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BADERI: an online database to coordinate handsearching activities of controlled clinical trials for their potential inclusion in systematic reviews

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Abstract

Background: Systematic reviews provide the best evidence on the effect of health care interventions. They rely on comprehensive access to the available scientific literature. Electronic search strategies alone may not suffice, requiring the implementation of a handsearching approach. We have developed a database to provide an Internet-based platform from which handsearching activities can be coordinated, including a procedure to streamline the submission of these references into CENTRAL, the Cochrane Collaboration Central Register of Controlled Trials.

Methods: We developed a database and a descriptive analysis. Through brainstorming and discussion among stakeholders involved in handsearching projects, we designed a database that met identified needs that had to be addressed in order to ensure the viability of handsearching activities. Three handsearching teams pilot tested the proposed database. Once the final version of the database was approved, we proceeded to train the staff involved in handsearching.

Results: The proposed database is called BADERI (Database of Iberoamerican Clinical Trials and Journals, by its initials in Spanish). BADERI was officially launched in October 2015, and it can be accessed at www.baderi.com/login.php free of cost. BADERI has an administration subsection, from which the roles of users are managed; a references subsection, where information associated to identified controlled clinical trials (CCTs) can be entered; a reports subsection, from which reports can be generated to track and analyse the results of handsearching activities; and a built-in free text search engine. BADERI allows all references to be exported in ProCite files that can be directly uploaded into CENTRAL. To date, 6284 references to CCTs have been uploaded to BADERI and sent to CENTRAL. The identified CCTs were published in a total of 420 journals related to 46 medical specialties. The year of publication ranged between 1957 and 2016.

Conclusions: BADERI allows the efficient management of handsearching activities across different countries and institutions. References to all CCTs available in BADERI can be readily submitted to CENTRAL for their potential inclusion in systematic reviews.

Keywords: Information storage and retrieval, Database searching, Database development, Systematic reviews, Randomized controlled trial, Handsearching

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