

## **Lay Summary**

### **Researchers' experiences of the challenges faced in recruiting and interviewing patients for a study on patients' experiences in hospital Emergency Departments.**

Currently there are several different ways in which hospital emergency departments use GPs to help reduce pressure from increased patient demand. Our research tried to find out which models for organising the service work best from a patient's viewpoint.

We experienced some challenges in recruiting patients to take part in interviews for this research.

This paper looks at all stages of patient recruitment and identifies the challenges faced from identifying eligible patients through to engaging them in interviews. The results were used to make recommendations on how best to successfully recruit patients to this type of study in an emergency department.

Things which made recruitment difficult were:

- Patients needed to meet a narrow set of conditions to take part in our study
- The way in which hospitals kept records made it complicated and time-consuming to find patients to interview
- Research nurses did not always have time to help us
- Trying to recruit patients by post rather than face to face

Suggestions made by the public members of the research team, which we introduced to improve the recruitment of patients to the study, included:

- Increasing the number of patients invited to take part
- Offering a shopping voucher to those interviewed
- Using hospital headed notepaper for invitation letters
- Making it easy to respond to invitations using text messages

The results of the research will help future studies to recruit patients in similar settings.