Abstract Template

Project title: Using Discrete Choice Experiments to Untangle the Use of Incentives in Clinic Trial Recruitment

Institution: University College Cork

Project details

Clinical trials face ongoing challenges in patient recruitment and retention. Financial incentives are one potential method to improve recruitment. However, there is a lack of consensus on the optimal type, level and timing of the use of incentives and there are concerns about ensuring that patients are not coerced into participation. One method of exploring patient preferences for the use of incentives is Discrete Choice Experiments (DCEs). DCEs are widely used in health economics to assess patient choice. Choice is inherent in the decision making process and there is growing interest in the development and application of quantitative statistical methods to study choices and gain a better understanding of the elements involved in decision making. DCEs have gained popularity with the increasing emphasis on public and patient involvement (PPI) in clinical research, including preferences.

The aim of this study is to design a DCE to explore patient preferences for different aspects of financial incentives for recruitment in clinical trials.

The DCE will address three distinct steps: describe attributes, deliver the DCE and analyse the results. Attributes of interest (and their levels) may include the method of incentive (none, cash, voucher, present); level of incentive (amount 1, amount 2); timing of incentive (enrolment, end of participation). An experimental design will combine the attributes into choice sets which will then be presented to respondents using a self-completion questionnaire. Data will be analysed using a random utility model framework and a conditional logistic regression.

The results of the study are important as it is argued that insufficient focus has been placed on the development of recruitment and retention. It is important to understand patient preferences for incentives in recruitment for clinical trials in order to support decision making by ethical committees and regulatory authorities involved in clinical trials.

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