



The IDEAL Collaboration

Idea, Development, Exploration, Assessment, Long-term follow-up

<http://www.ideal-collaboration.net>



 @IDEALCollab

Who we are:

The Collaboration is an international group of surgeons, methodologists, statisticians and others interested in studying and resolving the special problems of research methodology in surgery and other similar complex interventions.

Our Aims:

To improve scientific evaluation methods and reporting standards for surgical and interventional therapies. To do this we have developed the IDEAL Framework, a description of the natural history of surgical innovation in 5 stages and the IDEAL Recommendations, describing appropriate study designs and reporting methods tailored for each stage of the Framework.

Activities:

Research: To evaluate, revise and extend the Framework and Recommendations.

Education: To spread awareness of the problems of evaluating complex interventions and available solutions.

Advocacy: To encourage those with the authority to improve the environment for surgical research to make changes to benefit researchers and patients.

The IDEAL Framework

Stage 1 IDEA	Stage 2a DEVELOPMENT	Stage 2b EXPLORATION	Stage 3 ASSESSMENT	Stage 4 LONG TERM MONITORING
Initial report	"Tinkering" (rapid iterative modification of technique and indications)	Technique now more stable	Gaining wide acceptance	Monitoring late and rare problems, changes in use & quality of surgical performance
Innovation may be planned, accidental or forced	Small experience from one centre	Replication by others	Considered as possible replacement for current treatment	
Focus on explanation and description	Focus on technical details and feasibility	Focus on adverse effects and potential benefits	Comparison against current best practice (RCT if possible)	
		Learning curves important		
		Definition and quality parameters developed		

Contact us at allison.hirst@nds.ox.ac.uk

INNOVATION STAGE

Online registry for first-in-man innovations

DEVELOPMENT STAGE

Prospective development studies

Protocol and study registries for prospective development studies in surgery

Development of agreed reporting standards and definitions for key outcomes

EXPLORATION STAGE

Prospective research databases

“Phase 2S “ prospective collaborative studies

Reporting of continuous quality control measures (eg, CUSUM-Quality control and compliance measures stages 2b to 4)

ASSESSMENT STAGE

Alternatives to randomised clinical trials

-Case-matching studies

-Controlled interrupted-time series designs

-Step-wedge designs

Modified randomised clinical trials

-Randomisation variants: expertise-based, third party

-Tracker trials

-Phase 2S transition from database to randomised clinical trial

-Feasibility randomised clinical trial (where study size and endpoints are aimed at determining the feasibility of a definitive study)

-Explanatory randomised clinical trial (where contextual confounders are minimised to ensure the best possible comparison between experimental and control treatments)

Additions to randomised clinical trials

-Learning curve evaluation

-Quality control and compliance measures

LONG TERM STUDY STAGE

Registries for surveillance of specific established techniques

How can IDEAL help YOU move your research plans forward?

IDEAL seeks to help all efforts to improve methodology in surgical research. We are not restricted to RCTs but equally interested in earlier stage studies.

1. Background information:

Look at our website Library which contains helpful papers and links on topics including Ethics, Study Design and Reporting.

2. Publicity for your research:

We want to support and promote innovative research in surgery and interventional therapies or which explore improvements in methodology or reporting. Send us details of your project and if it meets IDEAL criteria we will publicise it on our website, tweet about it or invite you to write a blog about it for our newsletter.

3. Advice:

If you would like to discuss your plans for studies especially those in the IDEAL Development or Exploration phases, please get in touch and we will be happy to help.

4. Collaboration:

We can offer assistance in developing funding applications or writing papers in the manner proposed by IDEAL to a limited number of projects at any one time. We are particularly interested in studies of surgical techniques and devices and are keen to evaluate these qualitatively to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the IDEAL approach. For publications we request co-authorship of at least one member of the IDEAL Steering Group or team stating it is “on behalf of the IDEAL Collaboration”. For grants we request a small allocation of funds to allow for our qualitative evaluation using interviews and questionnaires. If you think your project is suitable and would be keen to collaborate in this way please contact us.

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