Identification and assessment of ongoing trials in health technology assessment reviews


Record Status
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Citation

Authors' objectives
This research aims to assess the importance of ongoing trials in health technology assessment reviews (HTARs) for the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) and to provide practical recommendations for identifying ongoing trials and assessing their possible impact.

Authors' conclusions
Identification of ongoing trials is common in HTARs. Searching for ongoing trials in effectiveness reviews should be more thorough and explicit. Conversely, primary researchers, in particular those working in multicentre trials, should label ongoing trials more clearly, preferably by ISRCTN. Qualitative assessment of identified ongoing trials is crucial and informative. Available quantitative methods could be used to strengthen findings from narrative assessment, although further research and more empirical examples are required. Information from ongoing trials may contribute to syntheses of results, conclusions and recommendations for future research. Future research is suggested into the identification and assessment of ongoing trials in other systematic reviews of effectiveness of health care interventions; existing and new methods for incorporating information on ongoing trials; comparing estimated impacts with the actual results of ongoing trials; and to incorporate findings from the assessment of ongoing trials into decision models.

Project page URL
http://www.hta.ac.uk/1359

INAHTA brief and checklist

Indexing Status
Subject indexing assigned by CRD

MeSH
Information Storage and Retrieval; Research; Technology Assessment, Biomedical

Language Published
English

Country of organisation
England

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AccessionNumber
32004000837

Date bibliographic record published
23/11/2004

Date abstract record published
23/11/2004