

Research Template

This document outlines the basic research method the Healthwatch partnership will adopt in its community research activity. It will be used by the partnership and by the community researchers that carry out community research on behalf of Healthwatch.

Please read this document fully and use it as a guide for the research you will be doing.

There are two stages to community research, firstly you need to plan what you are going to do. Then you will need to do the research and write a report based on what you find out.

Stage 1 - Plan your project

Follow these steps to design and plan out your research. For further help and advice please speak to the course leader. Once you have filled out each section of stage 1 you are ready to start your research. Before you start your research it is also worth finding out if this research has already been done, or if you could join in with other research going on in the area.

1. Research Question

What is the main question that you will be trying to answer through this research? What are you trying to find out? This should be your starting point. Your final report should attempt to answer this question.

2. Aims of Project

What are the main things your research will try to find out? Do a short bullet pointed list of the aims. For example, a projects aims could be:

- to analyse the main health issues in Charles Dickens ward
- to find out why people don't access (xxx) services in this area
- to make recommendations based on the research done

3. Method

How will you conduct the research? Will it be through a survey, a focus group, a written report based on existing evidence, or something else? What will you ask people? What information will you be looking for?

4. Who will the participants be?

If you are engaging with people, who will they be? What groups are they? Have you missed anyone out that should be included?

5. How will participants be recruited?

Where will you go to get these people involved? Will you ask for volunteers or approach people in public places?

6. What will you do to get people involved?

How will you get people to get involved? Will there be an incentive or reward? How will you approach them?

7. What data are we collecting?

Be precise and clear. What information do you want to collect? Numbers, comments, views? Is it personal information? Be careful not to face problems with the data protection act here. For more information and advice on how to deal with sensitive information see: http://www.ico.gov.uk/for_organisations/data_protection.aspx and make sure to discuss these issues with your course leader.

8. How will we analyse this data?

What will you do once you have the information? How will you produce your report and how will you ensure you answer your original research question?

9. Are there any ethical issues?

Have you thought about the effects on people by doing this research? How will you handle the information you receive if it's sensitive? Could your research be offensive or difficult for people to take part in? If you have concerns please discuss them with your course leader.

10. When is the deadline for your work to be finished?

It is important to plan a project that can be achieved in the time available and that will be delivered on time. Think about the timeframe in all the parts of your planning.

11. Evaluation

How will you evaluate the information you get? Through tables and charts or a written evaluation?

12. Recommendations

Do you plan to make any recommendations in the report? If so how will you develop these?

OK, now once you have finished your plan you are ready to carry out your research. Once you have collected your data or have gathered your information you can present it in the

following way:

Stage 2 - Writing the final report

Follow these headings to put your final report together. You can use a lot of the information you did in the project plan.

1. Project Title

Now that you want to present your findings, what will you call your report? It should be short and clear, linked to your research question.

2. Project Question

What was the main question you were trying to answer through your research? Put it in here.

3. Project Aims

Include the aims of your research from your plan. These are the things your report will attempt to do.

4. Executive summary

Explain very briefly what the main aims of the research were, how you found out your results and the main findings were. Also include what the recommendations are. This section is designed to let the reader know what you are trying to say in your report in only a few lines.

5. Introduction

Here explain why you have chosen to do this research. What are the main issues that you wanted to address? And what you hope to achieve from doing this research.

6. Methods

How did you carry out your research? Why did you decide to do it this method? Were there any limitations or problems? Explain all the important decisions you made in carrying out your research.

7. Results

What did you find out from doing all of this research? Display any tables or graphs here and explain what the main findings were. Give the main results of your research in this section.

8. Interpretation of results

What does it mean? What can we learn from the results of the research carried out? Are there any limitations to the research, what has been missed out? What could be looked at

next time?

9. Conclusion

So overall, what have you learned from doing this research? Has it meet the aims of the project? If you were to do it again what would you do differently? What are the main findings?

10. Recommendations

Based on the results and conclusions, what would be the main recommendations you would make? What needs to change in order to make things work better?

If you need any more help or support in doing your research report please ask the course leader to help.