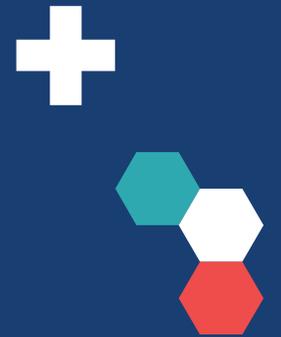


# Critical appraisal of research papers:



## Session 1: qualitative

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Dr Hayley Alderson  
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# Types of studies

- Why is this study being conducted?
- Exploration
- Description
- Explanation
- Feasibility studies
- Applied research
  - Evaluation studies
  - Action research

# Units of analysis

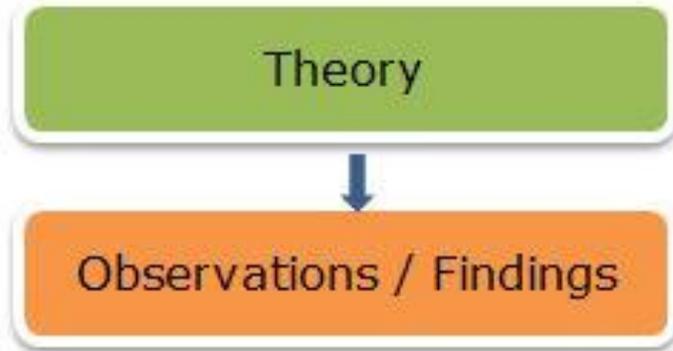
- Items (things; technology; assistive technology)
- Experiences (patients, people living with dementia; carers...)
- Social facts (policy change in ageing societies; health inequalities)
- Abstract ideas (views; opinions; not necessarily measurable)
- Processes (implementation)
- Outcomes (evaluation)
- Impact.....
  
- **Mode of explanation:**
- quantitative (measurement)
- qualitative (interpretation and meaning)

# Quantitative vs qualitative research methods

Quantitative	Qualitative
Measure objective facts	Construct social reality
Focus on variables	Focus on interactive processes/events
Reliability is key	Authenticity is key
Value free	Values are present and explicit
Independent of context	Situationally constrained
Many cases or subjects	Few cases or subjects
Statistical analysis	Thematic analysis
Researcher is detached	Researcher is involved

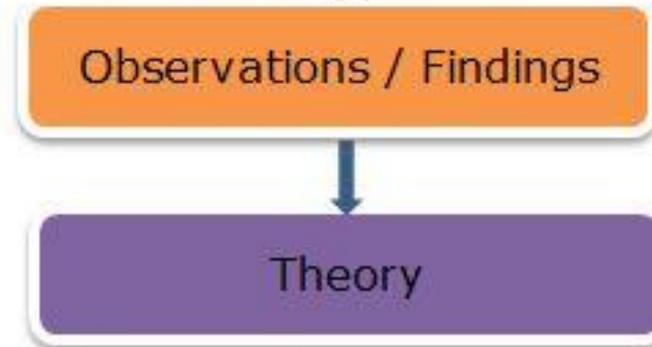
# Deductive and inductive approaches to the relationship between theory and research

Deductive approach



Conclusion certain

Inductive approach



Conclusion: probable  
Seeks to supply evidence for conclusion;  
Seeks generalisation from a few cases to many

Bryman, 2008

# Which method(s) suit the project?

- Different paradigms / different data
  - What is my research question? (who, what, how many, why...)
  - Which type of project (exploratory; hypothesis testing...)
  - Where is my project situated in the wider literature / in current debates?
  
  - Who constitutes my sample (every 50<sup>th</sup> household / case study.....)
  - Various sets / types of study participants (service users, service providers, commissioners...)  
Ethnography.....**Mixed methods** ..... surveys?  

- What does this mean for data collection and analysis? [practical issues]
  - Which type of data needs to be collected / can be collected?
  - How will data be analysed?

