UNIVERSITY OF TURKU

27.05.2024

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Validation of register-based quality indicators towards safe and effective pharmacotherapy in the Nordic countries: An eDelphi study

Invitation to participate in research

You are invited to participate in research that aims to select, following an expert-based consensus process, a set of relevant, valid, and actionable register-based indicators and definitions that provide a credible and comprehensive comparison of prescribing quality across and within the Nordic countries.

You are requested to participate in this research because of your professional expertise in the field. The eDelphi panel is envisaged to include experts from each of the five Nordic countries, and within each country, from relevant stakeholders including healthcare professionals (primarily physicians, pharmacists), methodological experts (e.g., researchers, analysts) and potential users of the indicators (representatives of bodies responsible for national and regional healthcare quality assessment and steering).

The estimated number of panellists is 20–50. Recruitment is conducted using the networks of the research team, contacting relevant organisations, and experts with publications in the field. Snowballing techniques may be used to recruit participants (contacted experts may recruit other experts).

Voluntary participation

It is voluntary to participate in the research. You can refuse to participate in the research, withdraw from the research or cancel your consent to participate in the research at any point without any negative consequences to you or your work.

You can withdraw your consent by email to: katri.m.aaltonen@utu.fi.

If you withdraw from the research or cancel your consent, the information collected of you can be used as part of the research data.

Responsible persons and funder of the research

This research is conducted by:

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Conflicts of interest: Katri Aaltonen has a secondary affiliation through employment to the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela).

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Research process

Delphi is an iterative process that uses a series of structured questionnaires, administered and submitted in “rounds”. Following each round, the participants receive a summary of the panel’s combined answers. Rounds are held until reaching consensus, or maximum four rounds. The Delphi technique differs from group techniques and consensus conferences by that experts never meet each other. Receiving panel responses and revision of responses will nevertheless converge toward consensus. Anonymity in regards other panel members has the advantage of avoiding dominating role of few members.

This Delphi study will be conducted using electronic surveys (eDelphi). In each round, the participants will be asked to rate approximately 20 indicator based on their professional experience, and provide feedback on the indicators and the indicator set.

At each subsequent round, the indicator set will be further developed based on the feedback from the participants. In the latest rounds, the participants will also be asked to rate the set of indicators in terms of its coverage over the domains of interest (quality domains, policy priorities, relevant sectors/service areas, health care needs over individuals’ life cycle).

Completing each survey will require approximately one to two hours of the participant’s time. The total time required is therefore approximately 3–8 hours spread out over to three to four separate occasions during a six-month period.

Possible benefits and risks

By participating, you will contribute to the development of quality indicators that are made openly available for further use in research and practice. This is important because quality of prescribing and medication use remains a critical concern for clinicians, policymakers, and patients. Statistics and different types of indicators are needed for healthcare system to optimise quality through measuring key metrics. By standardising the evidence base for assessing prescribing quality, there will be a more uniform adoption of these definitions across the Nordic countries.

The risks related to participation are limited to the time spent on answering the surveys.

Incentives for participation

No fee is paid for participating in the research.

Processing personal data

The information obtained in the research is confidential. The personal data collected in the study include the email addresses of participants, which are only used to administer the subsequent surveys to the same panellists.

The survey includes questions on the personal characteristics of the participants (education, professional background, country, and gender), used to evaluate and report the panel composition. Individual participants may be identifiable through the combination of characteristics, or by the free text answers they provide. Therefore, also the research data without direct identifiers is handled as personal data.

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The personal data collected during the research is processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (see the privacy policy).

All results are reported in a manner that individual participants cannot be identified.

Storage of research data and reporting the research results

The data collected during the research is handled and stored within the secure institutional IT infrastructure at the University of Turku, and the collaborating institutions until the end of the research project (31.8.2027).

After the end of the study, anonymised survey data of the participants who explicitly consent to archiving will be offered to permanent archiving in the Finnish Social Science Data Archive (FSD). The anonymisation will be performed according to the instructions of FSD. Personal identifiers of all participants, and all data collected of participants who do not consent to archiving will be destroyed by the end of the research project (31.8.2027).

The research results are reported in scientific publications conference and seminar presentations, and publications intended for professional communities and the general public.

Open access is granted to reports, the developed indicators and indicator set, scientific publications and other publications using as broad user licenses as possible, typically CC BY 4.0.

Contact person for further enquiries

If you have questions about the research, you can contact:

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