

## How Do You Estimate the Degree of Clustering for Outcomes?

Liz Turner:

How am I going to get a good estimate of the degree of clustering that I would expect for a particular outcome when I'm planning my study?

Well, it depends on the outcome and the study characteristics. Now, the good news is the consult statement on reporting of results from cluster randomized trials recommends that all trials report the ICC. So the degree of clustering. So therefore, a good start could be to look at other articles with similar settings, but we know that they are not going to be immediately transferable to our own setting.

Perhaps in the case of embedded pragmatic clinical trials, if you're working within an EHR system, you may actually have available data that could be used to inform and to give kind of preliminary estimates of the ICC, if you were doing a smaller pilot study. In this case, your estimated ICC may have quite a wide confidence interval. So you'd have to be pretty cautious when using it for planning a future study.