**CASP Checklist:** 10 questions to help you make sense of a Qualitative research

**How to use this appraisal tool:** Three broad issues need to be considered when appraising a qualitative study:

- Are the results of the study valid? (Section A)
- What are the results? (Section B)
- Will the results help locally? (Section C)

The 10 questions on the following pages are designed to help you think about these issues systematically. The first two questions are screening questions and can be answered quickly. If the answer to both is “yes”, it is worth proceeding with the remaining questions. There is some degree of overlap between the questions, you are asked to record a “yes”, “no” or “can’t tell” to most of the questions. A number of italicised prompts are given after each question. These are designed to remind you why the question is important. Record your reasons for your answers in the spaces provided.

**About:** These checklists were designed to be used as educational pedagogic tools, as part of a workshop setting, therefore we do not suggest a scoring system. The core CASP checklists (randomised controlled trial & systematic review) were based on JAMA ’Users’ guides to the medical literature 1994 (adapted from Guyatt GH, Sackett DL, and Cook DJ), and piloted with health care practitioners.

For each new checklist, a group of experts were assembled to develop and pilot the checklist and the workshop format with which it would be used. Over the years overall adjustments have been made to the format, but a recent survey of checklist users reiterated that the basic format continues to be useful and appropriate.

**Referencing:** we recommend using the Harvard style citation, i.e.: Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (2018). CASP (insert name of checklist i.e. Qualitative) Checklist. [online] Available at: URL. Accessed: Date Accessed.

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### Section A: Are the results valid?

| Question                                                                 | Yes | Can’t Tell | No |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------------|----|
| 1. Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?              |     |            |    |
| **HINT:** Consider                                                       |     |            |    |
| • what was the goal of the research                                      |     |            |    |
| • why it was thought important                                            |     |            |    |
| • its relevance                                                          |     |            |    |
| **Comments:** This study outlined clear aims, which was to define transition success in inflammatory bowel disease according to providers, patients, and their parents. Within the introduction, the importance and relevance of this study is clearly outlined. |     |            |    |

| Question                                                                 | Yes | Can’t Tell | No |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------------|----|
| 2. Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?                             |     |            |    |
| **HINT:** Consider                                                       |     |            |    |
| • If the research seeks to interpret or illuminate the actions and/or subjective experiences of research participants |     |            |    |
| • Is qualitative research the right methodology for addressing the research goal |     |            |    |
| **Comments:** This study used a naturalistic inquiry with the method of qualitative description. The student researcher had previously taken a course on qualitative research methods so had a foundation on qualitative methodology. A professor in qualitative research was also consulted on methodology to ensure that the qualitative methodology was appropriate. |     |            |    |

| Question                                                                 | Yes | Can’t Tell | No |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------------|----|
| 3. Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research? |     |            |    |
| **HINT:** Consider                                                       |     |            |    |
| • if the researcher has justified the research design (e.g. have they discussed how they decided which method to use) |     |            |    |
| **Comments:** The methods, data collection strategy and data analysis was designed to best address the research aims. The data analysis method of latent content analysis was chosen to be in alignment with the method of qualitative description. We have also highlighted why analysis was done concurrently with data collection. |     |            |    |
4. Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?

Yes ✓

Can’t Tell

No

HINT: Consider

• If the researcher has explained how the participants were selected
• If they explained why the participants they selected were the most appropriate to provide access to the type of knowledge sought by the study
• If there are any discussions around recruitment (e.g. why some people chose not to take part)

Comments: Participant recruitment and inclusion/exclusion criteria is described in detail. Due to word limit of the journal, participants who declined participation was not explained; however, this was 8 patients (study was explained to 25 patients of whom 8 declined to participant due to various reasons - usually indicating too busy to participate)

5. Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?

Yes ✓

Can’t Tell

No

HINT: Consider

• If the setting for the data collection was justified
• If it is clear how data were collected (e.g. focus group, semi-structured interview etc.)
• If the researcher has justified the methods chosen
• If the researcher has made the methods explicit (e.g. for interview method, is there an indication of how interviews are conducted, or did they use a topic guide)
• If methods were modified during the study. If so, has the researcher explained how and why
• If the form of data is clear (e.g. tape recordings, video material, notes etc.)
• If the researcher has discussed saturation of data

Comments: Manuscript highlights that semistructured interviews were conducted virtually (due to the COVID-19 pandemic) and were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. Comments on the use of separate interview guides with a discussion on saturation being reached as an indicator or recruitment termination.
6. Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?

HINT: Consider
- If the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during (a) formulation of the research questions (b) data collection, including sample recruitment and choice of location
- How the researcher responded to events during the study and whether they considered the implications of any changes in the research design

Comments: This relationship has been considered at all steps throughout the interview. Additionally, the student researcher has taken a course of qualitative methods and had a foundation on examining own role and biases. This has been commented on further in the trustworthiness paragraph within the manuscript.

Section B: What are the results?

7. Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?

HINT: Consider
- If there are sufficient details of how the research was explained to participants for the reader to assess whether ethical standards were maintained
- If the researcher has discussed issues raised by the study (e.g. issues around informed consent or confidentiality or how they have handled the effects of the study on the participants during and after the study)
- If approval has been sought from the ethics committee

Comments: This study has been approved by three research ethics boards (University of Alberta, University of Calgary, University of British Columbia). We have described the method of participant recruitment, how consent was taken - participants had time to review the study information before. Due to word count limits, details on how study material will be stored was not discussed, but as per ethics requirements, papers will be stored in a secure locked cabinet for 5 years while audio files will be stored on a password protected file on a secure database. All recruitment material has been approved by the respective ethic boards.
8. Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?

|       | Yes | Can’t Tell | No |
|-------|-----|------------|----|

HINT: Consider
- If there is an in-depth description of the analysis process
- If thematic analysis is used. If so, is it clear how the categories/themes were derived from the data
- Whether the researcher explains how the data presented were selected from the original sample to demonstrate the analysis process
- If sufficient data are presented to support the findings
- To what extent contradictory data are taken into account
- Whether the researcher critically examined their own role, potential bias and influence during analysis and selection of data for presentation

Comments: Provided a detailed description to how latent content analysis was undertaken. To ensure rigor, a critical friend was introduced during data analysis to have ongoing discussions ensuring that conclusions were coming from data rather than researcher’s assumptions. Also double checked with a gastroenterologist with first hand experience in caring for transitioning patients. We have also included a table with salient quotes from each theme. Researcher’s role is further highlighted under trustworthiness section.

9. Is there a clear statement of findings?

|       | Yes | Can’t Tell | No |
|-------|-----|------------|----|

HINT: Consider whether
- If the findings are explicit
- If there is adequate discussion of the evidence both for and against the researcher’s arguments
- If the researcher has discussed the credibility of their findings (e.g. triangulation, respondent validation, more than one analyst)
- If the findings are discussed in relation to the original research question

Comments: We have highlighted the seven themes that emerged and across what stakeholder groups. We have also highlighted how this compares to other literature surrounding transition in chronic diseases. Critical friend was used to confirm results were accurate.
Section C: Will the results help locally?

10. How valuable is the research?  

HINT: Consider

- If the researcher discusses the contribution the study makes to existing knowledge or understanding (e.g. do they consider the findings in relation to current practice or policy, or relevant research-based literature)
- If they identify new areas where research is necessary
- If the researchers have discussed whether or how the findings can be transferred to other populations or considered other ways the research may be used

Comments: We highlight the contribution of this study to not only existing knowledge (addressing limitations in the literature), but while also suggesting future directions that are needed and the impact that the research will have on the field.