

Interview topic guide

Interview strategy

Given the exploratory nature of the study, the interview will be flexible and sensitive to the cues of the participant. It is important to establish a good rapport with the respondent and to develop a common language to explore their experiences rather than imposing too rigid a framework. The interview will use the participant's cues to move the conversation forward and will only introduce certain topics if appropriate.

Introduction Time: 5 min

Interviewer ID: _____ Date (including day): _____

Time started _____ Time finished _____

Name: _____

I just want to be sure that you are happy with what this interview involves? I will ask you a few questions about your illness and the use of online networking and the experiences you have had.

I don't want the session to be too formal and I really just want to hear what you have to say so we can learn from your experiences.

You are free with to withdraw at any time.

Everything you say will be treated confidentially.

Some of the things I might ask you to talk about are quite personal so bear in mind that you don't have to answer any questions you are not comfortable with.

Let me know if there are any questions that you don't want to answer or if you feel tired or upset in any way then we can stop.

Can I just check that you are happy to go ahead and for me to record the interview?

Do you have any questions you would like to ask?

Section 1 (past and present). 15 min

I would like to ask you some questions about your life and use of the Internet in the past few years.

- Can you tell me a bit about yourself? Prompts: And then what happened? What did you do after that? How did you feel about that?
- How come you started using Facebook?
- Are there family and friends in your life that have played an important role during your illness?

Section 2 Everyday use of online networking and the environment. Time 20 min

- How often do you use Facebook and where? Prompts: do you usually use it in home setting out a specific time for browsing/posting or are you a more 'on the go' person, accessing the site periodically throughout the day, via a smartphone, for example?
- How would you describe the role of online networking in your life?

- Does the use of diabetes-related groups/pages influence your own decisions about managing your illness? How? Could you give examples?
- Do you feel the use of the Internet and Facebook has been a positive experience or have there been any experiences you are not happy about? Can you elaborate?
- What would you describe as the main benefits or dis-benefits of using online social networking by people with diabetes? Are there any reasons for or against long-term use?
- [if the participant is a long term user] Do you think the way you use (and feel about) online networking has changed since you first registered on the site? How?

Section 3 Using different Facebook features Time 15-20 min

I'd like to talk a bit more about your ways of using the Facebook site. I have a laptop with me if you wanted to show me which pages/groups/features you usually access/contribute to, or talk me through any other relevant content.

- Can you tell me a bit more about your experiences of using Facebook different features? Prompt: Do you use specific pages/groups? Do you use it to stay in touch with family/friends?
- Facebook is said to be about 'social networking'. How would you describe your 'network'? Prompt: what are the main components or who are the main actors? (You can show me these on the site if you wish).
- Do you normally just read through updates/discussions or try to contribute/reply whenever you can? Do you mind showing me how you do that?
- What do you find most useful about this page/group [if there is a specific group/feature mentioned by the respondent]? Prompt: any potential benefits such as new information, staying in touch, etc. Why do you think it is useful for people with chronic illness?
- Can you think of examples when after using online networking you changed the way you think about your illness?
- If you could change anything about the site's features or about online networking in general, what would it be?

Many thanks for your time and your participation! Do you have any questions?