

# MANIFESTO FOR EXCELLENCE IN QUALITATIVE HEALTH RESEARCH EDUCATION

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## Brazil-Canada Network of Qualitative Health Research<sup>1</sup>

We<sup>2</sup>, researchers and scholars committed to the quality of university education, raise our voices in support of creating and implementing policies that promote scientific literacy and advanced training in qualitative research in the field of health. Considering that health is the outcome of intersecting social, cultural, political, economic, spiritual, psychological, and biological factors, comprehensive healthcare depends on knowledge with the potential to transform interpersonal relationships, healthcare systems, and people's living conditions. Hence, we cannot find solutions to the complex challenges facing the field of health without researchers capable of producing such knowledge. Recognizing the crucial importance of understanding and mastering the scientific principles that guide the production of high-quality qualitative research, we advocate for the following guidelines for education and public policy:

### 1 Scientific literacy in qualitative research methodology in undergraduate health curricula

To incorporate qualitative research methodology courses into undergraduate health sciences programs and to promote other academic activities, such as participation in research projects and events, that explore qualitative research approaches. This will help train professionals who are more critical, reflective, and prepared to address the complex social and human realities embedded in healthcare.

1 The Brazil-Canada Network of Qualitative Health Research is a collaborative initiative that brings together researchers from several Brazilian universities and the University of Toronto, Canada. Its goal is to promote excellence in qualitative research practice and education in the health sciences. Learn more about the Network at: <https://www.redequali.unb.br/index.php/pt/>

2 The first version of the Manifesto was prepared by members of the Brazil-Canada Network of Qualitative Health Research and discussed during a session of the International Seminar on Training in Qualitative Health Research: The Challenge of Scientific Literacy, held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, on March 12-14, 2025. The contributions approved during the Seminar were revised by the Manifesto drafting team (see editorial notes) and later translated into English and Spanish.

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## **2 Advanced training in qualitative research in graduate health sciences programs**

To develop educational strategies that provide a comprehensive understanding of qualitative health research, ensuring the theoretical-methodological rigour of studies. To establish differentiated expectations for master's and doctoral levels, qualifying master's students as critical co-investigators, and encouraging doctoral students' autonomy in producing empirical knowledge that furthers theoretical-methodological development. Additionally, to promote continuing education for faculty to strengthen their understanding of qualitative health research, fostering interdisciplinary education — particularly with the social sciences and humanities — to address the limited sociocultural perspective in current teaching and improve understanding of the subjective and social dimensions of health.

## **3 Encouragement for interdisciplinary training and methodological diversity in health sciences programs**

To promote participation and collaboration among groups from different levels of education and research areas within undergraduate and graduate health sciences programs, valuing knowledge from related disciplines such as history, sociology, anthropology, geography, law, philosophy, and the arts. To encourage interdisciplinary education to understand health as a social, cultural, political, economic, and ethical phenomenon, enabling health professionals to think beyond its individual and biological dimensions. To strengthen interinstitutional collaboration at regional, national, and international levels to prepare students to develop methodologies that transcend traditional training and expand the potential of qualitative health studies. Support emancipatory research, ensuring that marginalized communities are not merely objects of study, but protagonists in the process of knowledge production.

## **4 Creation of funding opportunities for qualitative research development**

To advocate for the creation of funding opportunities — at both undergraduate and graduate levels — to support qualitative research through calls for proposals and collaborative programmatic actions in partnership with research groups. Funding agencies and academic administrators should collaborate with qualitative research experts to implement these policies, ensuring more equitable resource allocation and greater recognition for qualitative research.

## **5 Equitable participation of qualitative evaluators in funding decisions**

To increase the participation of qualitative researchers in evaluation and decision-making processes within funding bodies, ensuring greater representation and recognition of this approach in scientific knowledge production. To ensure that evaluators are specialists in qualitative research.

## **6 Publication policies that value qualitative research**

To promote publication policies for qualitative health research through collaboration with funding agencies, university presses, graduate programs, and professional associations to value the qualitative approach in science. This includes balanced evaluation criteria for funding calls, academic journals, and institutional rankings.

## **7 Encouragement for the organization and participation in qualitative health research events**

To support the organization of events dedicated to qualitative health research. To encourage broad participation across multiple sectors, including sessions on qualitative research in health-related conferences and events.

## **8 Review of the evaluation model for graduate health sciences programs**

To promote an inclusive evaluation model that recognizes methodological diversity and ensures that the qualitative approach is appropriately valued in the production of health sciences knowledge, considering key elements such as social impact and community engagement.

## **9 Review of research ethics boards' approach to qualitative health research evaluation**

To ensure that research ethics boards include individuals with expertise in qualitative research, thereby guaranteeing theoretical-methodological diversity in the evaluation of health science studies.

Porto Alegre, RS, March 13, 2025.

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