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Randomized Trials in Preventive Medicine and Health Service Research: report on a study group: Copenhagen, 8-12 December 1975 (ICP/SHS 006).

Geneva: WHO

Preamble

The report is also available in French and Russian.

Aims

In recent years there has been growing concern about the evaluation of health programmes, services and medical procedures. The problem is of particular importance for health administrators and policy makers, but also for other health professionals. The study group examined the use of randomised trials in preventive medicine and health service evaluation. It also reviewed the present situation in the field of utilization of randomised trials, priorities and criteria for their design, as well as ethical aspects and operational constraints. At present there is a gap between what is known and what is applied in the running of health services. For many health programmes, it is not known to what extent they achieve their operational aims; similarly, little is known about their efficacy (effect on health status). More evaluation of health services is therefore urgently required (Introduction, page 1).

Contents (iii+28 pages)

1. Introduction
 2. General review of methods of evaluation
 3. Role of randomized trials in evaluation
 4. Ethical and operational constraints in the use of the randomized approach
 5. Review of the present situation in the field of utilization of randomized trials in preventive medicine and health service research
 6. Priorities and criteria for the use of randomized design in research aimed at the evaluation of programmes and procedures in preventive medicine and health services
 7. Conclusions and recommendations
- References
ANNEX I: Agenda
ANNEX II: List of participants

Authors

The participants were divided into temporary advisers: Dr A Aromaa (Senior Research Officer, Research Institute for Social Security, Helsinki, Finland); Professor J Červenka (Head, Department of Epidemiology, Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology, Postgraduate Medical School, Bratislava, Czechoslovakia); Professor J Kostrzewski (Chairman; Head, Department of Epidemiology, National Institute of Hygiene, Warsaw, Poland; Dr J Mosbech (Medical consultant, Department of Health Statistics and Epidemiology, Directorate of Health, Copenhagen, Denmark); Dr Claude Rumeau-Rouquette (Chief, Mother and Child Section, National Institute of Health and Medical Research, Le Vésinet, France); Dr B Velimirovic (Epidemiologist, Ministry of Health and Environmental Protection, Vienna, Austria); Professor WE Waters (Rapporteur, Department of Community Medicine, Southampton General Hospital, Southampton, UK); and, WHO staff from the Regional Office for Europe: Dr Z Brzezinski (secretary; Regional Officer for Epidemiology), and Dr DHS Griffith (Regional Officer for Health Planning and Evaluation); Dr M Postiglione (Chief, Disease Prevention and Control) and, Dr R Glyn Thomas (Regional Officer for Development of Community Services); and from WHO Headquarters: Dr B Grab (Statistician, Division of Health Statistics); and, Dr BM Kleczkowski (Chief Medical Officer for Resource Group, Division of Strengthening of Health Service).