

Defining the Research Agenda for Surgical Infection: A Consensus of Experts Using the Delphi Approach

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For which topic were research priorities identified?

surgical infections

In which location was the research priority setting conducted?

North America - USA

Why was it conducted at all?

A substantial proportion of operative procedures are complicated by infections, either remote from or related to the surgical site. These infections account for substantive morbidity and health care costs. With limited research funds available to study interventions designed to either prevent or reduce the morbidity associated with infections in surgical patients, we developed a research agenda.

What was the objective?

to develop priorities to aid in study design and to focus both human and capital resources more effectively

What was the outcome?

a ranking list of 15 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: experts were asked to provide as many as three to five questions pertaining to surgical infections that merited scientific investigation, participants were given suggestions on how to construct research question by asking to define topic, patient population or problem, intervention, comparator (if applicable) and outcome of interest, 96 questions submitted. Step 2: data processing: questions collated and reviewed, similar questions combined, questions collapsed to 62 distinct questions grouped into 11 areas. Step 2: Delphi round 2: survey with 62 questions, participants were asked to rate relative merit of each topic. Step 3: Delphi round 3: questions with priority scores above median in second round presented, participants were asked to re-rate and to indicate amount of research they believed was already available that addressed the particular question (substantial amount of research available, some research available, little research available). Step 4: comparing experts' assessment with existing published data

Which stakeholders took part?

Experts in the field of surgical infection, members of the surgical infection society. Delphi round 1: 63 participants. Delphi round 2: 42 participants. Delphi round 3: 45 participants.

How were stakeholders recruited?

The project team invited 103 experts from 79 different hospitals or research institutions in six countries and 26 states to participate in the first round.

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.