

Review of: "Research & Evaluation Framework 2022/23"

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Potential competing interests: The author(s) declared that no potential competing interests exist.

(1) This is a good introduction to many of the methods used within healthcare research (and evaluation), but I feel parts of it need to be a little more nuanced. Separating Research and Evaluation for the purposes of explanation may help to explain these two approaches, but in reality, it is very rare that they are entirely separated; especially within the context of healthcare. For instance, it's not uncommon for "Research" to begin with questions from key stakeholders; some research is funded due to a strong "pull" from patient groups.

It is also very common for large projects to contain both elements; for instance, research sitting within a larger evaluation project, or vice versa. Authors do explain the overlap, but it needs more detail earlier for the novice/student reader. I think some examples would help explain more clearly.

(2) Agree with other reviewers about the need to put PPI earlier in the manuscript, and emphasise the role that PPI has throughout each stage of the project. One way that this might be done is to show how PPI influences the Four-Phase Approach, perhaps by adjusting the diagram to show how PPI impacts and feeds in to each of these questions.

(3) I think the mixed methodologies section could be stronger, and the relative strengths and weaknesses of each approach could be explained in more detail. An example could help here. - For instance, a quantitative survey may not tell us "Why" certain things are preferred over others, but interviews do not give us a good idea of things like prevalence. Again, an illustrative example may help.

(4) Authors may wish to reconsider the narrative structure of this report. There is not a unifying narrative thread which links the sections together. For instance, section 1 talks of Research and Service Evaluation; and section two moves on to Quality Improvement, but authors do not state how QI relates the previous concepts; is QI Research or Evaluation? Can it be both? Research and Evaluation are picked up again in the "Data and Measurement for Improvement" section but the context is more specific here. Research and Evaluation need to be discussed earlier, and their relation to QI made more clear earlier. Authors need to ensure that in general, the sections lead on from one another (even if they can be read out of sync).