

Please note the interview topic guide is a living document. The design is iterative to tailor the interview to the needs of the participant, and the issues that they feel are most important. As analysis occurs concurrently the topic guide is likely to be adapted over time - questions might be added, amended or omitted – and used flexibly. Also, this is a generic guide for all clinicians; the topics discussed will be adapted for each of the different clinician groups (e.g. cardiology compared with palliative care team).

Plan of interview

1. Introduction
2. The referral pathway
3. Risk communication & patient information
4. Implantation decisions - current practice
5. Improving decision making about implantation
6. Deactivation decisions – current practice
7. Improving decision making about deactivation
8. Feedback

1. Introduction

- Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview. As you know, we are interviewing clinicians about their views and experiences of decision making about ICD implantation and deactivation. We are interested in understanding the types of information and support patients (and clinicians) need when making decisions about ICD therapy.
- With your permission I would like to record the interview; all details will be confidential.
- Do you have any questions or concerns?
- *Obtain written consent.*

2. The referral pathway

- Can you talk me through what happens from the point of referral to a specialist centre to implantation please?

- From your perspective, what works well in the pathway (what works not so well)?
- What, if any, understanding do patients have about ICDs when they first meet you?
- Do you feel that some of the early information sharing about ICDs could be begun in secondary care?

3. Risk communication & patient information

- How do you explain to patients that they need an ICD?
- How do you communicate information about benefits, risks, prognosis, life expectancy?
- What are the issues that seem to be important to patients?
- Do you feel that patients have a good understanding of the function of the device?
- How do you talk about short term complications?
- Do you talk about any other types of risks (e.g. effects on mental health)?
- Do you discuss quality of life implications?
- Is there anything that you would like to talk about in more detail but rarely have time?
- Do you talk about what happens as a patient gets older (battery changes and deactivation)?
- Do patients grasp the role and function of the device?
- What types of misunderstandings do patients have if any?
- What are patients' hopes and expectations about the device?
- Which information sources do you signpost patients to? Do you think these are appropriate/useful? Do you feel we might rely too much on leaflets?
- What kind of information/decision support would you rather see was available at this time?

4. Implantation decisions - current practice

- Currently how does decision making about ICD implantation take place?
- Who is involved in information sharing?
- Typically what role do patients tend to want to play in decision making?
- To what extent are partners/family members involved in decision making?
- How do you engage and support the patient to make a decision about ICD therapy?

- What factors do you think need to be considered when making a decision about having an ICD?

5. Improving decision making about implantation

- How do you feel about patient engagement in decision making?
- What are the benefits of involving patients and carers in decision making?
- What are the main facilitators and barriers to meaningful discussions about ICD implantation?
- In your view, how might patients and clinicians be better supported to make decisions about ICD implantation?
- What resources/tools/training are needed?
- What are the ingredients of a good/ideal model of decision making about ICDs.

6. Deactivation decisions – current practice

- Can you tell me about a time when you were involved in the care of a patient who needed a device deactivated? Please would you tell me about that experience? How was the issue approached, at what point and by whom?
- How common are conversations with patients about device deactivation?
- Why do you think that the issue of deactivation is rarely approached in advance?
- How are these conversations different to others at the end of life?
- What are the facilitators and barriers to timely discussion about device deactivation?

7. Improving decision making about deactivation

- At what time point do you think that the topic of deactivation should be discussed?
- In an ideal scenario when and how should device deactivation be discussed?
- In your view, who should be involved?
- What are the characteristics of a “good” conversation about deactivation?
- What type of support for patients/family is required?
- How can clinicians be better supported to have these conversations (resources/tools/training)?

8. **Feedback**

- *Thank you for your time.*
- *What made you take part in this interview?*
- *Are we asking the right questions?*
- *Do these questions allow you to talk about the most important issues for you?*
- *Is there anything else you think it would be useful for us to know?*