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Title [max 250 characters]

Derivation and Definitions of Clinical Study Variables for Multimorbidity in Patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD): A modified Delphi study

Abstract Content [max: 1,810 characters inc. spaces; current: 1,810 characters]**Introduction**

Standardized variables and their definitions are key to understanding clinical care and study delivery in COPD. Existing data variables for COPD are not comprehensive for multimorbidity and have limited adoption.

Aims

To provide an internationally designed and endorsed suite of clinical variables for use in clinical care and research for multimorbidity in COPD.

Methods

We formed an executive committee (EC), a steering committee (SC) and an international consensus group (ICG).

Candidate variables were identified by a literature search overseen by the EC. We followed a modified Delphi process of anonymous rounds of online voting for the SC, with consensus thresholds set at 60% agreement and 75% minimum response rate for inclusion/exclusion of variables. Definitions overseen by the EC were developed, and consensus obtained through online SC voting. The ICG, EC and SC reviewed and voted on the final set of variables and definitions.

Results

The SC (including the EC) comprised 23 individuals representing 15 countries, of whom 70% were pulmonologists. The systematic review yielded 131 articles, generated 476 candidate variables and the EC removed 86. The SC refined the list to 282 variables across 9 domains (see Figure).

Conclusions

Through international consensus, a suite of data variables and their definitions have been developed for multimorbidity in COPD that may be used for clinical care and studies.

Figure 1: Number of variables per domain.

