

OPEN SEMINAR SERIES

Monday 18 February 2013
12:00 – 13:00

SEERC Conference Room
3rd Floor Strategakis Bldg

“How large should a pilot trial be?”

By

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ABSTRACT

The success of definitive randomised controlled trials (RCTs) is heavily dependent upon the availability of robust information to inform their study design. A pilot or feasibility trial can help to inform the design of the definitive RCT and the likelihood of the RCT achieving its aims and objectives. Some recommendations for sample size in pilots have been developed although there is little consensus in practice. Furthermore, the published literature focuses on the estimation of variability for continuous outcomes, rather than binary outcomes such as recruitment rate or willingness to be randomised. We have investigated the impact of sample size in pilot and feasibility studies through simulation. Estimates taken from small samples are more likely to be biased, so some recommendations suggesting correcting for this bias. However, we show that the lack of precision is more of an issue than the bias, so larger sample sizes (60-70 per group) are desirable.

The seminar series is open to all members of *staff and students* of CITY and to any *externals* that wish to attend.

