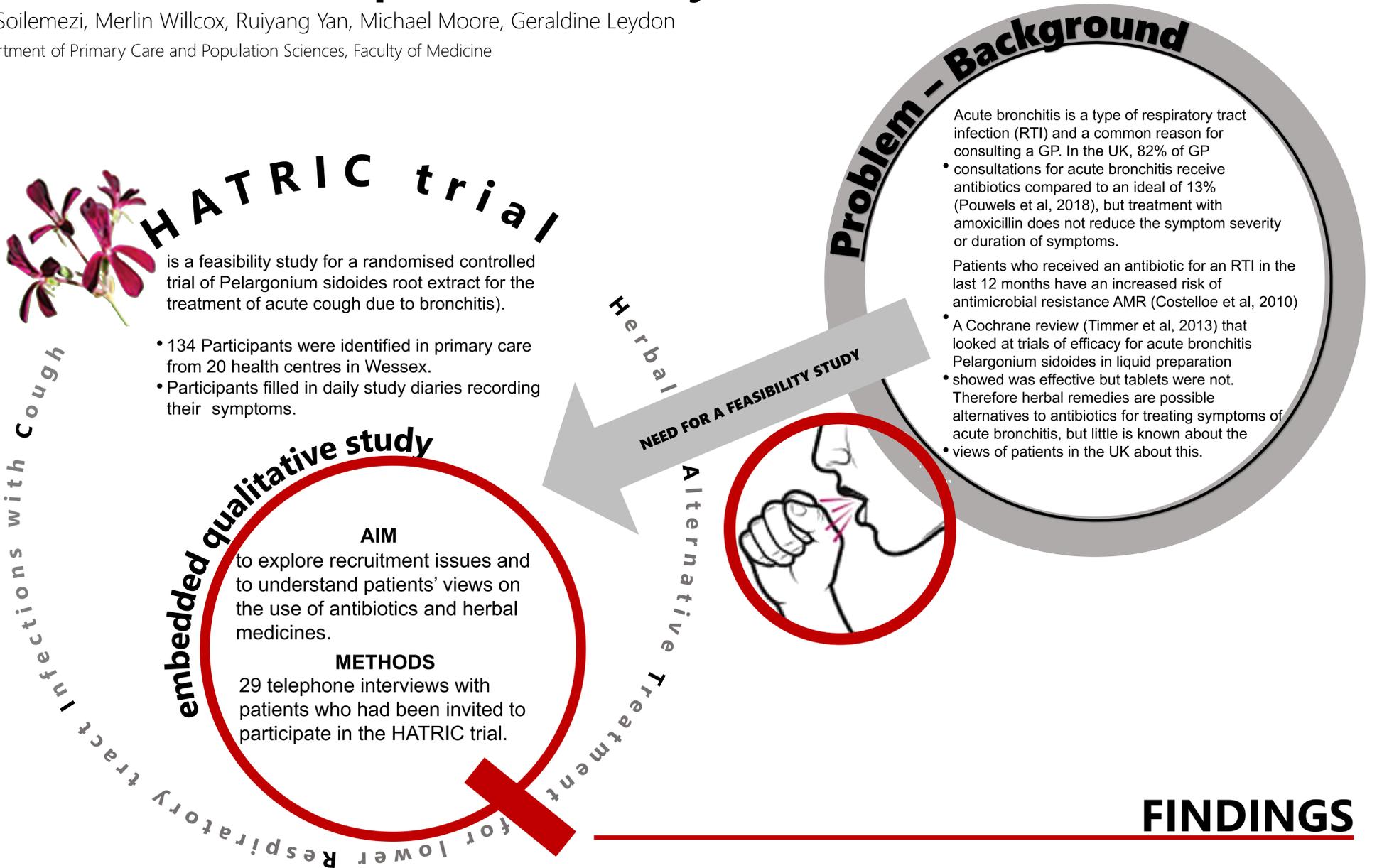


Views of patients on use of herbal medicines and antibiotics for acute bronchitis: a qualitative study

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FINDINGS

Treatment decisions

Beliefs about treatments

Expectation for antibiotics
"We're almost all used to being given a prescription for antibiotics by the doctor, right? Almost an historic expectation that you're going to get antibiotics" PA01

Concerns about antibiotics
"I know the problems with antibiotics now, that they're losing their efficacy" PA26
"Well, I don't particularly like sort of the chemicals and everything in the antibiotics" PA03

Faith in effectiveness of antibiotics
"I know everybody's saying that antibiotics are causing worse problems, but if it works I'd rather go with those" PA16

Trusted advice

i.e. The GP
"if they [GPs] thought that it was in my best interest to delay, and just see how things are going rather than going straight into taking something, then yes, I would respect that" PA08
Media
Family and friends

antibiotics herbal

Need for alternative treatments
"obviously we've come to a point where antibiotics aren't going to work, we need to find alternative remedies" PA19

Need for more evidence
"some of the evidence is perhaps word of mouth... the fact that people use it in a particular country and they think it works, is in itself a kind of evidence. It's just not been properly trialled here, and you wonder why" PA18

Herbal medicines are less damaging
"Antibiotics can whack you quite a lot, whereas the herbal medicines are not as strong, more gentle, and more suitable for taking over an extended period of time rather than antibiotics" PA04

Beliefs about illness

"people don't go until later on, because they think things are going to clear up quickly. I only went down, cos it took longer than I thought." PA04

Cost and availability

"the price would put me off more than anything else" PA05

CONCLUSION

Most patients were happy to consider the use of herbal medicines as an alternative to antibiotics for the treatment of acute bronchitis, but some want evidence on safety and efficacy. More research is needed to build evidence herbal medicines as alternatives to antibiotics, in order to provide good evidence-based advice to patients.