

POSTER PRESENTATION

Open Access

# It's all in whom you know (as well as what you know). Using network analysis and health professionals own knowledge for recruitment

Charlene McShane<sup>1</sup>, Olinda Santin<sup>2</sup>, Helen McAneney<sup>3,4\*</sup>, Michael Donnelly<sup>1</sup>, Jackie Quinn<sup>5</sup>, Oonagh Sheehy<sup>5</sup>, Liam Murray<sup>1</sup>, Lesley Anderson<sup>1</sup>

From 2nd Clinical Trials Methodology Conference: Methodology Matters  
Edinburgh, UK. 18-19 November 2013

Often the decision of whom to interview within a study is crucial to its ultimate success or failure, but when the study is to assess a very specific subset of health professionals, this decision may be even more vital.

One avenue that has been proposed within the AiMS Study, is to make use of the knowledge that the group of interest inherently possesses, the names of others working with the specific patient group. Using the tools of network analysis, the frequency and linkage of the names given will be analysed to assess who are the key or central persons whom the study should recruit for interview. Techniques will include degree, betweenness and eigenvector centrality, as well as core-periphery structure analysis of the network graph. The benefits of this approach are that rather than interviewing a large or random sample of health professionals, the core individuals are approached, reducing the number of interviews to be conducted, and in theory, conducting interviews with those having greater knowledge of the specific patient group. The protocol, ethical considerations and success of such a stratum for recruitment will be discussed.

#### Authors' details

<sup>1</sup>Cancer Epidemiology Health Services Research Group, Centre for Public Health, Queen's University, Belfast, UK. <sup>2</sup>School of Nursing and Midwifery, Queen's University Belfast, Belfast, UK. <sup>3</sup>MRC Methodology Hub, Centre for Public Health, Queen's University Belfast, Belfast, UK. <sup>4</sup>Institute of Child Care Research, Queen's University Belfast, Belfast, UK. <sup>5</sup>Belfast City Hospital, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Belfast, UK.

<sup>3</sup>MRC Methodology Hub, Centre for Public Health, Queen's University Belfast, Belfast, UK

Full list of author information is available at the end of the article

Published: 29 November 2013

doi:10.1186/1745-6215-14-S1-P86

**Cite this article as:** McShane *et al.*: It's all in whom you know (as well as what you know). Using network analysis and health professionals own knowledge for recruitment. *Trials* 2013 14(Suppl 1):P86.

Submit your next manuscript to BioMed Central  
and take full advantage of:

- Convenient online submission
- Thorough peer review
- No space constraints or color figure charges
- Immediate publication on acceptance
- Inclusion in PubMed, CAS, Scopus and Google Scholar
- Research which is freely available for redistribution

Submit your manuscript at  
[www.biomedcentral.com/submit](http://www.biomedcentral.com/submit)

