

IPROS NETWORK: THE CREATION OF RESEARCH ATMOSPHERE IN PRIMARY CARE

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Practice-based research network in primary care is a group of primary care clinics tied together in a structure of a network for the purpose of performing research. The network is the research laboratory of the primary care setting. PROS, the Paediatric Research in Office Setting, is an example of an American practice-based research network that was established by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

IPROS, the Israel Paediatric Research in Office Setting network, was formed in 1996, and is affiliated with the Israel Ambulatory Pediatric Association. Currently, more than 450 pediatricians are members of IPROS. They are highly motivated, come from different setups of primary care, represent various geographical regions and health maintenance organisations and treat patients who come from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Intranet communication is crucial to the functioning of the network and is based primarily on the IPRONET electronic mailing list. The list now consists of 290 paediatricians and its main characteristics are the rapidity of message exchange, the option to hold a virtual brainstorming on various clinical and research questions and the unique opportunity to recruit paediatricians as future participants in studies.

IPROS has published, as of today, more than 25 articles in major scientific journals. The study types were mostly intervention studies and attitude surveys.

IPROS paediatricians have taken part in six multicentre international phase III trials. In addition, each year IPROS is monitoring influenza-like illness activity in the clinics during winter months. Funding of network activity and studies is achieved by research grants and pharmaceutical companies' sponsorships.