Comparison Of iNfliximab and ciclosporin in STeroid Resistant Ulcerative Colitis: pragmatic randomised Trial and economic evaluation (CONSTRUCT)

John G Williams,¹* M Fasihul Alam,² Laith Alrubaiy,¹ Clare Clement,¹ David Cohen,³ Michelle Grey,¹ Mike Hilton,⁴ Hayley A Hutchings,¹ Mirella Longo,² Jayne M Morgan,¹ Frances L Rapport,¹ Anne C Seagrove¹ and Alan Watkins¹

¹Swansea University Medical School, Swansea University, Swansea, UK
²Swansea Centre for Health Economics, College of Human and Health Science, Swansea University, Swansea, UK
³Faculty of Health Sport and Science, University of South Wales, Pontypridd, UK
⁴Patient representative

*Corresponding author

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Plain English summary

CONSTRUCT

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Plain English summary

Ulcerative colitis can present rapidly with severe symptoms. Infliximab and ciclosporin, the trial drugs, can improve severe colitis, but their relative effectiveness in acute attacks is not known.

We recruited 270 patients admitted to 52 hospitals in the UK who had failed to respond to steroids given into a vein, and allocated them at random between the trial drugs. They completed quality-of-life (QoL) questionnaires on admission, 3 and 6 months after treatment, and then 6-monthly for 1–3 years. We compared QoL scores between the trial drugs over patients’ time in the study. Both improved QoL, but there was no real difference between them.

We also compared length of hospital stay following recruitment, number of colectomies (removal of the colon) despite treatment with a trial drug, side effects and mortality. There was no real difference between the two drugs in any of these measures. The much lower cost of ciclosporin meant that total NHS costs over 30 months were also much lower with ciclosporin.

We conducted 35 interviews with 20 patients. Those who had received infliximab were generally more positive about treatment than those on ciclosporin. We interviewed 23 doctors and nurses, who reported advantages and disadvantages with both trial drugs. However, nurses particularly disliked the prolonged intravenous ciclosporin regimen.

We concluded that ciclosporin is much cheaper than infliximab. Nevertheless, there is no difference in the performance of these two trial drugs.
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Editorial contact: nihredit@southampton.ac.uk

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