

Good reporting practices and the CONSORT

Boas práticas de redação e o CONSORT

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Increasing attention has been paid to the importance of good reporting practices as they relate to the potential utility of a manuscript⁽¹⁾.

Randomised controlled trials, when appropriately designed, conducted, and reported, represent the gold standard in evaluating healthcare interventions. However, randomised trials can yield biased results if they lack methodological rigor⁽²⁾. To assess a trial accurately, readers of a paper need complete, clear, and transparent information on its methodology and findings. Unfortunately, attempted assessments frequently fail because authors of many trial reports neglect to provide complete descriptions of that critical information^(3,4).

The CONSORT (Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials) statement, originally published in 1996 and updated in 2001 and 2010, provides a 25 item checklist for a minimum set of recommendations for reporting the trial design, analysis, and result⁽⁵⁾. It was developed to assist authors in writing reports of randomised controlled trials, editors and peer reviewers in reviewing manuscripts for publication, and readers in critically appraising published articles. It provides guidance for reporting all randomised controlled trials, but focuses on the most common design type-individually randomised, two group, parallel trials, which accounts for over half of trials in the literature.

The evidence based approach that has been used for CONSORT also served as a model for development of other reporting guidelines, such as for reporting systematic reviews and meta-analyses of studies evaluating interventions [PRISMA]⁽⁶⁾, and observational studies [STROBE]⁽⁷⁾.

However, as a potential drawback, a reporting guideline might encourage some authors to report fictitiously the information suggested by the guidance rather than what was actually done. Readers, peer reviewers, and editors should vigilantly guard against that potential drawback and refer, for example, to trial protocols, to information on trial registers, and to regulatory agency websites.

Although the Arquivos Brasileiros de Oftalmologia has not yet officially adopted the CONSORT, we encourage its use as well as other protocols such as STROBE and PRISM. This attitude will contribute to the improvement of our global insertion.

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