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## Research Article

# Development and application of a rapid research prioritisation process for identifying health research priorities in low- and middle-income countries: the RAPID-RP stakeholder analysis

Andrew P Dickens,[1,2,†] Nicola Gale,[3,†] Peymane Adab,[1*] KK Cheng,[1] Chunhua Chi,[4] Jaime Correia de Sousa,[5,6] Alexandra Enocson,[1] Amanda Farley,[1] Kate Jolly,[1] Sue Jowett,[1] Mariam Maglakelidze,[7,8] Tamaz Maghlakelidze,[7,9] Sonia Martins,[10] Zihan Pan,[4] Alice Sitch,[1,11] Katrina Stavrikj,[12] Alice Turner,[1] Siân Williams[6] and Rachel E Jordan[1]

[1]Institute of Applied Health Research, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK
[2]Observational and Pragmatic Research Institute, Midview City, Singapore
[3]Health Services Management Centre, School of Social Policy, College of Social Sciences, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK
[4]Department of General Practice, Peking University First Hospital, Beijing, China
[5]International Primary Care Respiratory Group, Edinburgh, Scotland
[6]Life and Health Sciences Research Institute (ICVS), School of Medicine, University of Minho, Braga, Portugal; ICVS/3B's, PT Government Associate Laboratory, Braga/Guimarães, Portugal
[7]Georgian Respiratory Association, Tbilisi, Georgia
[8]PetreShotadze Tbilisi Medical Academy, Tbilisi, Georgia
[9]Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia
[10]Family Medicine, ABC Medical School, Sao Paulo, Brazil
[11]NIHR Birmingham Biomedical Research Centre, University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust and University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK
[12]Center for Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Skopje, North Macedonia

*Corresponding author  p.adab@bham.ac.uk
†Joint first authors

## Plain language summary

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## Background:

Many topics need research, but within limited resources, we need to focus on the most important. There are lots of established approaches for deciding what topics are more important than others to be studied. However, they are time-consuming and complicated. We developed a simpler rapid approach by combining aspects of the previous methods.

## Methods:

Our team included 26 researchers in respiratory health and primary care in the United Kingdom, Brazil, China, Georgia and North Macedonia. Using our collective expertise, we identified 10 topics that need more research to help prevent, better detect or treat people with chronic lung disease. We invited groups of patients with lung conditions, clinical staff, managers and those involved in health policy, as well as researchers to attend separate discussion groups in each country. Each group talked through the potential study topics and scored them independently, considering importance, practicality and fairness. The group then discussed the combined scores and explored why each topic had a higher or lower score. Then each member ranked the topics in order of importance, considering their reflections on the discussions.

## Results:

Four to eight people attended each group and sessions lasted under four hours. We combined final importance scores from different groups to finalise the research priorities. Although there were some differences between groups and countries, the top and bottom scoring topics were consistent. Generally groups thought it was important to (1) find the best ways to identify people with lung disease earlier, (2) test whether telling smokers their lung age would help them quit, (3) adapt lung rehabilitation programmes for low income countries, and (4) improve education for staff working in primary care. All groups gave low scores to topics around the use of e-cigarettes for quitting smoking, encouraging handwashing to reduce chest infections and helping patients with weight management to improve their lung symptoms.

## Conclusions:

Although some aspects can be improved, we showed that this adapted approach can help identify research priorities quickly and relatively simply. We highlight some lessons learnt and further work to enable more groups to use this approach.