



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

NOTE FOR THE PRESS



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**Note for the media WHO/22
4 May 2007**

NEW WHO ONLINE TOOL TO IMPROVE CLINICAL TRIAL TRANSPARENCY

GENEVA -- The World Health Organization (WHO) today launched a new web site that will enable researchers, health practitioners, consumers, journal editors and reporters to search more easily and quickly for information on clinical trials. The site works as an entry point or portal into multiple, high quality clinical trial registers with a global search function.

For a doctor or a patient, identifying all clinical trials relevant to a decision to receive a specific treatment option is a difficult task, made easier if the results have been reported in the published literature. However, a significant proportion of research is never published and, even if it is published, it is possible that only part of the story is told in the publication. Relying on information provided only by published trial research is therefore unreliable and leads to inadequately informed treatment decisions.

The only way to ensure the availability of complete and accurate information about clinical trials is for all trials to be registered before any participants are recruited. WHO believes that the registration of clinical trials is a scientific, ethical and moral responsibility.

"The Clinical Trial Search Portal is a collaborative international initiative led by WHO that facilitates the identification of all clinical trials, regardless of whether or not they have been published. For health care researchers, funders, policy makers and consumers the Portal represents an enormous step towards greater access, transparency and accountability of health research globally." Tim Evans, Assistant Director General, Information Evidence and Research, WHO.

Clinical trial registries have now become widely accepted as an essential part of an overall strategy for improving health outcomes. The challenge now facing those wanting to identify clinical trials research is knowing how to navigate their way through the ever increasing number of registers that now exist, and knowing which registers provide information that is accurate and reliable.

The quality of information accessible through the WHO portal is assured as registers providing data to the search portal are all collaborators in the WHO Network of Collaborating Clinical Trial registers, also announced today. The Network will provide a forum for registers to exchange information and work together to establish best practice for clinical trial registration. Registers in the Network that contribute data to the search portal have agreed to prospectively register trials, are able to collect all 20 items in the WHO Trial Registration Data Set and have mechanisms in place to ensure the optimal quality of the data provided. They are also required to publicly disclose their ownership, governance structure and for-profit status. Details of registers meeting the required standards are available on the web site.

"The WHO search portal is a big step forward to making it possible to search for all relevant trials in a given research area. The onus now lies with all investigators to be sure that their work is fully and meaningfully registered in a WHO compatible database," said Jeff Drazen, Editor-in-Chief of the New England Journal of Medicine

The WHO Clinical Trial Search Portal may be accessed at <http://www.who.int/trialsearch/> For more information on the WHO International Clinical Trials Registry Platform go to <http://www.who.int/ictrp>.

All WHO News Releases, Fact Sheets and Features can be obtained on the WHO web site: www.who.int.

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