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## INTRODUCTION

Healthcare professional (HCP) surveys are a widely used type of real-world study which can be used to explore many aspects of clinical practice, including standards of care, diagnostic and treatment practices, and to explore the use of measurement tools in clinical settings<sup>1,2</sup>.

Traditional survey methods can be slow, expensive, and resource-intensive, limiting participation and timely insight<sup>3</sup>.

Digital survey platforms provide a faster, cost-effective, and GDPR-compliant alternative<sup>4</sup>.

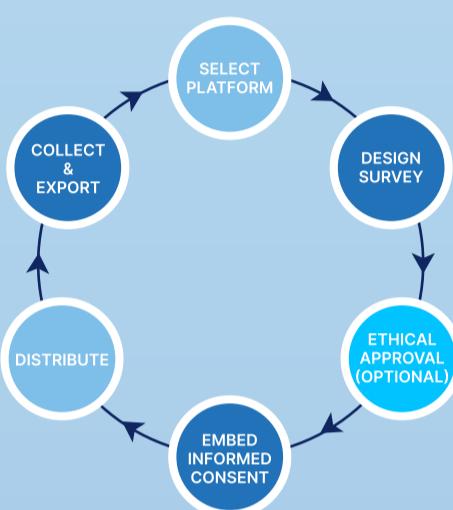
## AIM

To outline a practical, ethical, and efficient approach for designing and deploying HCP surveys using a digital survey platform.

## METHOD

Digital survey platforms offer a fast, cost-effective, and GDPR-compliant way to conduct HCP surveys. This methodological approach highlights practical considerations for survey design, ethical compliance, and data management.

**Figure 1: Digital HCP survey workflow**



- Platforms should allow **secure, anonymous participation** and **real-time data export**.
- Surveys should be **short and structured** (multiple choice and Likert-scale items) to minimise participant burden.
- **Pilot testing** ensures clarity and usability across devices
- **Ethical approval** from an independent review board or ethics committee is not always required but is recommended, particularly if publication is planned
- **Informed consent** should be embedded at the start of the survey to maintain voluntary participation, including all required elements per BHBIA or other relevant guidance to ensure compliance
- Data collection should be **anonymous, secure**, and GDPR-compliant.

## RESULTS

Implementing digital HCP surveys using the workflow outlined in the methods section can bring efficiency and security, but practical challenges can arise at each step.

The table to the right summarises these common challenges and provides practical solutions to ensure smoother survey deployment and data quality.

**Key considerations** include:

- Minimising participant burden
- Ensuring cross-device compatibility
- Embedding informed consent
- Maintaining GDPR compliance data handling

Common Challenges		Practical Solutions
	Limited time or budget	Use a low-cost, GDPR-compliant digital platform
	Participant burden	Keep survey short and focused to reduce fatigue
	Ambiguity or unclear questions	Pilot test the survey for clarity and flow
	Device variation	Ensure cross-device compatibility (desktop, tablet, mobile)
	Data protection/privacy concerns	Collect data anonymously and store securely
	Demonstrating methodological robustness	Ethical approval is sometimes needed to show that study methods are sound and reliable.
	Ensuring informed consent and compliance	Embed clear, electronic consent at the start of the survey, including all required elements per relevant guidance to ensure compliance

## CONCLUSIONS

Digital survey platforms offer a practical, cost-effective option for conducting HCP surveys. Data collection can be completed quickly, often within a few weeks, making them a useful option for generating publishable and impactful data particularly to address specific short-term data requirements.

While formal ethics approval is not always required, it enhances robustness and supports publication. Success depends on clear planning and thoughtful survey design to ensure high-quality, relevant data.

## REFERENCES

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