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ENCePP Checklist for Study Protocols (Revision 2, amended)

Adopted by the ENCePP Steering Group on 14/01/2013

The European Network of Centres for Pharmacoepidemiology and Pharmacovigilance (ENCePP) welcomes innovative designs and new methods of research. This Checklist has been developed by ENCePP to stimulate consideration of important principles when designing and writing a pharmacoepidemiological or pharmacovigilance study protocol. The Checklist is intended to promote the quality of such studies, not their uniformity. The user is also referred to the ENCePP Guide on Methodological Standards in Pharmacoepidemiology which reviews and gives direct electronic access to guidance for research in pharmacoepidemiology and pharmacovigilance.

For each question of the Checklist, the investigator should indicate whether or not it has been addressed in the study protocol. If the answer is "Yes", the page number(s) of the protocol where this issue has been discussed should be specified. It is possible that some questions do not apply to a particular study (for example in the case of an innovative study design). In this case, the answer 'N/A' (Not Applicable) can be checked and the "Comments" field included for each section should be used to explain why. The "Comments" field can also be used to elaborate on a "No" answer.

This Checklist should be included as an Annex by marketing authorisation holders when submitting the protocol of a non-interventional post-authorisation safety study (PASS) to a regulatory authority (see the Guidance on the format and content of the protocol of non-interventional post-authorisation safety studies). Note, the Checklist is a supporting document and does not replace the format of the protocol for PASS as recommended in the Guidance and Module VIII of the Good pharmacovigilance practices (GVP).

Study title:

Realization of the clinical practice guidelines for diabetes in Finland – A case study of the usability of electronic patient information systems and national registers to support evidence based decision making in health care

Study reference number:

ER12-9451

Section 1: Milestones	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
1.1 Does the protocol specify timelines for				
1.1.1 Start of data collection ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10
1.1.2 End of data collection ²	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10
1.1.3 Study progress report(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10
1.1.4 Interim progress report(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10
1.1.5 Registration in the EU PAS register	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
1.1.6 Final report of study results.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10

Comments:

1.1.2: "Start of data analysis"

¹ Date from which information on the first study is first recorded in the study dataset or, in the case of secondary use of data, the date from which data extraction starts.

² Date from which the analytical dataset is completely available.

Section 2: Research question	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
2.1 Does the formulation of the research question and objectives clearly explain:				
2.1.1 Why the study is conducted? (e.g. to address an important public health concern, a risk identified in the risk management plan, an emerging safety issue)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6, 10-11
2.1.2 The objective(s) of the study?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6, 11
2.1.3 The target population? (i.e. population or subgroup to whom the study results are intended to be generalised)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7, 12
2.1.4 Which formal hypothesis(-es) is (are) to be tested?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.1.5 If applicable, that there is no <i>a priori</i> hypothesis?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6, 10

Comments:

2.1.4 & 2.1.5: Study does not include strict hypotheses but descriptive evaluations of how current care guidelines are realised in practice.

Section 3: Study design	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
3.1 Is the study design described? (e.g. cohort, case-control, randomised controlled trial, new or alternative design)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7, 12
3.2 Does the protocol specify the primary and secondary (if applicable) endpoint(s) to be investigated?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8-9, 16-20
3.3 Does the protocol describe the measure(s) of effect? (e.g. relative risk, odds ratio, deaths per 1000 person-years, absolute risk, excess risk, incidence rate ratio, hazard ratio, number needed to harm (NNH) per year)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14-20, 23

Comments:

Section 4: Source and study populations	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
4.1 Is the source population described?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7,9,12,22
4.2 Is the planned study population defined in terms of:				
4.2.1 Study time period?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	13-14
4.2.2 Age and sex?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
4.2.3 Country of origin?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7, 12
4.2.4 Disease/indication?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7, 12
4.2.5 Co-morbidity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	15
4.2.6 Seasonality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
4.3 Does the protocol define how the study population will be sampled from the source population? (e.g. event or inclusion/exclusion criteria)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7, 12-13

Comments:

4.2.2: No age limits, both genders included.

