

**COREQ (Consolidated criteria for REporting Qualitative research) Checklist (1)**

Topic	Item No.	Guide Questions/Description	This study
<b>Domain 1: Research team and reflexivity</b>			
<i>Personal characteristics</i>			
Interviewer/facilitator	1	Which author/s conducted the interview or focus group?	<i>The first author</i>
Credentials	2	What were the researcher's credentials? E.g. PhD, MD	<i>MSc.</i>
Occupation	3	What was their occupation at the time of the study?	<i>Phd Student</i>
Gender	4	Was the researcher male or female?	<i>Female</i>
Experience and training	5	What experience or training did the researcher have?	<i>Experience with interviews, focus groups and analysis of qualitative data. Participated in several relevant short courses</i>
<i>Relationship with participants</i>			
Relationship established	6	Was a relationship established prior to study commencement?	<i>No, with the exception of one patient recruited through the network of the interviewer</i>
Participant knowledge of the interviewer	7	What did the participants know about the researcher? e.g. personal goals, reasons for doing the research	<i>Interviewer introduced the research goal in terms of 'learning from experiences, interested in decision making in this context'</i>
Interviewer characteristics	8	What characteristics were reported about the interviewer/facilitator? e.g. Bias, assumptions, reasons and interests in the research topic	<i>Interviewer introduced herself as being a trained researcher, with a background in sociology. On some occasions the personal experience of the interviewer with sciatica was also discussed</i>
<b>Domain 2: Study design</b>			
<i>Theoretical framework</i>			
Methodological orientation and Theory	9	What methodological orientation was stated to underpin the study? e.g. grounded theory, discourse analysis, ethnography, phenomenology, content analysis	<i>Thematic analysis</i>
<i>Participant selection</i>			
Sampling	10	How were participants selected? e.g. purposive, convenience, consecutive, snowball	<i>Combination of convenience, snowball and purposive sampling</i>
Method of approach	11	How were participants approached? e.g. face-to-face, telephone, mail, email	<i>Per e-mail</i>
Sample size	12	How many participants were in the study?	<i>35</i>

Non-participation	13	How many people refused to participate or dropped out? Reasons?	<i>About the same number of people. Physicians for reasons of time, patients because they turned out they did not meet inclusion criteria (mostly stenosis patients)</i>
<i>Setting</i>			
Setting of data collection	14	Where was the data collected? e.g. home, clinic, workplace	<i>Patients at home or per telephone. Physicians at their workplace or per telephone.</i>
Presence of non-participants	15	Was anyone else present besides the participants and researchers?	<i>During one patient interview the partner of the patients was present, she contributed some comments to the interview</i>
Description of sample	16	What are the important characteristics of the sample? e.g. demographic data, date	<i>See table 1 and 2 in the main text</i>
<i>Data collection</i>			
Interview guide	17	Were questions, prompts, guides provided by the authors? Was it pilot tested?	<i>Open ended questions were provided, sometimes followed by a prompt to steer the respondent towards providing more information on a topic ("difficult?..."). guide was not pilot tested, but it was discussed with an experienced colleague and adjusted after the first few interviews</i>
Repeat interviews	18	Were repeat inter views carried out? If yes, how many?	<i>None</i>
Audio/visual recording	19	Did the research use audio or visual recording to collect the data?	<i>Audio recorded</i>
Field notes	20	Were field notes made during and/or after the interview or focus group?	<i>Yes, after every interview a short summary of the interview was written by the interviewer, to support future interviews, these were no part of the overall analysis</i>
Duration	21	What was the duration of the inter views or focus group?	<i>On average 49 minutes with physicians and 44 minutes with patients</i>
Data saturation	22	Was data saturation discussed?	<i>Saturation within groups was difficult to reach, however, responses in interviews were remarkably constant. Especially amongst physicians. In the overall picture, we thus feel to approach saturation quite closely</i>
Transcripts returned	23	Were transcripts returned to participants for comment and/or correction?	<i>Every respondent was offered this option, but all patients and most physicians declined. Two physicians did receive their transcript, one made come corrections</i>
<b>Domain 3: analysis and findings</b>			

<i>Data analysis</i>			
Number of data coders	24	How many data coders coded the data?	<i>3, in 2 sets of 2</i>
Description of the coding tree	25	Did authors provide a description of the coding tree?	<i>No, we choose not to do so, for reasons of space and relevance</i>
Derivation of themes	26	Were themes identified in advance or derived from the data?	<i>Derived from the data</i>
Software	27	What software, if applicable, was used to manage the data?	<i>Atlas-ti® (2)</i>
Participant checking	28	Did participants provide feedback on the findings?	<i>No</i>
<i>Reporting</i>			
Quotations presented	29	Were participant quotations presented to illustrate the themes/findings? Was each quotation identified? e.g. participant number	<i>Yes, yes</i>
Data and findings consistent	30	Was there consistency between the data presented and the findings?	<i>Topic 30 and 31 are difficult to state for our own work, but we did aim to meet these goals</i>
Clarity of major themes	31	Were major themes clearly presented in the findings?	
Clarity of minor themes	32	Is there a description of diverse cases or discussion of minor themes?	<i>We did aim to present the variability in the findings. We did not have enough space to discuss specific cases or minor themes</i>

1. Tong A, Sainsbury P, Craig J. Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ): a 32-item checklist for interviews and focus groups. *Int J Qual Health Care.* 2007;19(6):349-57.
2. Scientific Software Development GmbH. Atlas-ti [computer program]. 7.1 ed. Berlin 2013.