



A guide to making patient films

See also:

<https://www.pointofcarefoundation.org.uk/resource/experience-based-co-design-ebcd-toolkit/step-by-step-guide/8-interviewing-filming-patients/>

This involves creating a comfortable environment for families to share their stories of services, and capturing those stories effectively, to provide rich information that will guide improvement.

The interviews should take place within a couple of weeks of them being asked to take part, in a location where the patient feels comfortable. This may be at a hospital, community centre or in their home. Beforehand, send out notes to help them prepare, see [our example interview schedule](#) (at the end of this guide). When the person arrives, welcome them, help them feel comfortable, and take time to develop a rapport. Make sure there are comfortable seats, refreshments, tissues, and plenty of privacy. Parents will be asked to consent to the clips that will go into the final version, so encourage them to be completely open at this stage.

The interview itself usually takes around an hour. Each individual film is then edited down for the final compilation film, which is half an hour long. In previous projects this has been divided between 11-12 interviewees, but this can vary. Try to let people tell their story in their own way, but prepare a list of questions for any interviewees who need more structure. While you're listening, make a note of comments that require clarification or more detail. The interview also forms the start of the editing process, as the interviewer may also be involved in editing the film. So, as the parent is talking, listen out for key points and 'touch points' – themes that particularly resonate, and that may have also arisen in interviews with other people.

Key points

- Realistically, you can conduct only two, or at most three, interviews in a day. Be aware that it can be emotionally draining for the interviewer as well as the interviewee. Always check on the day of the interview that the agreed time is still convenient for the family. Bear in mind that patients may have to cancel at short notice – for example, due to sickness.
- Let the family decide where the interview will take place. This is very important as the aim is to make them as comfortable as possible. Factor in the time that the interviewer will need to take to travel to and set up each interview. If you are travelling to a family home, inform a colleague of your planned movements. (In the UK we often refer people to the Suzy Lamplugh Trust for further personal safety advice). https://www.suzylamplugh.org/?gclid=EAlaIqobChMI55W4iNOu4AIVzrXtCh214wsBEAAAYASAAEgJFAvD_BwE
- If people are travelling to the venue, offer to pay their travel expenses, and make sure they are clear about directions and travel arrangements. You may also decide to give people vouchers or payment for their time.
- As the video is single-shot footage, showing only the person's head, it may be possible for only one team member to film while interviewing using a tripod. If the interviewer is not confident with the technology this could be a distraction, so make sure they spend some time practising and preparing. If a separate cameraperson is involved in the process, ask them to stand some distance from the interview so that it is less intrusive.
- A little practice goes a long way in getting the angle, framing and lighting right. We have included some practical tips below.
- The audio quality captured by video recorders can be variable. If you are worried about the quality of your equipment, take an audio recorder as well. Always do a quick test in the room, to make sure that the recording level is adequate for the background noise levels and for your participant's natural speech volume.
- The interviewer does not need formal training, but must be empathetic, sensitive, non-judgemental, and able to inspire trust. They also need good knowledge of the patient pathway so they can re-order events into the correct chronological order where necessary when editing.
- Throughout the interview, remember that the family member is being filmed, so do not interrupt them. The more the interviewer speaks, the harder it is to edit a clear message from the interview, so try not to make encouraging noises, and remember to turn off all phones. If there are animals or children in the room or some other noise interruption, you may need to ask the parent to repeat themselves.
- Respect family and staff privacy and confidentiality, and ask parents to try not to use names of staff when describing services. Anything that slips through will be anonymised in the editing process.

- Parents may be nervous before the interview and distressed afterwards. Invite them to bring along a friend, family member or carer for moral support, and schedule in time beforehand and afterwards for a supportive debrief.
- Arrange psychosocial support from within the clinical team or from outside services in case issues are raised that require the parent to have some support. Examples might include a patient-support phone line or staff within the clinical team. The interviewer should also have adequate support too – for example, the opportunity to debrief with a colleague.

Editing the film

See also:

<https://www.pointofcarefoundation.org.uk/resource/experience-based-co-design-ebcd-toolkit/step-by-step-guide/9-editing-film/>

By this stage you should have a wealth of information, but in order to communicate the salient points you need to reduce it to a manageable length and highlight the key issues.

