

Developing a Research Agenda for the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons: Results of a Delphi Approach

Burt et al. (2009)

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For which topic were research priorities identified?

colon and rectal surgery

In which location was the research priority setting conducted?

North America - Canada; North America - USA

Why was it conducted at all?

Currently there are multiple and diverse research initiatives relating to colon and rectal surgery, involving the efforts of surgeons, basic scientists, and allied professionals, supported by funding from a range of sources. Although this system has produced important advances in the treatment of colorectal disease, it is a challenge to research and funding organizations who want to select the proposals most likely to make important contributions to the field. The purpose of this project, sponsored by The American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons (ASCRS) Research Foundation, was to develop a research agenda for colorectal surgery. Such a research agenda could assist clinical investigators in developing their research programs and guide funding agencies in determining the relevance of grant proposals. It could also provide medical journal editors and reviewers with information about which issues colorectal specialists consider to have the highest priority, enabling a better understanding of the importance and potential impact of original research reports.

What was the objective?

to survey a group of colorectal specialists and reach a consensus on the research questions of highest importance in terms of clinical care

What was the outcome?

a ranking list of 20 research questions

How long did the research prioritization take?

No information provided.

Which methods were used to identify research priorities?

Delphi

How were the priorities for research identified exactly?

Step 1: Delphi round 1: participants were asked to suggest up to six key research questions, 746 questions submitted.
Step 2: data processing: review of submissions, excluding questions submitted only once, 105 questions remaining.
Step 3: Delphi round 2: participants were asked to rate priority of each question, 50 highest scoring questions remained. Step 4: Delphi round 3: participants were asked to re-rate

Which stakeholders took part?

Colorectal specialists from the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons (ASCRS): surgeons, candidate members, allied health professionals, and affiliated scientific investigators. Delphi round 1: 203 participants. Delphi round 2: 399 participants. Delphi round 3: 360 participants.

How were stakeholders recruited?

The entire membership of ASCRS, consisting of a total of 2,229 fellows and other members (surgeons, candidate members, allied health professionals, and affiliated scientific investigators), was asked to participate.

Were stakeholders actively involved or did they just participate?

Stakeholders were mere participants of the research prioritization process; they were not actively involved in the process.