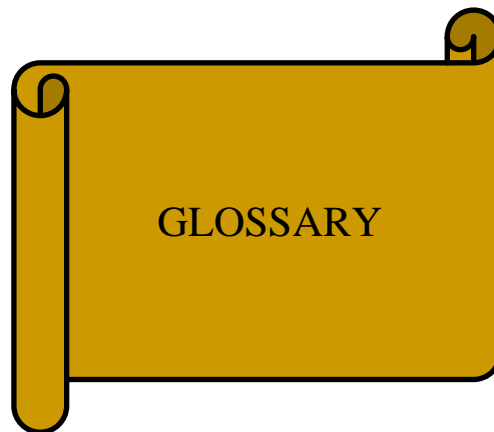


GLOSSARY

FOR PATIENT/PUBLIC RESEARCH PARTNERS



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Introduction

This booklet is a Glossary of terms and words often used in research studies in the Centre. We hope the Glossary will assist anyone who needs a quick collective point of reference and in particular assist our Research User Group (RUG) in their important contribution to our work.

Their role in helping researchers, sitting on steering committees, and commenting on documentation going out to the public often inevitably involves specialist research or medical terminology. The Glossary is not an exhaustive reference but we hope it will help RUG members with their work.

Explanation of Terms

A:

A Priori: A Latin term meaning 'from the earlier' it refers to knowledge which is based on logical reasoning or theory, which is not supported by scientific proof. Researchers frequently use this term to describe decisions about how they will analyse data before the research occurs.

Abstract: A brief summary of the main features and results of a research study.

Acute Attack: Acute is the medical term for an illness or medical problem that begins and progresses rapidly. It may also refer to an illness that begins and ends quickly.

Adherence Enhancing Toolkit: A comprehensive range of assessment and treatment techniques (or 'tools') that are made available to physiotherapists in the trial, including for example ways to identify patients' own exercise goals and support them to maintain their chosen activities over time. Some of the techniques are used by physiotherapists with patients and some are used by patients.

Adherence to Treatment: The following of a recommended course of treatment by taking all prescribed medications for the length of time necessary.

Adrenal Gland: A small gland located on top of the kidney. The adrenal glands produce hormones that help control heart rate, blood pressure, the way the body uses food, the levels of minerals such as sodium and potassium in the blood, and other functions particularly involved in stress reactions.

Adrenal Suppression: A condition resulting from the suppression of cortisol secretion by the adrenal glands.

Allopurinol: A drug used in the treatment of gout, a disease that is characterized by severe inflammation in one or more of the joints of the extremities.

Analgesics: A member of the group of drugs used to relieve pain. Also known as a painkiller.

Analysis: Data analysis involves examining and processing research data, in order to answer the questions that the study is trying to address. For some types of research this will mean looking at numbers and statistics to identify patterns. For other types of research it will involve looking at the words of what people have said in interviews and drawing out the main themes. Analysis is often done with specialist computer software.

Anonymised Data: Data from which the patient cannot be identified. The name, address, and full post code must be removed together with any other information which, if combined with other data seen by researchers, could identify the patient. Unique numbers may be included only if researchers do not have access to the 'key' to trace the identity of the patient.

Anticoagulants: Anticoagulants are a class of drugs used to prevent blood clotting.

Anti-inflammatory drugs: Also known as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). Anti-inflammatory drugs are a class of medication used to prevent inflammation (i.e. swelling and redness) of muscles and joints, and to reduce pain.

Arm: A group of patients receiving a particular treatment (or placebo) in a clinical trial.

Arthritis Research UK Clinical Studies Groups: Groups set up by Arthritis Research UK to review and fund proposals relating to clinical trials of arthritis. ARUK currently has Clinical Study Groups in 8 arthritis-related disease areas. These groups will only fund research if it fits with the ARUK's strategic priorities.

Arthrocentesis: (See Joint Aspiration)

B:

Barriers: A barrier is something that stops somebody from doing something. So, for example, a barrier to visiting your GP about joint pain may be the fact that you live a long way from the surgery and you don't drive so you find it hard to get to the practice.

Baseline Measure: A baseline measure is a patient symptom or characteristic (e.g. pain, blood pressure) that is measured at the beginning of the research study, before any treatment starts.

Baseline Questionnaire: A questionnaire used at the beginning of a research study (see Baseline Measure).

Behavioural: The way in which a person, or group behave in response to a specific set of symptoms or conditions.

Bias: Bias is when a particular research design or analysis is likely to favour a particular outcome and would, therefore, make those results unreliable. It is important to avoid bias in health research as it can influence the results and could lead to unsafe or ineffective treatments being licensed for use, or useful treatments being overlooked.