Deriving causal information from Norwegian health registries – what are the challenges?

Norway is famous for our health registries. From a research point of view their aim is to say something about causality. Why? Because, if you find a causal effect, then maybe you can intervene and prevent disease or treat people.

But to which extent is there causal information in the registries? You could have the most excellent biobank, and it could be virtually useless if data are not collected according to a statistical design that allows causal inference. Or if there are numerous unmeasured confounders. Do the registry data really contain a lot of gold that can be mined?

Following Judea Pearl’s fundamental distinction between seeing and doing: Registry data are about seeing while the interventions they shall support are about doing. How to bridge the gap?

The two pillars of epidemiology are the great data sources, represented by cohorts, registries and other data collections, and the extensive and deep methodological thinking. In recent years the latter has been supplemented by the more formal approach of causal inference. The aim of this seminar is to join representatives of the registries with people working in causal inference. The hope is to promote a mutual understanding of the challenges and possibilities of registry and cohort data, and also the recent development of clinical quality registries.

Welcome to all interested people from statistics, epidemiology, clinical research and elsewhere! Participants should have a basic knowledge of statistics.

Registration and practical information
The seminar is free of charge, and will include refreshments and a small lunch. To register for the seminar, please send an e-mail to Hilde Beate Liudalen h.b.liudalen@medisin.uio.no within November 20th, 2015.

The seminar will take place on Wednesday, December 9th, 2015, in the “Runde auditorium”, which is located next to café “Eric” in the new part of Domus Medica at the University of Oslo. The Domus Medica building is next to Rikshospitalet.

Organizers:

Thematic Research Area: Statistical methods for biobank, health survey and registry data, OCBE – Oslo Center for Biostatistics and Epidemiology, Marit B. Veierød and Odd O. Aalen
Program 9.12 – Runde Auditorium, Domus Medica

9:00-9:05: Welcome (Marit B. Veierød)

9:05-9:20: Odd O. Aalen, Oslo Center for Biostatistics and Epidemiology

«The challenges of Norwegian health registries»

9:20-10:05 Stijn Vansteelandt, University of Ghent, Belgium

«Inferring pathways from health registry data: pitfalls, cautions and some solutions»

10:05-10:25 Coffee break

10:25-11:10 Stijn Vansteelandt

«Challenges and opportunities for causal analyses of time-varying exposures»

11:10-11:40 Giske Ursin, Cancer Registry of Norway

«What is the potential for making causal inferences from data in the Cancer Registry?»

11:40-12:10 Susanne Strohmaier, Oslo Center for Biostatistics and Epidemiology

«Mediation analysis using the observational parts of clinical survival trials»

12:10-13:00 Lunch

13:00-13:30 Stein Emil Vollset, University of Bergen

«Knowledge from cohorts, biobanks and health registries – do we need new directions?»

13:30-14:00 Petter Kristensen, National Institute of Occupational Health

«Connecting health registries and other national registries: Experience with causal inference»
14:00-14:20 Coffee break

14:20-14:50 Jon Michael Gran, Oslo Center for Biostatistics and Epidemiology

«Multi-state models for health registry data and causal inference »

14:50-15:00 Odd O. Aalen

«Closing comments »

Welcome!

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