess of anticipated workload, equating to 6.3 additional days of work (**91% greater than anticipated**)

Table 1

Anticipated	Overall Activity	Actual (Median, IQR)
30	Participants	23 families (21 consented RCT, 2 declined RCT)
3	POC	5 (4-8)
1.72 hours	Time/Participant	2.7 hours (1.58-3.28)
51.6 hours	Total Time	99.15 hours
6.9	Working days	13.2

Conclusion

- There was significant workload associated with conducting a relatively simple qualitative sub study, which was not fully articulated within the study protocol.
- Highlighting this workload is invaluable to ensure realistic project timelines, recruitment targets and sufficient staff funding

Implications for practice

- Research teams need a well staffed workforce offering flexible 7 day cover to aid recruitment and retention activities.
- Protocols must specify realistic recruitment targets and timelines, with sufficient funding for the actual workload.

