CASE STUDY: Dr. Michelle Orme

MORE THAN A PLACEBO EFFECT:
ENDNOTE TAKES THE HEADACHE OUT OF PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH

Dr Michelle Orme is a freelance outcomes research consultant specializing in systematic literature reviews and meta-analysis for the pharmaceutical industry. Dr Orme reviews the evidence from published clinical trials and analyses outcomes data across several trials. By factoring variables into the analysis, such as the number of participants, and the control used, her meta-analysis provides unbiased comparisons of one drug compared to others used to treat the same condition. For example, the analysis will tell us that Drug A is better at treating a migraine under this set of conditions compared to Drug B.

When Dr Orme started her consultancy business, ICERA Consulting Ltd in Swindon, she drew up a list of software that she needed. “We considered EndNote to be essential when we started our consultancy business. It was one of our first software purchases.”

Having been established for some time, EndNote is widely used in the industry—truly an industry standard. “Most of our clients use EndNote. And, as well as being incredibly useful for creating bibliographies, EndNote is a great housekeeping tool which is important when conducting a systematic literature review,” Dr. Orme continued.

When Dr Orme conducts a systematic review, she searches for all relevant published studies in peer-reviewed journals. The results are saved in EndNote which can then be used to filter these to a manageable number. Having done this, each of the selected trial publications are reviewed before any relevant data is extracted for the meta-analysis. These systematic reviews require a degree of rigor and, as such, Dr Orme needs to be able to keep track of all the publications meeting the inclusion criteria for the review. This allows her to categorize these clinical trials and to be able to quickly retrieve the relevant publication. Using EndNote for this process enables even those trials which are not included in the final report to be retained for future reference.

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EndNote also allows you to make notes within the reference library so you can keep track of why a study has been rejected as well as why it was relevant for the project.

“It is important to be able to keep track of studies you have rejected, as well as a list of references included in the review, as this provides transparency,” Dr Orme stated.

Furthermore, EndNote has the ability to automatically search and retrieve PDFs and attach them to the references, and Dr Orme finds this functionality invaluable. “We use EndNote in most of our projects for creating bibliographies for reports and manuscripts; for ad-hoc PubMED searches and for quick retrieval of relevant PDFs and URLs.”

This enables a fully-referenced review to be written up and for all the PDF files to be embedded in the EndNote library. This is especially useful for regulatory bodies such as the Scottish Medicine Consortium and NICE.

Another useful feature of EndNote is the reference formatting tool. At the click of a mouse, the output style can be reformatted for different publications.

EndNote is an integral part of Dr Orme’s working day. It is an essential bibliographic tool and archive with a huge range of features she simply wouldn’t be without.

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