EULAR Study Group

The OA Trial Bank

The OA Trial Bank initiates meta-analyses on predefined subgroups of OA patients from existing literature. The OA Trial Bank is formalized with a chairman (Prof. SMA Bierma-Zeinstra), a steering committee (Prof. JW Bijlsma; Prof. S Lohmander; Prof. M Doherty; Prof. KS Dziedzic; W Zhang, PhD; Prof. TE McAlindon; I Lether) and an executive coordinator (M van Middelkoop, PhD). The board consists of international clinical researchers in the OA field. The steering committee members are involved in the development of the protocol, including the license agreement for data delivery and will have a formal oversight of the data collection and will ensure correct handling and analyses of data. Publications will be made on behalf of the OA Trial Bank.

The executive coordinator, whose main tasks are to further optimize the organisational structure, to develop the licence agreement for data-exchange, to collect the data and administer the dataset and to perform the first meta-analysis using IPD, will be supervised by the steering committee. The data will be stored at the Department of General Practice, Erasmus MC Medical University, Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

The OA Trial Bank is funded by the Dutch Arthritis Organisation and officially endorsed by the OARSI.

History

Based on small to moderate effectiveness of the wide range of symptomatic treatments in OA, and the heterogeneity of OA patients, treatment guidelines for OA have stressed the need for research on clinical predictors of response to different treatments.[1] Identifying responsive subgroups is not simple and it is essential to use the correct methodology in order to avoid that some patients are erroneously deprived of certain treatments, or are erroneously assumed to have an (better) effect from such treatment. A meta-analysis for quantifying interaction effects using Individual Patient Data (IPD) is considered to be the gold standard for subgroup analysis. This method requires re-analysis of individual patient data, made available by the authors of several trials, and consequently, well-designed collaborative projects can be initiated.

Study aims

The first aim of the current initiative is to build a solid and reliable organization for the development of an IPD bank, i.e. the OA Trial Bank, which will be used to perform predefined subgroup analyses. And secondly, to perform a first meta-analysis with IPD on the subgroup effects of intra-articular corticosteroid injection in OA patients. These aims provide the first step towards continued future meta-analysis with IPD in other interventions.

Role of EULAR Study Group

We propose that the EULAR disseminates this initiative. The endorsement of the EULAR committee will ratify our initiative and will result in an official and widely supported project, which is likely to be successful. The support of the EULAR will increase the visibility towards all data-deliverers and this is likely to result in a larger support from the data-delivers. To ensure a close interaction with EULAR, Prof. JW Bijlsma, a delegate of the EULAR executive committee members, serves in the OA Trial Bank steering committee.

Financial statement

The current project, including the setup of the organisational structure and the accomplishment of the first (pilot) meta-analysis on corticosteroid injections, is funded by the Dutch Arthritis Organisation. If this project appears to be successful, we will ask the Dutch Arthritis Organisation for structural funding for the coordination of the Trial Bank.

Reference

1. Zhang W, Doherty M, Arden N, et al; EULAR Standing Committee for International Clinical Studies Including Therapeutics (ESCISIT): EULAR evidence based recommendations for the management of hip osteoarthritis: report of a task force of the EULAR Standing Committee for International Clinical Studies Including Therapeutics (ESCISIT). *Ann Rheum Dis* 2005, 64:669-81.

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