Benchmarking Medical Research - Aggregating Publications using Medical Subject Headings (MeSH-terms)

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As the interest in research performance analysis using bibliometrics increases, more specialised tools are developed. In cases when verified publication data is not available; data is normally collected and aggregated using subject or organisational criteria. The journal subject areas in Thomson Reuters/ISI are often used, but can be poor in their precision and granularity.

In an attempt to improve the data collection for a number of medical fields, MeSH-areas were created using Boolean combinations of MeSH-terms, the controlled vocabulary keywords of Medline. These areas were then used to benchmark medical research of a number of universities by using a database containing matched Thomson Reuters ISI/Medline data.

The presentation will focus on the creation of the MeSH areas and how a reasonable workflow can look. Pros and cons of the general method will also be discussed. The actual benchmark and a study of the nature of the data aggregation are underway and preliminary data will be shown and commented.