

P.E.A.R.L.S. Practical Evidence About Real Life Situations



Contracts for improving patients' adherence cannot be recommended.

Clinical Question	Can contracts between patients and healthcare practitioners improve patients' adherence to treatment, prevention and health promotion activities?
Bottom Line	There is limited evidence that contracts can potentially contribute to improving adherence, but there is insufficient evidence from large, good quality studies to routinely recommend contracts for improving adherence to treatment or prevention health regimens.
Context	Contracts are a verbal or written agreement that a patient makes with themselves, with healthcare practitioners, or with carers, where participants commit to a set of behaviours related to the care of a patient. Contracts aim to improve the patient's adherence to treatment or health promotion programs.
Caveat	Trials evaluated contracts in addiction, hypertension, weight control and a variety of other areas. Effects on adherence were not detected when measured over longer periods.
Reference	Bosch-Capblanch X et al. Contracts between patients and healthcare partitioners for improving patients' adherence to treatment, prevention and health promotion. activities. Cochrane Reviews 2007, Issue 1. This review contains 30 trials with 4691 participants.
Date (Author)	May 2007 (Brian R McAvoy)

NNT = numbers needed to treat to benefit one person

NNH = numbers needed to harm to benefit one person

Both NNT and NNH are only reported if the studies or pooling of studies is statistically significant

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