SWAT 191: Effects of the timing of telephone contact with potential participants on the return of 12-week questionnaires.

Objective of this SWAT
To determine if the timing of a telephone call impacts on the return rate of 12-week follow-up questionnaires in a cluster randomised controlled trial.

Study area: Recruitment, Retention, Follow-up
Sample type: Patients
Estimated funding level needed: Low

Background
A great deal of effort is often expended in recruiting participants to trials. Ensuring that as many as possible are recruited, retained, and provide outcome data can greatly improve research efficiency and minimise the risk of bias from incomplete data.

In the FAMOUS trial (ISRCTN10589817) of follow-up and monitoring of new users of hearing aids, the randomisation of clusters (i.e., audiology clinics) means that all eligible patients seen during the trial period will receive care in line with the clinic's allocation. The strategy of informing patients that the clinic they have attended is participating in research will be delayed until the 12-week time point, when the first set of patient reported outcome measures (PROMs) are due. Given that patients are being sent information that does not pertain to their hearing aid clinical care, each patient will receive a reminder phone call from their audiology clinic reiterating the details of the FAMOUS trial and the questionnaires. This SWAT will investigate the timing of a single telephone call from the clinic, during which the questionnaires will be discussed with the patient to find out if they have any further questions or concerns.

Interventions and comparators
Intervention 1: Telephone call conducted at the time of sending the 12-week questionnaire, to inform the patient that the questionnaires and consent form are on the way.
Intervention 2: Telephone call conducted 2 to 3 days after postage of the 12-week questionnaire, to confirm whether the patient has received and read the questionnaires and consent form, having given the patient time to read the documents.

Index Type: Rate of data collection

Method for allocating to intervention or comparator
Randomisation

Outcome measures
Primary: (1) Return rate of 12-week follow-up questionnaire, and (2) demographics of populations completing the 12-week follow-up questionnaires.
Secondary:

Analysis plans
A mixed-effects logistic regression model will be used to compare response rates between the two SWAT groups, with a random effect to adjust for clustering within clinics. The comparison will be presented as an absolute and relative difference in proportions, along with 95% confidence intervals. Given the brief site opening period (months 8 to 17) and that recruitment of participants into the SWAT will occur at the 12 weeks post fitting appointment, it will not be feasible to perform an interim analysis on the SWAT and implement a change should one strategy prove more effective. Therefore, the analysis of the SWAT will occur after all patients reach 12 weeks post-fitting.

Possible problems in implementing this SWAT
Audiology clinics may not have the capacity to conduct multiple phone calls if a patient does not answer their phone the first time. Patients may ask questions that could result in lengthy phone calls.

References

Publications or presentations of this SWAT design

Examples of the implementation of this SWAT

People to show as the source of this idea: Dr Caroline Rick
Contact email address: famous@nottingham.ac.uk
Date of idea: 9/MAR/2020
Revisions made by: Caroline Rick
Date of revisions: 16/JUL/2020