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Qualitative research: standards, challenges, and guidelines

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Summary

Qualitative research methods could help us to improve our understanding of medicine. Rather than thinking of qualitative and quantitative strategies as incompatible, they should be seen as complementary. Although procedures for textual interpretation differ from those of statistical analysis, because of the different type of data used and questions to be answered, the underlying principles are much the same. In this article I propose relevance, validity, and reflexivity as overall standards for qualitative inquiry. I will discuss the specific challenges in relation to reflexivity, transferability, and shared assumptions of interpretation, which are met by medical researchers who do this type of research, and I will propose guidelines for qualitative inquiry.



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and Thunder.

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