Distributed networks of linked health data: their role in the rapid quantification of drug-related harms

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Pharmacoepidemiology uses large data-bases of linked administrative health data to assess the harms and benefits of prescription medicines. However, important findings are often delayed while individual research groups negotiate funding and access to data. This traditional approach is being augmented by large distributed networks of data centres. David Henry will describe the experiences of the Canadian Network for Observational Drug Effect Studies, which uses 10 data sources comprising over 100 million individuals to answer questions about drug safety in Canada.

David Henry is professor at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health and Institute for Health Policy Analysis and Evaluation and in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto, Canada. Before moving to Canada in 2008 he held the position of Professor of Clinical Pharmacology at the University of Newcastle, Australia. His main research interest is in measuring the impacts of therapeutic drugs in communities and he is executive co-lead of the Canadian Network for Observational Drug Effect Studies (www.cnodes.ca), a distributed network of provincial data centres that carries out drug safety analyses on behalf of Health Canada and other sponsors.

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