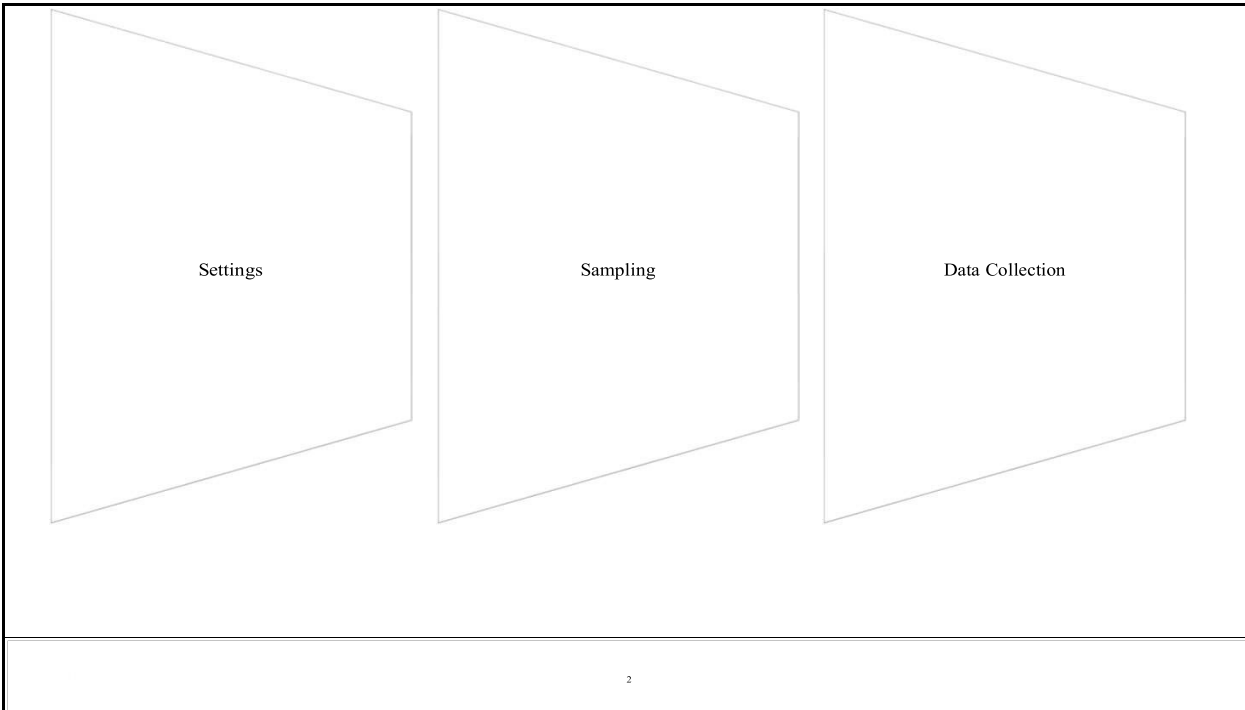




1



2

A case study of a study



3

The study

- Topic area
 - Healthcare for homeless men
- What do we know and what does the literature say about it?
 - There is little published specifically on this topic area
 - Some exploratory survey research in Canada through homeless care agencies
 - Some (old) research in Sydney using administrative hospital (not ED) data suggests longer and complicated stays for homeless people
 - Unpublished reports from an inner Sydney ED suggest that many homeless men attend ED for primary healthcare needs
- Question
 - “What are the primary healthcare needs of homeless men in inner Sydney?”

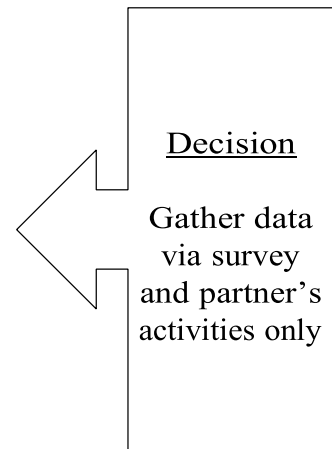
Could
survey, or
use
admin
data, or –
better –
could do
both