Section 5: Exposure definition and measurement	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
5.1 Does the protocol describe how exposure is defined and measured? (e.g. operational details for defining and categorising exposure)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7,12-14,16

Section 5: Exposure definition and measurement	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
5.2 Does the protocol discuss the validity of exposure measurement? (e.g. precision, accuracy, prospective ascertainment, exposure information recorded before the outcome occurred, use of validation sub-study)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24-25
5.3 Is exposure classified according to time windows? (e.g. current user, former user, non-use)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7, 12-14
5.4 Is exposure classified based on biological mechanism of action and taking into account the pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of the drug?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.5 Does the protocol specify whether a dose-dependent or duration-dependent response is measured?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14,16

Comments:

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Section 6: Endpoint definition and measurement	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
6.1 Does the protocol describe how the endpoints are defined and measured?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8-9, 15-20
6.2 Does the protocol discuss the validity of endpoint measurement? (e.g. precision, accuracy, sensitivity, specificity, positive predictive value, prospective or retrospective ascertainment, use of validation sub-study)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24-25

Comments:

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Section 7: Confounders and effect modifiers	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
7.1 Does the protocol address known confounders? (e.g. collection of data on known confounders, methods of controlling for known confounders)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	23-25
7.2 Does the protocol address known effect modifiers? (e.g. collection of data on known effect modifiers, anticipated direction of effect)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	18-19,23-25

Comments:

7.2: Treatment decisions depend on blood pressure, renal function, cholesterol level
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Section 8: Data sources	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
8.1 Does the protocol describe the data source(s) used in the study for the ascertainment of:				
8.1.1 Exposure? (e.g. pharmacy dispensing, general practice prescribing, claims data, self-report, face-to-face interview, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20-21
8.1.2 Endpoints? (e.g. clinical records, laboratory markers or values, claims data, self-report, patient interview including scales and questionnaires, vital statistics, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20-21
8.1.3 Covariates?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20-21
8.2 Does the protocol describe the information available from the data source(s) on:				
8.2.1 Exposure? (e.g. date of dispensing, drug quantity, dose, number of days of supply prescription, daily dosage, prescriber)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20-21
8.2.2 Endpoints? (e.g. date of occurrence, multiple event, severity measures related to event)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20-21
8.2.3 Covariates? (e.g. age, sex, clinical and drug use)				

Section 8: Data sources	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
history, co-morbidity, co-medications, life style, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20-21
8.3 Is a coding system described for:				
8.3.1 Diseases? (e.g. International Classification of Diseases (ICD)-10)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14-20
8.3.2 Endpoints? (e.g. Medical Dictionary for Regulatory Activities (MedDRA) for adverse events)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14-20
8.3.3 Exposure? (e.g. WHO Drug Dictionary, Anatomical Therapeutic Chemical (ATC) Classification System)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14-20
8.4 Is the linkage method between data sources described? (e.g. based on a unique identifier or other)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	25

Comments:

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Section 9: Study size and power	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
9.1 Is sample size and/or statistical power calculated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Comments:

Due to the nature of the study (see aims of the study) power calculations have not been performed.
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Section 10: Analysis plan	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
10.1 Does the plan include measurement of excess risks?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22-24
10.2 Is the choice of statistical techniques described?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22-24
10.3 Are descriptive analyses included?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22-24
10.4 Are stratified analyses included?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22-24
10.5 Does the plan describe methods for adjusting for confounding?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22-24
10.6 Does the plan describe methods addressing effect modification?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22-24

Comments:

A separate detailed statistical analysis plan will be prepared.

Section 11: Data management and quality control	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
11.1 Is information provided on the management of missing data?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14-20
11.2 Does the protocol provide information on data storage? (e.g. software and IT environment, database maintenance and anti-fraud protection, archiving)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22,25
11.3 Are methods of quality assurance described?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24
11.4 Does the protocol describe possible quality issues related to the data source(s)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24-25
11.5 Is there a system in place for independent review of study results?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22

Comments:

11.1: Availability of the data is one of the study questions.

Section 12: Limitations	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
12.1 Does the protocol discuss: 12.1.1 Selection biases?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24-25
12.1.2 Information biases? (e.g. anticipated direction and magnitude of such biases, validation sub-study, use of validation and external data, analytical methods)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24-25
12.2 Does the protocol discuss study feasibility? (e.g. sample size, anticipated exposure, duration of follow-up in a cohort study, patient recruitment)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7, 12-13
12.3 Does the protocol address other limitations?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24-25

Comments:

Section 13: Ethical issues	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
13.1 Have requirements of Ethics Committee/Institutional Review Board approval been described?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	25
13.2 Has any outcome of an ethical review procedure been addressed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
13.3 Have data protection requirements been described?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22, 25

Comments:

13.2: The review of the Ethical Review Board of Hospital District of Helsinki and Uusimaa has not been completed yet.

Section 14: Amendments and deviations	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
14.1 Does the protocol include a section to document future amendments and deviations?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9

Comments:

Section 15: Plans for communication of study results	Yes	No	N/A	Page Number(s)
15.1 Are plans described for communicating study results (e.g. to regulatory authorities)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24
15.2 Are plans described for disseminating study results externally, including publication?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	25

Comments:

Name of the main author of the protocol: Pasi Korhonen

Date: 30/4/2013

Signature: _____

