



# EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS IRELAND

## Mixed methods evidence synthesis (In-person)

### Background

Methods for qualitative evidence synthesis (QES) are now well established and decision makers are able to access rigorous QES on issues such as patient experiences of health conditions and interventions, and contextual factors influencing intervention implementation. QES often generate theories and explanations about why and how interventions work or do not work as anticipated. By integrating these theories with evidence on intervention effects in a mixed methods synthesis, review teams can offer vital information to support implementation of review findings in practice. However, the diversity of approaches for integrating QES and effectiveness syntheses can make it challenging for reviewers to understand how best to integrate.

### Target Audience:

Healthcare professionals, academics, researchers, decision makers, librarians, information specialists, and Evidence Synthesis Ireland fellows and teaching faculty who would like to learn more about mixed method synthesis.

### Prerequisites:

Some experience with systematic reviews.

### Objectives

This two day interactive workshop delivered by co-convenors of the Cochrane Qualitative and Implementation Methods Group will introduce theory and practical examples of mixed methods synthesis. During group work participants will be encouraged to think reflectively on the strengths and limitations of diverse approaches. Each day will conclude with an open forum to reflect on the day's activities and discuss issues relating to participants' own review activity.

### Date:

**25th & 26th  
September 2024**

### Time:

**9:30am – 5:00pm**

### Location:

**Galway Bay Hotel**

### Facilitators:

#### **Prof. Angela Harden**

Professor of Health Sciences,  
School of Health and Psychological  
Sciences, Department of  
Health Services Research and  
Management, City University of  
London

#### **Dr. Katy Sutcliffe**

Associate Professor, Evidence for  
Policy and Practice Information and  
Coordination Centre (EPPI Centre),  
University College London

#### **Prof. James Thomas**

Professor of Social Research  
& Policy, Evidence for Policy  
and Practice Information and  
Coordination Centre (EPPI  
Centre), UCL Social Research Unit,  
University College London

### Places:

**30 places available for  
individuals who are  
resident on the island of  
Ireland**

### Fee:

**General €250  
Student €140**

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### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this workshop participants will:

- understand why and when it is useful to do a mixed methods synthesis
- be able to recognise and appraise diverse approaches and tools for mixed methods synthesis;
- describe challenges, and potential opportunities, for mixed methods synthesis;
- have gained hands on experience of integrating different types of evidence
- apply lessons learnt to their own review activity.

### Course content/timetable

Day 1 (25th Sep)	
09:30 - 11:00	Welcome, introduction and overview Lecture 1: A worked example of a mixed methods review Activity 1: Thematic synthesis
11.15 - 13:00	Lecture 2: Why do mixed methods evidence synthesis? Activity 2: Developing a question for a mixed methods review
14:00 - 15:30	Lecture 3: A typology for mixed methods reviews Activity 3: Recognising different types of mixed methods synthesis
16:00 - 17:00	Open plenary

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### Course content/timetable

Day 1 (25th Sep): 3 lectures – 3 activities	
09:30 - 11:00	Lecture 4: Finding, describing and appraising studies for a mixed methods review Activity 4: tbc
11.15 - 13:00	Lecture 5: Approaches to comparing Activity 5: Integrating using comparison approach
14:00 - 15:30	Lecture 6: Approaches to connection Activity 6: Integrating using a connection approach
16:00 - 17:00	Open plenary

### Facilitators:

#### Prof. Angela Harden

Professor of Health Sciences, School of Health and Psychological Sciences,  
Department of Health Services Research and Management, City University of  
London

Angela's research is interdisciplinary and inter-professional and she works with a wide range of research methods from participatory action research through to randomised controlled trials. Her research has led to direct impact on policy, practice and the public through, for example, underpinning NICE Guidance on community engagement to reduce health inequalities and integration of findings from a young commissioners model into a tool kit published by NHS England ('How to develop youth forums in the NHS'). She has published extensively and has secured funding from national and international bodies such as NIHR, ESRC, AHRC and EUFP7 as well as local health trusts and charities. She is a co-convenor of the international Cochrane Collaboration's Qualitative and Implementation Methods Group. She was a key investigator and theme lead (child and adolescent health) within the NIHR funded North Thames CLAHRC (2013-2019) and is now the Director of the training academy and key investigator in the Population Health and Social Care theme in the successor to the CLAHRC, the North Thames ARC (2019 to 2024). From 2012 to 2018 she was a member of the NIHR Health Technology Assessment Commissioning Board.

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# Mixed methods evidence synthesis (In-person)

Facilitators:

### Dr. Katy Sutcliffe

Associate Professor, Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Coordination Centre (EPPI Centre), University College London

Dr Katy Sutcliffe is an Associate Professor at the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Coordination Centre (EPPI Centre), Institute of Education, University College London. She is the Deputy Director of the London-York NIHR Policy Reviews Facility which produces research syntheses to support the Department of Health and Social Care's policy decisions. Katy specialises in developing systematic review methods for producing policy-relevant evidence, in particular qualitative and mixed-methods evidence syntheses and approaches for identifying the key ingredients and underlying mechanisms of interventions. Katy is associate editor of the forthcoming Cochrane handbook on QES and lead author of the chapter on integrating qualitative and quantitative evidence.

### Prof. James Thomas

Professor of Social Research & Policy, Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Coordination Centre (EPPI Centre), UCL Social Research Unit, University College London

Prof. James Thomas is based at the EPPI Centre and his research is centred on improving policy and decision-making through more creative use and appreciation of existing knowledge. It covers substantive disciplinary fields – such as health promotion, public health and education – and also the development of tools and methods that support this work conducted both within UCL and in the wider community. He has written extensively on research synthesis, including meta-analysis and methods for combining qualitative and quantitative research in 'mixed method' reviews; and also designed EPPI-Reviewer, software which manages data through all stages of a systematic review.

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