

Testing accelerated experience-based co-design: a qualitative study of using a national archive of patient experience narrative interviews to promote rapid patient-centred service improvement

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Plain English summary

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Improving patient experience is a priority for the government and the NHS – and for all of us who use the NHS. But to do this we need to understand better what it is really like to be a patient with a particular condition, and patients need a direct say in planning changes to health care that make a real difference to them.

Getting patients to tell their story in detailed interviews is a good way of capturing patient perspectives. We also know that showing patient interviews to staff is a powerful way to help them think about how to improve care. This is an approach which has been used successfully in experience-based co-design (EBCD). In EBCD, interviewers normally spend months interviewing local patients and staff to understand their perspectives, and then use edited films of the patient interviews to stimulate joint 'co-design' work between patients and staff to improve services.

However, collecting and analysing interviews takes time and money; it is unlikely that each local health service will be able to repeat this for every health condition. We tested what happened in two hospitals when we used interviews already collected by researchers at Oxford University instead of new local interviews. We called this 'accelerated experience-based co-design' (AEBCD) and compared it with previous studies of EBCD.

Results showed that AEBCD worked well; using national rather than local films made little difference to the kind of discussions between staff and patients, and the resulting 48 improvement activities were similar to those in EBCD, at lower cost.

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