**Interview schedule**

Potential participants (following Schwartz et al 2010) will be asked in advance of their interview to think of one or two especially difficult ethical challenges faced on deployment that they might be willing to discuss in detail during the interview.

Participants will be reminded about the nature and purpose of the interview. Consent will be obtained before the interview commences and a warning will be given that the audio-recording is about to commence before the recording device is switched on.

Questions

1. Please very briefly describe your healthcare background and experience prior to deployment on Operation Gritrock.

Prompt for years of experience and previous military deployments, if any, and any previous humanitarian relief experience

2. When were you deployed on Operation Gritrock and in what role?

Prompts dates and generic job role

3. Describe the circumstances under which you were deployed on Operation Gritrock.

Prompt – actively volunteered, received deployment orders, combination of both, expected/unexpected, notice given

4. What were your feelings about this deployment when you first found out you might be deploying?

Prompts – hopes, fears, concerns, expectations, motivation for going. How were these feelings normal/unusual?

5. Before we begin to discuss your experiences, please tell me how you would define an ethical challenge in your professional life using as general terms as possible

Prompt – aim here is to ensure common understanding

An ethical challenge may look like:

* Ethics has to do with our ideas about right and wrong
* We are thinking about situations where, for instance, the right thing to do isn’t clear or the right thing to do is clear but you can’t do anything about it, or there is a sense that something is wrong but you have to do it nonetheless.
* The ethically preferred response is unclear
* The ethically preferred response is clear but cannot be enacted
* Someone must choose between equally unacceptable responses to a situation
* Someone must choose between equally unacceptable responses to a situation
* Afterwards I felt very uncomfortable about it
* I knew it was wrong
* Knowing what I ought to do, but couldn’t do anything about it

6. What were your expectations of the kinds of ethical challenges that you might face on this deployment?

Prompts: general issues based on shared understanding derived from previous questions, e.g. allocating time and resources, risks of infection to self/others; what informed expectations?

7. In preparation for this interview, we asked you to think of one or two ethical challenges that you faced on this deployment. Please describe these in as much detail as possible.

Prompts – elaborations – what happened next? Why was this a particular struggle for you at the time? Get the participant to talk about what they believe the rights and wrongs to be in these circumstances, and the feelings the circumstances evoked

8. How did you respond to this/these ethical challenge(s) at the time?

Prompts: long and short term responses, outcomes, why the response chosen, decision making factors that led to this – explore underlying values employed and justifications; how did others respond? Other issues that arose from the response? Is there something that you might do differently with hindsight? (If two examples given work through both.)

9. Thinking not just about your own direct experiences, but also other accounts you have heard about from other people, to what extent was this challenge typical of those faced whilst on this deployment?

Prompts – range/frequency of ethical challenges experienced; what was especially difficult and why? What was easier and why? Explore whether experiences of DMS staff different to e.g. NHS staff who deployed or NGO staff.

10. How well prepared did you feel to meet these kinds of challenges and what sorts of resources, past experience or training were you able to draw on?

Prompts: investigate use of previous experience, professional values in general, training in general or for this particular deployment, sources of advice or help available. Similarities and differences to other experiences whilst on deployment or in other clinical practice.

11. From your own experience, what advice or training or resources on ethical challenges would you recommend to/for others about to deploy on Gritrock?

Prompts: explore training needs, how met what might have been done differently, what kind of training useful and medium best suited; other means of support aside from training? Need for ethical debriefing on return? Best means of learning from/passing on experience? Use/usefulness of the four quadrant approach and/or other frameworks?

12. To what extent, if at all, do you think that your experiences on operation Gritrock have changed your ethical compass or your professional values?

Prompts: explore issues of professional identity, change of career plans, willingness to do this humanitarian relief work again, and if appropriate willingness to work with contagious diseases in the future, confidence in PPE. Positives in relation to the ethical challenges?

13. Thinking about your own experiences of ethical situations, do you have any recommendations that you would share with those about to deploy that you think might help them in similar situations?

Debrief

Thank you for sharing your experiences with me. Is there anything else you think it would be useful or interesting to share with me?

Recap on what happens next e.g. sending the transcription, opportunities to withdraw and depending on whether participant agreed to be contacted about evaluation or future research when we will be in touch again.