

Practical session 1 Assessing risk and ethical considerations

The aim of this practical session is for you to think through some of the issues involved in the planning and interviewing participants, focusing on risk and other ethical considerations. You'll work in small groups to discuss a scenario and feed back to the rest of the group.

Scenario 1 - Jim

You are conducting a study using in-depth interviews to explore problem gambling, particularly why people gamble and how their gambling started and has developed.

Jim has been identified as suitable for the study and was recruited at one of the local bookies. Jim is 53 and he works full time. He lives alone in a suburb of Birmingham.

Over the phone you arrange an interview with Jim at his house for a Friday at 6.30pm. You have trouble finding Jim's house as it is in the middle of a large, complex council estate, so you phone him for directions. When you arrive at his house you are 15 minutes late and Jim greets you holding a can of strong lager. He seems tense and on edge, saying he has had a hard day at work, and you're not sure how much he has had to drink. During the interview Jim discusses how his gambling started when his wife left him, and he becomes very low when talking about this. During the interview Jim continues to drink lager and becomes increasingly agitated.

Think about...

- What issues do you think might need to be considered when interviewing people who may have problematic gambling behaviour?
- What would you do on arriving at Jim's house?
- What may be some of the risks of interviewing Jim?
 - ...for the interviewer?
 - ...for Jim?
- What risk management strategies do you think you might adopt?