

PROGNOSIS MODULE

Goal

At the completion of this unit, participants will be able to critically appraise an article addressing prognosis using the “Users’ Guide.”

Objectives

By completing this module the learner will be able to:

- Assess the validity of a prognosis paper
- Interpret a Kaplan-Meier curve
- Address issues of applicability to different patient populations

Preparation

- Read Chapter 20, Prognosis in JAMAevidence: Using Evidence to Improve Care by AG Randolph, DJ Cook and G Guyatt pp. 419-29
- Use the supplied Critical Appraisal form to evaluate the paper.
- Decide on the major learning points and take home messages
- Develop your educational strategy emphasizing active learning

Clinical Scenario

“So in general, what can be expected?”

You are participating in an inter-professional training project with students from medicine, physical therapy, chiropractic and podiatry. Since you are a chiropractor and manage many patients with low back pain (LBP) the question comes up about the prognosis of LBP patients. You see an excellent opportunity to illustrate some foundational principles of evidence-based clinical practice. So you take the group through the process of generating a clinical question, and introduce them to searching PubMed using clinical queries.

After some discussion it is the consensus that acute LBP patients generally are managed by primary care providers, physical therapists and chiropractors so you decide to include that in your search. You identify a paper that seems to directly address your clinical question.

Educational Strategy

- Build a searchable clinical question
- Discuss (or demonstrate) using clinical queries to identify a paper
- Critically appraise the paper using the supplied form
- Discuss the important elements of validity for a prognosis paper
- Discuss the interpretation of the results (including the Kaplan-Meier curve)
- Discuss how the outcomes of the paper can influence shared clinical decision making

Attached:

1. Henschke N¹, Maher CG, Refshauge KM, Herbert RD, Cumming RG, Bleasel J, York J, Das A, McAuley JH. Prognosis in patients with recent onset low back pain in Australian primary care: inception cohort study. *BMJ*. 2008 Jul 7; 337:a171.
2. Critical Appraisal form for prognosis.