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Publications in the Clinical Effectiveness Bulletin – the need for improvement

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Objective: To investigate the types and methodology of audits published in the Clinical Effectiveness Bulletin (CEB).

Design and setting: A retrospective audit carried out on all audits published in the CEB between July 2001 to May 2016. Gold standard: Audits to have a complete cycle (at least two cycles and a re-audit planned), with the methodology and evidence base for reported standards clearly stated. Target: 100% audits to be in accordance with the gold standard.

Materials and method: Full text articles of audits were retrieved from the British Orthodontic Society website. Literature reviews were excluded. Data was extracted using a pre-specified data collection form. Descriptive statistics were employed.

Results: 355 audits from 23 CEB issues were identified and assessed. 46% of audits were retrospective, 37% prospective and 17% being unclear. 63% of audits had standards based upon high levels of evidence. However, 5% failed to state any standard and 23% did not state a clear basis for the standards. 80% of audits only completed one cycle and 20% completed two or more cycles. Only 6% of audits were re-audits. 24% of audits did not state plans for a re-audit. The South-East reported the highest number of audits (22%). The most popular audit topic was focused on treatment.

Conclusions: There is variation in both the types and methodology of audits published in CEB. The value of single cycle audits based on low-level standards is limited. To improve both clinical practice and effectiveness, multi-cycle audits based on robust standards are desired.

Biography

My name is Rabia Dean. I graduated from King's College London with several awards, including a prize for an oral presentation presented at a national conference. I am currently completing dental foundation training at my first choice scheme in the West Midlands.

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