4

4

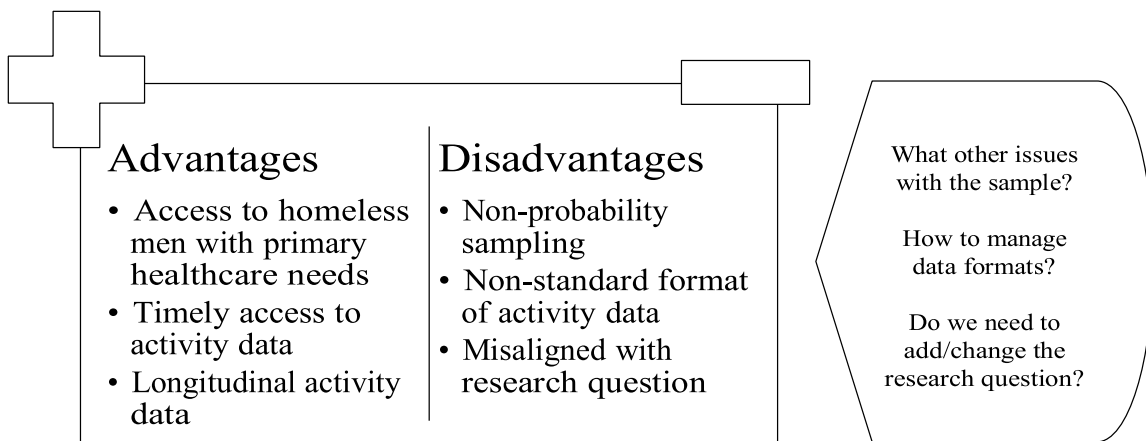
Design adjustments

- Do we have, or can we find, partners?
 - Service that conducts a primary healthcare clinic for homeless men in inner Sydney
 - Potential access to a relevant population
 - Administrative data on service activities
 - But - no realistic access to hospital (or ED) administrative data



5

Adjustment issues



6

Practical issues...

Surveys

Activity data

- Consent 'double witnessing' for vulnerable group summaries
- Reimbursement of participants for activities time involved
- Surveys completed via interview staff
- Recorded manually as daily this
- Definitional changes for over the period of collection
- Cost to extract data with clinic staff

7

It's a long road...

Access, sampling, recruitment, measurement



8

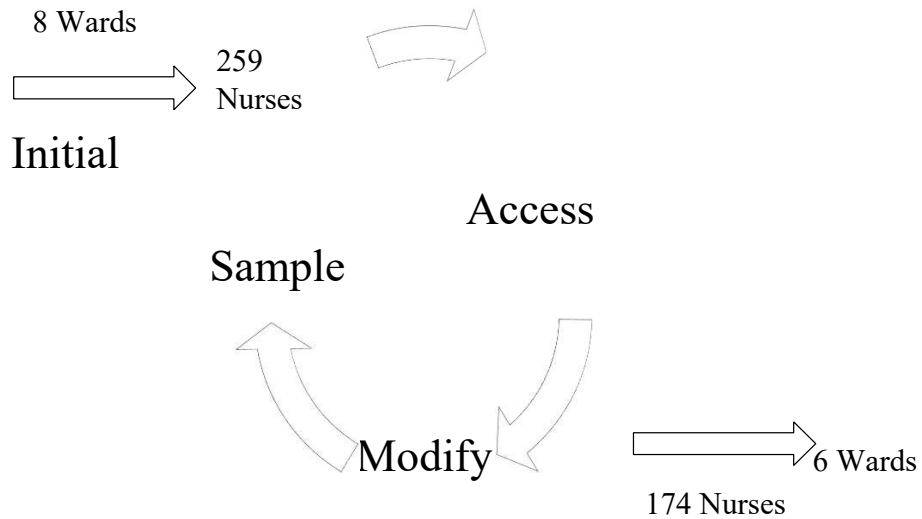
Site access (survey & ward profile data)

• Organisational access

	Study	N	High Response	Low Response	Overall
o District DONM A	120	100.0%	35.7%	82.8%	o District CE
o District MH Director	16	95.0%	37.0%	70.9%	B
o District MH DON					
o Hospital DONM Manager	C	18	46.3%	7.6%	17.3%
o Hospital DONM Manager	D	6	81.3%	23.1%	51.0%
o NUM/MUM E	62	69.3%	37.0%	44.4%	o Medical and AH Staff
o Participants - Nurses	F	1	35.4%	35.4%	35.4%

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Access Denied



10

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Access and response lessons

- Ensure engagement at all levels to improve access and response
- Build a relationship
- Emphasise outcomes for participants
 - Potential impact or professional interest (White, & Brooker, 1997)
- Consider the length of the questionnaire
- Consider concurrent research
- Don't underestimate the value of 'schmoozing'
 - "To talk casually, especially in order to gain an advantage or make a social connection" (Wiktionary, 2008)

11

11

Allocation, measurement and responses...

