



# The lived experience of those exposed to carbon monoxide

CO Research Conference 2022  
Good Afternoon and Welcome



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IRISH  
COMMUNITY  
CARE

# Today's discussion

- Previous research: ***Coping with exposure to CO: an IPA***
- People are at risk from exposure to lower levels of CO
- Why do we do qualitative research?
- What is 'othering'/'intersectionality' and who are the 'seldom heard' communities? How do we listen?
- Two studies with smaller communities:
  - Title 1: Carbon monoxide (CO) and the Irish Traveller Community: an investigation of a) knowledge about CO b) ambient levels in Traveller caravans in a Local Authority site and c) a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach to facilitating knowledge about CO in this community
  - Title 2: Carbon monoxide (CO) and the ex-combat veteran Community: an investigation of a) knowledge about CO and b) ambient levels at an ecotherapy retreat

## Why 'qualitative'?



- Data is in *language form*
- Answers questions like *why...* allows for **exploration** of the ill-defined
- Helps understanding of subtleties and **complexities**
- Helps understanding of the **context** and environment
- Hearing people's own words (their *voices*) helps us **understand** their position
- When the measurements don't fit well, qualitative research helps uncover the right things to **measure**
- Qualitative research is systematic and rigorous with quality concepts

# Are these real headlines about Gypsy and Travelling communities?

My big fat Gypsy council house

Meet your Neighbours

Stamp on the camps

Big fat gypsy jungle

You pay for Roma gypsy palaces

Gypsy plague returns

Second blonde girl found living with Gypsies: looks nothing like siblings and speaks much better English

We're proud to sponge off the UK

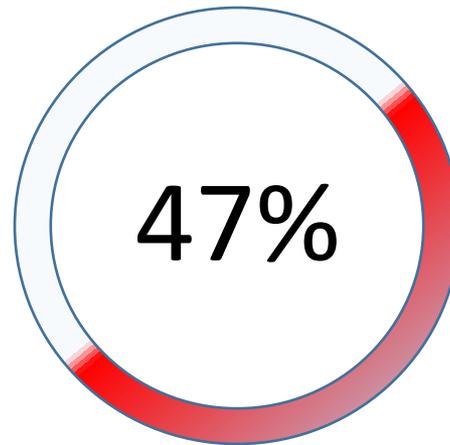
Like it or not, the gipsies are coming

Travellers invasion

The truth about Traveller crime (C4 dispatches)

# C/PTSD in military veterans and Ecotherapy

- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a defined medical disorder that is common among Veterans
- Number of surveyed ecotherapy users reporting poor or very poor mental health:



- Ecotherapy, where being close to nature acts as therapy, allows Veterans to have some respite from their symptoms, some comradeship, and find some purpose by re-engaging with nature

# Small communities

How can we work more closely with small communities?

- Exploring what it means to be misrepresented/seldom heard
- Participatory Action Research ‘nothing about me, without me’
- [Patient navigators](#)

The teams:

- CO and the Irish Traveller Community (Win Lawlor, Dr Jen Germain, Suzy Hargreaves)
- CO and the Ecotherapy Centre (Dr Jen Germain, Dr Jane Harris)

# 1. Irish Traveller study:

We aim to:

- Investigate whether there are ambient levels of CO within the caravans
  - Explore the anecdotal evidence that members of the community have previously shared, suggesting that they have some experience of issues related to CO
  - Using the PAR approach to produce a culturally-appropriate information booklet about CO
  - Potentially use the data from this study to inform a larger, national study in order to explore CO-related issues with the wider Traveller community
- Local Authority site
  - ICC – brokers relationships



## 2. Ecotherapy study:

- We aim to:
- Investigate whether there are ambient levels of CO within the tents and awnings used as shelter/accommodation by the residents of the Ecotherapy retreat
- Explore any levels of knowledge and understanding of lower levels of CO exposure, especially those that may result from 'wild living' and the effects this may have on someone with PTSD
- Produce, using photos taken by the veterans and the PAR approach, a culturally-appropriate information booklet/posters about CO for this community



# Summary

- Working with hard to reach/hard to help communities such as Irish Travellers and veterans with C/PTSD
- They can be very vulnerable to CO

What can help:

- Participant Action Research
- Brokering relationships
- Thank you for listening

