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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Declared competing interests of authors: none

Published February 2014
DOI: 10.3310/hsdr02040

Plain English summary

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Health Services and Delivery Research 2014; Vol. 2: No. 4
DOI: 10.3310/hsdr02040

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Imroving 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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This report

The research reported in this issue of the journal was funded by the HS&DR programme or one of its proceeding programmes as project number 10/1009/14. The contractual start date was in September 2011. The final report began editorial review in March 2013 and was accepted for publication in July 2013. The authors have been wholly responsible for all data collection, analysis and interpretation, and for writing up their work. The HS&DR editors and production house have tried to ensure the accuracy of the authors’ report and would like to thank the reviewers for their constructive comments on the final report document. However, they do not accept liability for damages or losses arising from material published in this report.

This report presents independent research funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). The views and opinions expressed by authors in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the NHS, the NIHR, NETSCC, the HS&DR programme or the Department of Health. If there are verbatim quotations included in this publication the views and opinions expressed by the interviewees are those of the interviewees and do not necessarily reflect those of the authors, those of the NHS, the NIHR, NETSCC, the HS&DR programme or the Department of Health.

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