



# Katherine Carroll

*"I want to conduct accessible, impactful research that is not only available to other academics but to anyone who can read it and relate to it."*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Katherine Carroll has a PhD in Medical Sociology and Health Research and is an applied sociologist and qualitative methodologist.

Since her PhD, Katherine has worked extensively to examine and transform how health services are experienced and delivered.

She does this by using the method Video Reflexive Ethnography (VRE), where different types of health care practices are video recorded, and video-reflexive sessions are thereafter held with health professionals in order to examine their own practice through the lens of the video footage.

# Improving medical practices through Video Reflexive Ethnography

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The VRE methodology is used to study social practices in all their aspects. Katherine uses video-reflexive ethnography to better understand and improve health care practices in the health system. This involves video recording various health care practices, interactions, actions and communications between clinical staff and with patients and their families. By reviewing practices in video-reflexivity sessions, health professionals can see their practices in a new way and identify areas for improvement in their local area

Katherine's work with VRE has contributed to a long range of improvements in the healthcare system. Amongst others, it has resulted in changes in the health care professionals' ward round structure, in the implementation of a new template for communication, and hospital policy changes.

When Katherine started her journey on VRE she did not know much about it; there was very little literature and very few scholars drawing on the method. It is through years of practical work in both Australian and American hospitals that she has obtained comprehensive experience within the field.

She and her colleagues have spent a lot of time building relations and preparing the terrain for future researchers. By establishing positive experiences with the participants she works with – health care professionals and patients – she hopes that the next time they see a sociologist they will welcome them into their lives and workplaces, knowing that they will benefit from that interaction.

Katherine highlights that although academia can be consuming and sometimes very focused on publications, it has been important for her receiving structural support from the universities in order to create an impact in society.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

## & ADVICE

**Spending time on building relationships** and trust is essential when investigating other people's daily working practices.

**Be open and attentive to the world outside academia.**

Although many universities are very focused on publications, conducting research relevant for society at large is slowly gaining popularity in the academic world.

**Establishing networks with like-minded people** can be a very valuable step in continuously improving and developing the research.