How to perform low-budget high-quality research—Using available datasets to answer new questions

Speaker Abstracts

Wednesday, 12 June 2019

14:15:00 – 15:45:00

How to perform low-budget high-quality research—Using available datasets to answer new questions

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Systematic reviews (SR) are a type of clinical research, and thus they follow the hypothetico-deductive or scientific method. Their objective is to answer clinical questions and they do it based on a specific structure (protocol) and working through inferences. Interestingly, a SR is a type of study design that can answer all types of questions, from efficacy to incidence. They manage the information from previous studies in a pre-established reproducible way, as unbiased as possible. They provide quick answers. However, they should be performed and interpreted with caution: a poor systematic review is much worse than a narrative review, as it gives the false impression of “science”. This is even worse if the studies were combined in a meta-analysis.

In this lecture, we will review the protocol of a SR, the importance of rephrasing the question, the search strategy, selection criteria, and procedures of studies selection, primary endpoints, and quality and risk of bias. The last part of any SR is the analysis, which is always qualitative, supported by the evidence table, and following a synthetic discourse with the PICO order, and sometimes quantitative (meta-analysis). We will review some methods to evaluate publication bias, to combine results, and to explore heterogeneity. In this sense, it is essential to note that if we cannot find a valid explanation for heterogeneity, our results may not be valid.

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Using available datasets to answer new research questions

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Background: Clinical data are continuously recorded in clinical encounters in the form of electronic medical records, registries, audits ans similar databases. Such large datasets are available to researchers, and provide unique opportunities. However, challenges arise from the use of routinely collected data, that need special attention and specific skills to minimise a waste in research.

Objectives: To discuss available data sources (data discovery), their advantages and limitations, their uses, and to cover examples of research conducted using routinely collected datasets.

Methods: We will discuss a list of data sources at high level (types of data), their main pros and cons, and then cover challenges and solutions through a number of previously published examples.

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Health Professional Welcome session

What you shouldn’t miss from the HPR programme as a clinician

Maria Bergström, Linköping University, Department of Social and Welfare Studies, Division of Occupational Therapy, Norrköping, Sweden

As a health professional, the EULAR congress is the place where I can get access to new and fresh rheumatology research of good quality. My presentation will take you through the possibilities the congress offers clinician when it comes to different topics within the area of rheumatology. Further, my aim and hope is to give you a sense of what is in store for you during this year’s EULAR congress.

People with rheumatic diseases today live their lives to a great extent having the diagnosis affecting their everyday life. The ability to work, interact with others or engaging in activities they want to, can be limited. So what do we need to know about them in order to provide the best possible treatment and rehabilitation? As a health professional clinician, I look forward to finding some of the answers to this during this congress.

During the EULAR congress, we as health professionals have the possibility to contribute to and acquire research of good quality in rheumatology, on our way to give our patients the best possible treatment. Also, we have the possibility to contribute to the patients health, and I look forward to sessions touching health topics such as exercise. The quality of research and the variety of topics during this EULAR congress can give us a bigger set of tools to work with when we get back to our patients and continue our path towards the best possible treatment and health for this big and important group of patients. I hope that this session can provide an overview of what this years’ congress can offer from a clinical perspective.

Disclosure of Interests: None declared


Projects in paediatric rheumatology

Christian Scott, University of Cape Town, Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital, Paediatric Rheumatology, Cape Town, South Africa

Background: Poorly developed healthcare systems and the overwhelming burden of communicable diseases have limited the growth and development of Paediatric Rheumatology in non central and less resourced countries. Most children on earth reside in these less resourced environments and suffer from disproportionately poor access to adequate care for paediatric rheumatic diseases. Emerging evidence suggests that rates of rheumatic diseases are not likely to be different to European and North American children but that diseases severity and...