This step involves watching all unedited films of the patient interviews – either with another person or alone – to get an overview of what has been said. You then need to pick out the key ‘touch points’ – themes that particularly resonate, and that may have also arisen in a number of interviews – within each interview and edit each film down to a length of about 10 minutes. The next step is to identify key themes (such as ‘getting your diagnosis’ or ‘moving through the service’) and divide up clips into those themes, interweaving the various patients’ quotes with each other. The final video will show a title screen for each theme, such as ‘outpatients’, followed by views from a number of different patients on that topic.

You will need editing equipment and software to carry this out.

Key points

- This is the most labour-intensive part of the process – especially if you are unfamiliar with the software. Editing down an interview into a ten-minute video could take a whole day, though you are likely to speed up over time.
- The final video will usually present experiences following the clinical pathway chronologically.
- Try to balance out negative comments with positive ones.
- Focus on stories that constructively explain things that need improving at clearly identifiable stages of the patient pathway.
- Your priority must be to include high-quality material, and it is important to include some quotes from everyone who was interviewed.

- Give families the final veto on what is included in the edited film. Ideally, send them a copy with all their quotes that you would like to include. Do not send them the edited film, as this would betray the confidentiality of other patients. Alternatively, send them the unedited film of themselves, ask if there are any sections they would prefer not included, and make sure these are not used. Allow time for families to receive and comment on these materials well before the family feedback event.

Practical tips

We'd like to acknowledge the team at Haelo for these practical tips. Organisations like Haelo and the Media Trust run courses in film making for this sort of work. HAELO is an healthcare improvement organisation based in Manchester, UK. For more information about Haelo's work, contact Stephen.Miller@haelo.nhs.uk

For example see

<http://www.haelo.org.uk/events/online-film-workshop/>

<https://mediatrust.org/news-events/events/filmmaking/>

Very professional films can be made at virtually zero cost, and with very little skill. Iphones and Ipads are great for this. But if you do want more training, Haelo does a very economical online course, using Google hangouts, which is really good.

Imovie is a good platform and can be done on an iphone, ipad or Mac. There are youtube videos to help with editing, but it is fairly intuitive. Make sure you have enough memory. 1 minute takes about 130mb. Here is a link to an online tutorial for Imovie <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BpgVWk8bFJ8>

If you'd like to try editing your clips on a laptop or desktop this is a great free program: <http://www.openshotvideo.com> and here are all the tutorials on how to use it: <https://www.openshot.org/user-guide/>

Sound can sometimes be a problem. Here is a good, cheap external microphone you can plug into your headphone socket: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Microphone-Seacue-Omnidirectional-Condenser-Smartphones/dp/B0727Q5M3G> (not this will not work on iPhone 7 or any device that doesn't have a headphone socket). There are loads of variations on this on Amazon.

Be sure to save the movies securely – preferably in encrypted form.

Tips for using Imovie

- Put the device in airplane mode – you don't want emails etc popping up mid way through filming
- Film your content using the photo / video mode – landscape.
- Open Imovie and select new project
- This is the process by which you merge separate snippets of film, still photographs, and sound together to create your movie.

- Film for longer than you think necessary. A beginner error is cutting off first and last words. Press record before you start and don't stop until you put the camera down. It is easy to edit bits off afterwards.
- Use the grid lines to frame the shot. Two thirds / one third ratio seems to be visually pleasing (so a person situated in one third of the screen)
- Tap the yellow box to fix the focus on something.
- Create sound either using the same film function (and then just use the audio), or using the voice memo function. Then overlay one on top of the other. Or, of course just record it as you are filming. Sound levels often vary so use the slider to try and equalise this. Sound recording outside can be a nightmare with wind, echoes etc. In an indoor, muffled environment is best. Sound is often too quiet.
- Film at 1080 frames per minute – the equivalent of high definition.
- Film in landscape – arms tucked in will give less camera shake. Keep the camera close to the body.
- Light coming from behind will turn your subject into a silhouette.
- It is easy to drag single images to create a photo montage. Leave them visible for longer than you think necessary. Same goes for captions and text – leave it there long enough that the viewer could read it twice.
- The settings for transitions between separate clips of film are a bit cheesy – just choose no transition.
- Split film into separate clips using the scissors tool and the small yellow “handles” at either end of your film clip. Otherwise if you add a caption, it will show for the duration of the film. (See the menu bar at the bottom – actions, split, scissors, delete).
- You can choose the audio level for each film clip by clicking on the speaker symbol.
- Project settings allows you to add filters and music.

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