



**JOHNS HOPKINS  
BLOOMBERG**  
SCHOOL of PUBLIC HEALTH

Department of Epidemiology  
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health  
415 N. Washington Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Baltimore, Maryland 21231

15 March 2023

Memorandum

To: Trialists

Fr: Curtis Meinert

Re: What’s on your list?

ClinicalTrials.gov (aka CT.gov) was created as a result of the Food and Drug Administration Modernization Act of 1997. The act required the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Library of Medicine, to establish a registry of clinical trials of federally and privately funded trials conducted under investigational new drug applications. It launched in 2000 and has now over 343,000 trials registered.

As users of the registry we are reminded that CT.gov is building a better system. My hope is that revisions include:

- 1: Calling trials by their rightful name rather than interventional studies.
- 2: Expanding the search algorithm available via CT.gov by adding a search term “Study publication”. The addition would allow users to track publications of registered trials.
- 3: The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) should be encouraged by CT.gov to implement procedures to monitor ICMJE member journals for adherence to posting registration numbers in papers published. Evidence is that less than 30% of published trials have posted registration numbers. That reality is almost certainly due to journal editors simply not requesting registration number when papers are published.

**Full length MEDLINE publication type “randomized controlled trial” (RzT) by registration status**

Year published	Indexed RzT	Registered in CT.gov or other WHO registries	Not registered	% not registered
2010	20,658	3,209	17,449	84.47%
2015	27,636	7,846	19,790	71.61%
2020	28,274	7,666	20,608	72.89%

- 4: The ICMJE announcement specifies that registration numbers should be the last entry in abstracts. Unfortunately, not even signatories to the 2004 announcement follow their own recommendation. Some journals, for example The Lancet and Ann Intern Med publish registration numbers in the middle of abstracts. Frustrating as that variation is for anyone reviewing abstracts for registration numbers, it is minor to when numbers are buried in bodies of manuscripts without mention anywhere in abstracts.

So there that is my list. What's on your list? Let me hear from you.