

SWAT 14: A web-based multimedia information resource on recruitment and retention of general practitioners

Objective of this SWAT

To evaluate the effectiveness of a web-based multimedia information resource on recruitment and retention of general practitioners.

Study area: Recruitment.

Sample type: Healthcare professionals; Trial team.

Estimated funding level needed: Low.

Background

Primary care trials often fail to achieve adequate sample size as demonstrated in a recent study of primary care trials in which only three (23%) recruited successfully compared to eight (62%) mental health trials.[1] This SWAT will add to the limited evidence base on recruitment to trials, and specifically, to trials in primary care by investigating the effects of different ways to provide information to healthcare practitioners about joining a randomized trial. A version of this SWAT will be conducted by the Health Research Board-Trials Methodology Research Network (HRB-TMRN), in collaboration with the MRC START Programme, and forms part of the research activity of the Irish Primary Care Trials Network (IPCTN) where it will be embedded within the host SATIN trial.

Interventions and comparators

Intervention 1: The original trial information sheet will be sent to general practitioners (GPs) by email. It will invite their participation GP in SATIN and will include a description of the trial, ethics information including risk-benefit assessment congruent with the scientific purpose of the trial and a form to indicate willingness to participate.

Intervention 2: The original trial information sheet plus the URL of a web-based multimedia trial information resource will be sent to GPs by email. The online resource will offer a platform for general information on randomized trials and information specific to the trial, a description of the trial, ethics information including risk benefit assessment congruent with the scientific purpose of the trial and an online form to indicate willingness to participate.

Index Type: Site Selection

Method for allocating to intervention or comparator

Randomisation.

Outcome measures

Primary outcomes: Number of eligible GPs who express 'willingness to participate' in the randomized groups.

Secondary outcomes: Number of GPs recruited (after application of SATIN eligibility criteria); proportion of recruited GPs in each group who are retained to the end of the trial; satisfaction among GPs as recruiter of patients; reasons GPs give for consenting or declining to participate in the trial; website analytics (available for intervention group 2 only).

Analysis plans

Comparative analyses of outcomes between groups.

Possible problems in implementing this SWAT

Possible challenges include recruiting GPs to participate in the study; the need to avoid a separate information leaflet for the SWAT as well as the information leaflet for the host trial.

References

1. Sully BGO, Julious S, Nicholl J. A reinvestigation of recruitment to randomised, controlled, multicenter trials: a review of trials funded by two UK funding agencies. *Trials* 2013; 14(1): 166.

People to show as the source of this idea: Declan Devane, Andrew Murphy, Valerie Smith and Mike Clarke.

Contact email address: declan.devane@nuigalway.ie.

Date of idea: 1 January 2013.