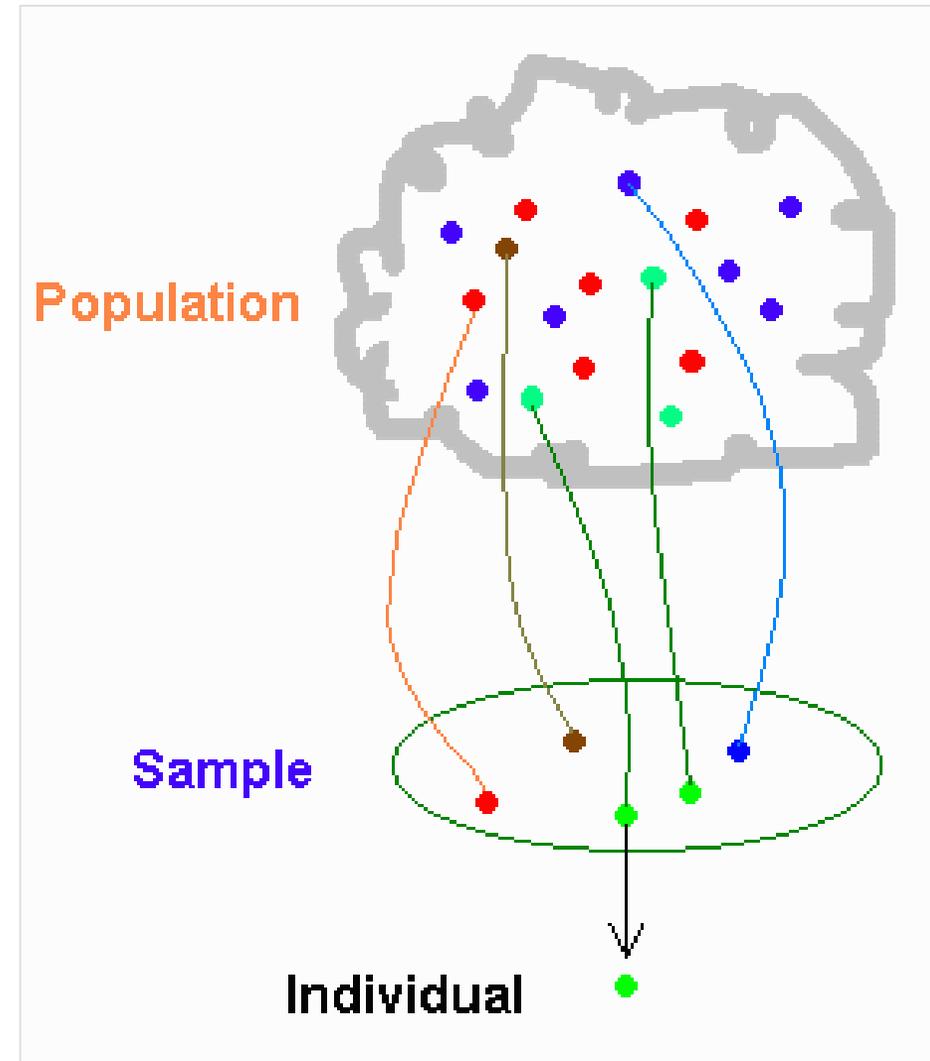
# Sampling



Sampling frame

Sample selection

Sample size



# Data

- Collecting data (interviews / focus groups / participant observation....)
- Analysing data
- Interpreting data
- Reporting data (published paper [peer-reviewed]; reports; grey-literature)

# What is Critical appraisal?

“Critical appraisal is the process of carefully and systematically examining the research to judge its trustworthiness, and its value and relevance in a particular context”

Burls (2009) What is critical appraisal?

[What\\_is\\_critical\\_appraisal.pdf \(bandolier.org.uk\)](#)

# Why is it important?

- The aim to provide the best possible care within the social care field.
- You need reliable information (what is helpful/harmful)
- Not all research is good quality (bias)

# So what should you be looking for?

You need to:

- Weigh up the evidence to see how useful it is in decision making
- Assess the benefits and strengths against its flaws and weaknesses
- Assess the research process and results
- Have studies been undertaken in a way that makes their findings reliable?

# So what should you be looking for?

- Assess credibility- does the data presented fit with the views of the participants studied?
  - Independent analysis of data by more than one researcher, verbatim quotes.
- Assess transferability- are research findings transferable to other similar settings?
  - Contextual background information, demographics.
- Assess dependability- is the process of research logical and clearly documented?
  - Has peer review taken place

# Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP)

The CASP Qualitative checklist provides 10 questions that help you to consider the quality of a qualitative piece of work.

[https://casp-uk.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CASP-Qualitative-Checklist-2018\\_fillable\\_form.pdf](https://casp-uk.b-cdn.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CASP-Qualitative-Checklist-2018_fillable_form.pdf)

# Groupwork

Groupwork exercise to review a qualitative paper