

CAN I USE DATA FROM A COHORT STUDY OR AUDIT TO ESTIMATE WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN A RANDOMISED TRIAL? (ID FAQ1)

FAQ SUMMARY

What is it?

Can I use data from a cohort study or audit to estimate what will happen in a randomised trial, for the trial's outcome measures and causes of loss to follow-up (such as death)?

Who prepared it?

Prof Mike Clarke, Northern Ireland Methodology Hub, Queen's University Belfast, Belfast, UK.

QUESTION

Can I use data from a cohort study or audit to estimate what will happen in a randomised trial, for the trial's outcome measures and causes of loss to follow-up (such as death)?

ANSWER

You need to be careful that the eligibility criteria and the measurement of the outcomes in the cohort or audit are similar enough to those for the trial. Sometimes, cohort or audit data are very different to the trial because the eligibility criteria for the trial are much stricter and would make the prognosis of people in the cohort/audit study very different to that for people in the trial.

Also, the people who are offered the trial and agree to take part might be very different to those in the cohort (e.g. because of co-morbidities, suitability for the trial's outcome measures, etc). When considering the outcome measures, you need to consider whether the techniques used to measure these (and the accuracy of those techniques) are similar enough in the cohort/audit study and the trial, and whether the likelihood of events that will lead to loss to follow-up is similar enough for people in the cohort/audit study and in the trial.

MORE INFORMATION

1. If you have any questions contact info@trialforge.org.