

Stephen Flett - Psychological Services for TV

My initial psych screening process during casting for most reality/documentary programmes is....

1. Semi-structured questionnaire (essential) – this is my own factual and risk-based questionnaire; it can be done as an email attachment or paper and pencil version on-site or verbally as part of the interview (preferred and more typical). It includes motivation, programme and filming issues, social media, family background, education, work record, relationships, vulnerability risks, anti-social risks, medication, support system, resilience and more. The interview and report are based on the same structure
2. interview (essential) – usually 40-50 minutes either face to face or by telephone, skype or Facetime, depending on circumstances; telephone interviews are more flexible including some evening and weekend options
3. written report (essential but time consuming – length and detail can be negotiated) - summarises key issues and risks in justifying the decision to include or exclude; confidentiality boundaries and a limited distribution list for reports will be agreed beforehand

NB....

- in some cases when serious issues are identified, further clinical tests (eg Millon personality disorders questionnaire) or a review of medical records may be required, incurring extra costs
- it is helpful to have editorial notes from the production team concerning individual contributors, how they were recruited and what challenges they will be facing
- all psych information is contracted as confidential with limited distribution “for selection and welfare purposes only and not for use in programme content or publicity material”

Support/welfare options

- welfare interviews are different from initial psych screening – more of a snapshot in time of the perceptions and experience of the contributors during or after filming with my recommendations for production and/or professional support if necessary
- on-call with agreed priority access and service levels; my name and chartered clinical status can be used as cover for legal, insurance and health and safety documents; on-call can be office hours, filming hours or 24/7; can be for producers, contributors or both
- call-outs – ie visiting the person on-site or at home charged by half-day or full day
- ad hoc consultation and advice for producers and/or contributors during or after filming –rates to be agreed
- halfway checks and final debriefs – by telephone or face to face
- liaison with GP, psychologists, psychiatrists as necessary

Fees

Fees depend upon the number of contributors, the type of interview, and the level of risk and complexity involved . I aim to be clear, fair and transparent so email or phone if you have any questions or special requirements.

updated June 2020