- Allocation
 - Hours worked last week
 - Control and intervention in a natural experiment
 - Responses ranged from 8 to 400
 - Age
 - Questions to measure outcomes
 - 50% completion
 - Next study, used categories
 - Next studies, categories or 'Year of Birth' – 90% completion
 - Did they measure outcomes?
 - Did they cover all outcomes?
- Shifts
 - Could we build corroboration into the design?
 - Adopting a Canadian survey
 - Amend to the Australian context
 - No 'quick-shifts'
 - If we had ED data, maybe yes
 - Different models of care

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Measurement matters: Validity & Reliability

- Does your measure actually measure what it sets out to measure?
 - Do the questions in a survey represent the situations/environments?
 - construct being measured?
- Can your measure be interpreted consistently in different situations?
 - Do they cover all aspects of that construct?
 - thing at different time points?
- Has it been shown to measure the same thing at different time points?
 - Can it be compared to another measure that purports to measure the same construct?

Answers to questions about validity and reliability will determine what you can say about your findings

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Checking the sample

- Compare to AIHW labour force data
 - Example – Clinical Nurses Working in Adult Mental Health
 - Similar RN/EN skill mix (89.5% / 87.8%)
 - Younger sample (36.3 / 44.4)
 - Fewer nurses >55 years (3.9% / 16.3%)
 - Fewer part time RNs (19.1% / 28.1%)
 - More male ENs (37.5% / 23.4%)

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Other thoughts



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Plan for contingencies

- What other issues may come up?
 - Someone moves the survey return box Don't let these be roadblocks
 - You discover someone coercing/blocking potential participants
 - A key contact changes jobs
 - The organisation restructures
 - Administrative data costs escalate
 - Nobody checks their email
 - Your software licence expires
 - Your computer dies and your backup is corrupted



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Develop support to do this well – it takes time

- Will you have organisational support?
 - How will you gain it?
 - Link it to organisational policies/guidelines/standards where feasible
- Who are the key stakeholders?
 - How will you engage them?
 - Identify the advantages to the stakeholders
- Setup a series of meetings, develop a steering group, build partnerships ◦ Talk to colleagues in other services, government departments, industry, and universities
 - They can add skills, tools, and sometimes resources, you don't have

17

17

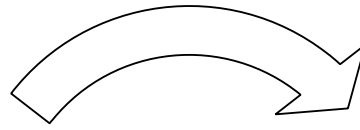
Administrative Data



18

Administrative data: data & questions

- There can be many cycles of discussion and exploration before getting to the point of study
 - Multiple measures and/or needed
 - Plan it in steps to decide if it is one or several studies
- The data determine what questions what data are multiple studies may be answered
- help The question helps determine
- needed needed to 'paint the full picture'



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Dataset Reduction

Complete Dataset	
59755 presentations	43464 individuals
↓ Exclusions (<55, major trauma, MVA)	
21276 presentations	14075 individuals
↓ ≥3 presentations in 60 days	
3253 presentations	705 individuals
↓ ≥3 presentations in 60 days & >5 overall	
880 presentations	176 individuals

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Sampling Administrative (Routinely Collected) Data

- Typically all cases for a • Considerations given time period ◦ Access
 - Format
- Not random sampling ◦ Completeness
- Often population data ◦ Data cleaning & manipulation challenges
- Large heterogeneous ◦ Skills and software to clean, manipulate, and analyse
 - Check for 'ground truth' and against other sources
- samples ◦ Coding system changes
- Reflection of what is ◦ Matching algorithms between coding systems really occurring ◦ Linkage
 - Matching algorithms between data sources
 - External linkage (e.g. CHeRL)