Heterogeneity of outcome measure reporting in otitis media

Gaurav Bajaj¹, Deepak Chandrasekharan¹, Samit Unadkat², Rishi Talwar³, Yogesh Bajaj²
¹ University College London, 2 Royal London Hospital 3 Luton and Dunstable University Hospital

Otitis media is...
COMMON: affects 95% of children at least once by age 5
EXPENSIVE: commonest indication for paediatric surgery in high-income countries
PROBLEMATIC: if untreated can cause disseminated infection and long-term hearing loss

Uniform outcome reporting enables better evidence synthesis to inform practice.

We searched for core outcome sets for otitis media on COMET initiative and for outcome measures currently used in registered ongoing studies.

RESULTS

There is significant heterogeneity in outcome measures for otitis media:

- 1 outcome set exists for otitis media, but applicable only to children with cleft lip and palate.
- 1 outcome set in development - for otitis media with effusion. Due 2019
- 12 ongoing studies into otitis media on study registries.
- 12 studies used 57 different outcome measures (mean 5.1, range 2-10).

Most replicated outcome measures

![Outcome measure bar chart]

There is no standardized outcome set for otitis media.

A core outcome set would be beneficial to improve diagnostics and treatment.

Core outcome sets should include both clinical measurements and patient reported outcomes.