Synthesizing Qualitative Evidence

This text examines the methodological bases to qualitative synthesis and describes the processes involved in the conduct of a rigorous synthesis of qualitative evidence, with a particular focus on meta-aggregation.

Practitioners and patients are called upon to make numerous health care decisions and, in doing so, need to weigh various types of information before taking action. This information comes from a myriad of sources, including the results of well-designed research; information related to the preferences of patients/clients and their relevant others; the practitioner’s own experiences; and the nature and norms of the setting and culture in which the care is being delivered. Methods to synthesize qualitative evidence are now emerging.