

A case study: Evaluation of a community survey of home care needs

THE CHALLENGE

We were approached by a health authority to provide an appraisal and report on any design weaknesses in a survey questionnaire of home care needs.

THE SOLUTION

The questionnaire was evaluated using QuestReview™ which is an evidenced-based expert review diagnostic tool which benchmarks a questionnaire against 32 design parameters of questionnaire design good practice. These include: word length, ambiguity and bias etc. Each parameter is rated using a traffic light system:

The questionnaire comprised 30 questions comprising mainly multiple choice and 4 open-ended questions. Five questions were identified as vague and difficult to understand. Three questions were rated as biased in their wording and two questions had insufficient response options.

Due to age of the target population it was considered that 4 open-ended questions could be cognitively demanding of participants.

Our appraisal included, estimated completion time, reading ease, overall layout and question order.

OUTCOME

Based on our detailed feedback and telephone discussion with the client, we were instructed to implement the recommendations. As recommended in our report we undertook a small scale study with 15 representative of the target population to evaluate these changes. Results from this study showed the revised questionnaire to be acceptable to all participants.

A case study: Evaluation of a chronic condition symptom scale prior to translatability assessment

THE CHALLENGE

To undertake an evaluation of the content of a chronic condition symptom frequency scale prior to pre-translatability assessment and inclusion in a clinical trial.

THE SOLUTION

The scale was evaluated using QuestReview™ which is an evidenced-based expert review diagnostic tool which benchmarks a questionnaire against 32 design parameters of questionnaire design good practice. The 32 parameters include, word length, ambiguity, wording and bias etc. Each parameter is rated using a traffic light system: No defects identified, Revision suggested, Major defects identified.

Fifty percent of questions were identified requiring revision including instructions on how to complete the questionnaire..

A total of 10 major design weaknesses and 13 suggested revisions were identified across 5 questions.

Questionnaire overall performance included, completion time, mean number of words per question, reading ease, reading grade.

OUTCOME

Based on our feedback the client decided to remove the questionnaire from the trial as the quality of data was of concern and in relation to the cost of retaining the questionnaire in the trial.