Chronic pelvic pain and menorrhagia: Assessing treatment effectiveness

Daniels, J.P.

Citation for published version (APA):

General rights
It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations
If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.
Those that know me will know that it has taken a long time and a roundabout route to get to the end of this thesis and the opportunity to defend it. This is the end of a journey started many years ago, with several detours and dead-ends, but that has ultimately brought me great satisfaction. I am privileged to have a career that can improve the lives of women worldwide, and that brings me such satisfaction. There are a number of people who have helped and supported me along the way, and I want to thank them all now, and hope I have not forgotten anyone.

First, my supervisor Professor Khalid Khan. I sincerely believe most of the best opportunities I have had in my career in clinical research have been due to Khalid. We both arrived in Birmingham at about the same time: he with a trial in need of trials unit support, me embarking on a change of direction from laboratory research. Together we learnt the art and science of clinical trial research from Professor Richard Gray (more of whom later) in the completion of the LUNA Trial. In the following years, Khalid has helped broaden my methodological repertoire, my network of collaborators and my way of thinking about science and society. I thank you for your patience, wisdom, generosity, general chilled-outness. More than anything else though, you gave me the belief that I could finally achieve this PhD and for that I am so grateful.

Very many thanks go to Professor Doctor Ben Willem Mol, my Dutch promoter. I was introduced to Ben Willem by Khalid over an expensive meal and believe this was one of the most fortuitous meetings in my life. Although I have not been one of your “traditional” PhD students, I have learnt a lot from your approach to clinical research. I am grateful for the opportunity to work in the department and the seminars you made me present, and wish that I could have spent more time in Amsterdam. Your research consortium has established the Netherlands as a major player in women’s health research and Holland’s loss will be Australia’s gain.

The other major influence in my career has been Professor Richard Gray, formerly Director of the Birmingham Clinical Trials Unit (BCTU), to whom I will be forever grateful. From you, I learnt that trial should be large and simple, systematic reviews are great for quickly getting to know a subject and meta-analyses are never as easy as they sound. I intend to maintain the high standard of trials research you established at Birmingham and create a legacy for research at Birmingham Women’s Hospital.

I would like to remember the LUNA Trial team, including Khalid, Richard, Liz Adey, Pallavi Latthe, Tara Selman, Janesh Gupta, Robert Hills, Laura Buckley, Becky Gair, Becky Powell and Leanne Lynch amongst others. LUNA was a great trial run on a shoe-string, compared to more recent
projects, so it shows what great teamwork can do. LUNA also proves that surgeons can randomise and surgical trials can be blinded, and undoubtedly laid the foundations for other BCTU gynaecological studies. I thank the clinical investigators who recruited their patients and all the women, who in looking for a solution to their pain, agree to participate.

Another big thank-you goes to the Heavy Menstrual Bleeding Individual Patient Data Meta-Analysis Collaborative group, including Bhatty, Khalid, Richard, Kevin Cooper, Rita Champaneria, Nick Hilken, Lee Middleton, Tracy Roberts and all the primary study authors. Never let it be said that IPD meta-analyses are easy, but working together with this team made it enjoyable and interesting, and started a great partnership with University of Aberdeen.

I’d also like to acknowledge the ECLIPSE team, including Janesh Gupta, Joe Kai, Laura Gennard and Lisa Leighton but particularly Helen Pattison. It is important to know how to ask the right questions, if we are to get the right answers, and together we pondered over the MMAS scale and the definition of a psychological therapy.

I thank the Promotion Committee, who have graciously allowed me to proceed to defend my thesis in public and who will come from Aberdeen and Veldhoven and all points in-between to the defence ceremony. My thanks go to Professor Dr P.M.M Bossuyt, Dr J.P.W.R. Roovers, Dr M.Y. Bongers, Professor Dr R.J. Lilford, Dr W.M. Ankum and Professor Dr S. Bhattachayra.

Huge thanks go to my paranymphs Merel Breijer, who is teaching me the etiquette of Dutch defence ceremonies and Lee Middleton, who doesn’t yet know what he has let himself in for.

I would like to mention all the staff of the Birmingham Clinical Trials Unit, who continue to work extremely hard to design and deliver clinical trials to the highest standard, and in particular the past and present members of the Women’s Health team. The BCTU is not only responsible for producing much important data which is changing people’s lives, but is also a great place to work. I am so proud of the work we all do.

I really want to thank my old friends Harry, Shona, Laura, Donna and Jon who have seen me through the years and waited so patiently for the post-PhD party; Mum and Dad, who although will not be there to see the ceremony, I know are suitably proud of their daughter, and last but not least, my husband Pete. I simply could not have done this without your love.