

SYSTEMATIC EVALUATION OF RESEARCH RISK

Principal investigator: Dr Annette Rid

Funding: University of Zurich (CHF 51'100)

About the research: The ethical acceptability of biomedical research critically depends on protecting participants from excessive risk. Unfortunately, there is great variation in how investigators and research ethics committees evaluate research risks. This variation raises ethical concern that research participants are not adequately protected in some studies, while other studies may be rejected out of unwarranted concerns about excessive risk. Together with colleagues, I recently developed a method for implementing thresholds of acceptable research risk – the Systematic Evaluation of Research Risks (SERR) method – in order to address this problem. SERR has been widely discussed, but its potential for improving risk evaluations in research remains to be fully harnessed. This project will further develop the SERR method by 1) refining SERR and 2) conceptualizing SERR as part of a broader approach to implementing and defining thresholds of acceptable research risk in comparison to the risks of non-research activities.

Publications

Wendler D, Rid A (2015): Genetic research on biospecimens poses minimal risk. *Trends in Genetics* (1):11-15

Rid A (2014): Setting risk thresholds in research: Lessons from the debate about minimal risk. *Monash Bioethics Review* 32(1): 63-85

Rid A, Abdoler E, Roberson-Nay R, Pine SD, Wendler D (2014): Evaluating the risks of clinical research: Direct comparative analysis. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology* 24(7): 390-8

Rid A, Emanuel EJ, Wendler D (2010): Evaluating the Risks of Clinical Research. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 304(13): 1472-79

Other publications are in preparation

Presentations

Risk-benefit analysis in research: how to improve structure and transparency. International Conference for Young Scholars, "Research Ethics: Current Challenges in Preclinical, Clinical and Public Health Research", Hannover Medical School, August 2013

Systematic Evaluation of Research Risks. Research Seminar, Institute of Advanced Study, University of Konstanz, July 2013

Risk-benefit evaluations in biomedical research. Joint Meeting of the Centre for the Humanities & Health and the Department of Social Science, Health and Medicine, King's College London, October 2012

Systematic Evaluation of Research Risks. Mini-Conference on Philosophy and Clinical Research, Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method, London School of Economics, September 2012