1. Identify a Research Area/Topic (funding secured): Formulate a question based on a gap in knowledge obtained from reading the literature, speaking to clinicians, women and parents consider inequity inequality of services treatments, etc., or implementation/prioritization of resources or emerging health care needs/regulations (such as COVID, breastfeeding cardiac babies or abortion laws). Start your personal field diary and keep notes on your research journey
2. Search for your topic on social media, PROSPERO, PhD databases, COCHRANE Library, Google Scholar, published protocols, Library Databases: Be careful about sharing your ideas outside your research team. Ideas are precious until they are published! Get a Twitter account and create an ORCID ID/join Research Gate and LinkedIn
3. Support Team: Engage early with clinicians/research staff/academics/consumers/patients/women and parents to plan and design study this will contribute to PPI
4. Consider epistemological stance (inductive/deductive) contribution to theoretical knowledge and propose tentative theoretical framework to guide your study
5. Select appropriate methods aligned with research paradigm and discuss practical, philosophical, ethical, professional and financial issues
6. Ensure aim and objectives are linked to data collection approaches
7. Explore feasibility of undertaking the study (access to the sample, ethics, research governance, Intellectual Property, timeline and funding availability of personnel to provide support)
8. Write your research proposal and present to support team/institution for ethical approval /academic assessment and PPI support. Pilot study to check process of data collection and data analysis. Ensure you have research governance from appropriate bodies and you have completed the Research Integrity Course. Engage statistician if necessary and any other experts
9. Secure ethical approval and research governance with PPI and research team support. Write your first paper (systematic literature review or protocol paper) Register with PROSPERO
10. Commence data collection following ethical approval and research governance. If Trial register with UK/EU? International clinical trials ICTRP/ISRCTN