



Improving perioperative research; making surgery better.

What is COMPAC?

COMPAC stands for 'Core Outcome Measures for Perioperative and Anaesthetic Care'. It represents the final stage of the P-COMMaS study (Patient-Centred Outcome Measures for Major Surgery) which brought patients, carers, clinicians and researchers together to agree the most important outcomes for research trials in Perioperative Care.

'Perioperative Care' encompasses everything involved in having surgery besides the surgery itself: the preparation beforehand, all aspects of the aftercare, and promoting the best possible long-term recovery.

Who is leading the COMPAC Initiative?

COMPAC is led by the UK's National Institute of Academic Anaesthesia, and sponsored by University College London.

How will COMPAC improve research?

Over 4,000 contributors to the P-COMMaS study helped us identify which outcomes matter most to patients who have major surgery. COMPAC now aims to formalise the use of these outcomes in perioperative research, by enshrining them in a 'Core Outcome Set' for inclusion in all perioperative research trials. This should enable the results from different trials to be more easily compared with each other, and thus reduce uncertainty in research, by enabling different trials investigating similar questions to report their findings in a consistent, comparable form.

Improving the consistency of perioperative outcome reporting is important because:

- Around 10 million people have an operation in the UK every year
- The UK spends almost £40 billion each year on health research
- There's no current agreement about which 'outcomes' this research money aims to improve – and hence over 50% of research spending is currently wasted

What does COMPAC involve?

The COMPAC initiative aims to agree a set of 'Core Outcomes' – outcomes which are so important, and so fundamental, they should be measured in all research trials. We will use a three-stage 'Delphi process' to achieve consensus:

- An online questionnaire, where respondents nominate the outcomes they think are most important (from a list of 'candidate' outcome measures)
- The most popular ones are compiled into a shortlist, which will be further reduced in a second online questionnaire
- Patients, carers, clinicians and researchers will be invited to a final COMPAC workshop in early 2020 to debate and discuss the outcomes, and agree the final Core Outcome Set.

How does this relate to P-COMMaS?

The contributions of over 4,000 participants to the UK-wide P-COMMaS study helped identify which outcomes matter most to patients who have major surgery. We found widespread agreement about the importance of traditional 'clinical' outcomes, such as rates of death and perioperative complications. However, many 'softer' outcomes, such as how surgery impacts patients in the long-term, were rated less important by clinicians than by patients and carers. The goal of COMPAC is to ensure that the importance of all such outcomes is formally recognised by enshrining them in a Core Outcome Set that has been developed and endorsed by a wide range of patients, carers, clinicians and researchers.

How will COMPAC use the P-COMMaS results to improve the research landscape?

COMPAC aims to promote the use of these important outcomes in perioperative research studies, by producing a formal 'Core Outcome Set' for perioperative research. The representation of views from a diverse range of patients, carers and clinicians will help ensure that COMPAC's final 'Core Outcome Set' includes only those outcomes that are widely agreed to be important to patients.

What will participating in COMPAC entail?

We're inviting you to contribute to COMPAC because of your valuable contribution to the P-COMMaS study. Your experience as a patient/carer – or as a healthcare professional – of the consequences and impacts of having major surgery will help ensure this Core Outcome Set accurately reflects the priorities of patients, thus maximising the benefits of future perioperative research.

If you agree to take part, you will be asked:

1. To complete an initial survey, which should take 10-15 minutes, where you will be asked to score the importance of several candidate outcome measures
2. To complete another online survey 4-6 weeks later (again 10-15 minutes) asking you to score those outcome measures again, minus the ones that didn't score highly enough
3. If you complete both surveys, you will be invited to attend a face-to-face workshop to help decide and approve the final Core Outcome Set.

Are there any invasive procedures or medicines involved?

No – COMPAC involves no procedures, and you won't be asked to take any medicines. You'll be asked to complete two short online surveys, around a month apart. As long as you complete them both, you'll also be invited to attend and participate in the final consensus workshop in early 2020 at the Royal College of Anaesthetists.

Are there any benefits to taking part in the COMPAC process?

There will be no direct benefit to you from participating in this study. However, your contribution will help ensure future research reports the outcomes that truly matter to patients. You will therefore be helping make future perioperative research more relevant to patients, more useful to clinicians, and less wasteful of scarce research funds.

Are there any risks from the COMPAC process?

Like the initial P-COMMaS survey, the COMPAC Delphi process and final consensus workshop will only seek information about your views on important outcomes after major surgery. However, unlike the initial P-COMMaS survey, you will **not** be asked to share any details whatsoever about your own experience, so none of the information you provide will be personal or sensitive. Any information you provide online (via the Delphi surveys) will be anonymised and stored in a database on a secure server at University College London (UCL). All participants at the final workshop will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement, and to treat other delegates' information in confidence. There will be no audio or video recordings of the workshop, nor any live social media feed.

We recognise that, for some patients and carers, having surgery may have been a traumatic or stressful experience, and remembering those experiences may be upsetting. Participation in each stage is entirely voluntary, and participants will be reminded at each stage that they are free to withdraw from the COMPAC process at any point.

Are there any costs to me personally from taking part in COMPAC? Will I be paid?

There are no costs to you from taking part in this study apart from your time. Each online questionnaire should take 10-15 minutes to complete. If you agree to attend the final consensus workshop, travel expenses and other costs will be fully reimbursed.

Who can answer my questions about COMPAC?

You can contact the COMPAC Steering Advisory Group about any questions or concerns you have about this study using the contact details below.

Giving consent to participate in the study

Participation in COMPAC is voluntary. You have the right to decline to participate without penalty. The first page of the COMPAC online questionnaire will explain the COMPAC process, and ask you to provide informed consent before you begin. At the end of the questionnaire, you will have a chance to withdraw that consent if you change your mind for any reason.

If you would like to participate in COMPAC, please click [this link](#) to go to the questionnaire.

COMPAC FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE

If you have further questions about participating, please reply to this email, or contact the National Institute of Academic Anaesthesia [here](#) (link to lfarmer@rcoa.ac.uk and <https://www.niaa.org.uk/contactHSRC>)

COMPAC Steering Advisory Group:

Dr Oliver Boney	NIAA Health Services Research Centre Research fellow
Prof Mike Grocott	Southampton University
Prof Paul Myles	Monash University, Melbourne
Prof Ramani Moonesinghe	University College Hospital, London
Ms Irene Leeman	Royal College of Anaesthetists Lay Committee
Ms Lynne Smith	Royal College of Anaesthetists Lay Committee