Validation of the national Danish ablation database: a retrospective, registry-based validation study

Filip Lyng Lindgren, Sofie Brix Christensen, Søren Lundbye-Christensen, Kristian Kragholm, Arne Johansson, Peter Karl Jacobsen, Steen Buus Kristiansen, Peter Steen Hansen, Mogens Stig Dyrhuus, Uffe Jakob Orved Gang, Ole Dan Jørgensen, and Sam Rihani

Aim. To validate the National Danish Ablation Database (NDAD) by investigating to what extent data in NDAD correspond to medical records. Non-blinded, registry-based, retrospective, validation study. Material and methods. A sample of patients who underwent ablation for atrial fibrillation in Denmark between 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2016 were included. Utilizing medical records as gold standard, positive predictive (PPV) and negative predictive values (NPV) for NDAD were assessed and presented as five main categories: arrhythmia characteristics, demographics, cardiac history, complications, and medication. PPVs and NPVs exceeding 90% were considered as high agreement. Results. 597 patients (71.0% males) were included in the study. Median age was 63.1 (IQR: 54.9–68.4) years. The median PPV and NPV estimates across all variables were respectively 90.4% (95% CI: 68%–95.2%) (PPV) and 99.4% (95% CI: 98.2%–99.3%) (NPV) at baseline, and 91.7% (95% CI: 67.4%–95.2%) (PPV) and 99.3% (95% CI: 98.2%–99.3%) (NPV) at follow-up. Conclusion. The data registered in NDAD agrees to a great extent with the patients’ medical records, suggesting NDAD is a database with high validity. As a result of low complication frequency, the PPV- and NPV-estimates among complication variables were prone to somewhat greater uncertainty compared to the rest.

Introduction

There have been major advancements in the treatment of cardiovascular disease for the last decades; however, cardiovascular disease still is one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in the world [1, 2]. There is a continuous need for research to find better prevention- and treatment techniques, but also to ensure the quality of the used techniques. National clinical quality registries can be used to monitor the quality of performed medical procedures and the results hereof. A limitation with various clinical databases is that these are typically not validated, and it is hard to do so as they often cannot be connected to other databases or medical records.

The use of administrative Danish databases is one of the key elements in conducting high qualitative research in Denmark. The registries are deterministic linked using the civil personal registration number, which is unique for each Danish citizen with an address in Denmark, making it possible for example to connect a medical procedure with an outcome. In Denmark, there are nationwide registries covering all health service contacts (both in the private and the public health care) and are in general regarded as of high quality [3–6]. In 2008–2009, the Danish arrhythmia working group initiated the National Danish Ablation Database (NDAD) as a nationwide registry, containing data of all performed percutaneous ablation procedures for tachyarrhythmias in Denmark. The database has been used as data source for previously published studies [7, 8], but has so far not yet been validated. In this non-blinded, registry-based, retrospective, validation study, we sought to evaluate and validate the data submitted to NDAD, and to examine the positive and negative prediction values (PPV’s and NPV’s) of clinical variables and procedure related complications among patients treated with percutaneous ablation for atrial fibrillation (AF).
Material and methods

Civil registration number and the national Danish ablation database

Since 1968, all Danish citizens with an address in Denmark have had a civil registration number (CPR-number) [9, 10]. The CPR-number is unique to each Danish citizen and is connected to a range of databases. As a result, the registered data in the medical records can be compared to the corresponding data in a database, and therefore making validation of that particular database possible. NDAD has collected data of all performed percutaneous ablation procedures for cardiac arrhythmias in Denmark since 2012, and has been accepted as a national, clinical, quality database since February 2012. The data is prospectively collected and contains both ablation, demographic and medication data of patients undergoing percutaneous ablation for supraventricular and ventricular arrhythmias [11]. The main purpose of NDAD is to monitor the clinical quality of the performed ablations and ablation-related complications in Denmark, but also contains demographic data of the patients undergoing the procedures. All data input in the database are performed by either the ablation physicians, nurses or technicians in connection with the ablation procedure and during follow-up visits. In Denmark, there are seven cardiac ablation centres: (six public and one private), which all put their data into NDAD [11, 12].

Data collection

Patients who had undergone percutaneous ablation for AF between the 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2016, in six of the ablation centres in Denmark were selected for the analysis. One ablation centre was not included, as only three patients underwent percutaneous ablation for AF in that centre in 2016 [13]. The patients were selected in chronological order in which they had their ablation performed at each centre, with a maximum of ten patients included per centre per month in order to spread the selected patients among the different centres and dates, thus reducing selection bias. If patients had several ablations performed during the period, only the first ablation procedure was used.

Variables selected for comparison were the demographic data, medication, and procedure complications at the time of the procedure and at follow-up. By utilizing the CPR-number, demographic data as well as procedure data were collected by free-text search from the patients’ electronic medical records. The demographic and medical data consisted of sex, age, ablation centre, date of ablation, previous cardiac and other medical history, CHA2DS2-VASc-score and characteristics, medication prior to and one-year post-ablation, type of AF, AF associated symptoms and presence of pacemaker or implantable cardioverter-defibrillator. In order to simplify the reporting of the results for this article, the previous medical history category was further split up into an arrhythmia-, a cardiac history and a CHA2DS2-VASc category, even though this partition does not exist in NDAD.

The medication data at the date of the procedure and at follow-up was obtained by screening the patients’ medical records combined with free-text search of both the generic and brand names of the medication drugs. In addition, in one of the regions, the Shared Medical Card (Faelles Medicinkort, FMK) [14] was available, and was used instead of the medical records. The data of the remaining demographic and complication variables were obtained by free-text search in the medical records, but also by including registered diagnosis codes according to the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-10) [15]. In the Capital Region of Denmark, an additional medication module (Medicinmodulet, The Medication Module), was used.

Complications were divided into two main categories: procedure-related complications and long-term complications. Procedure related complications consisted of atrial ventricular conduction block (AV-block), cardiac tamponade, embolism, perioperative mortality, nervous phrenicus paresis, pneumothorax, haematoma, and other undefined complication, whereas long-term complications consisted of deep vein thrombosis, oesophageal fistula, infection, pulmonary vein stenosis and the occurrence of either transient cerebral ischaemia (TIA) or ischaemic stroke. As a consequence of low complication rate, composite complication categories where synthesized, in which the complications were put into one of three main categories: no complication, mild/moderate complications and severe complications. Mild and moderate complications consists of AV-block, haematoma and undefined complication (procedural complications), deep vein thrombosis and infection (late-term complications). The corresponding severe complications consisted of cardiac tamponade, embolism, death, nervous phrenicus paresis and pneumothorax whereas the severe late-term complications consisted of oesophageal fistula, pulmonary vein stenosis and pneumothorax. As the severe complications of percutaneous ablation were known and registered, it was decided the undefined complications consisted of either mild or moderate complications, hence were put into the mild/moderate complication category.

If an investigated variable did not have any registrations in NDAD nor did it occur in the medical records, it was interpreted as a ‘No’-registration - that is no medication, no complications, no medical history nor any demography variables were present for that particular patient.

The data was collected by one of the authors (S.B.C) during 2018 to 2019. Medical records were used as gold standard. The investigator who performed the data collection did not have access to the cardiac image modalities from prior interventions; however, the procedures performed were described in the medical records.

Statistical analysis

Continuous variables are presented in medians and interquartile ranges (IQR), and categorical variables are presented as absolute numbers and percentages. For simplicity and future applicability of the results, the PPV’s and NPV’s were arranged into six main groups: arrhythmia, cardiac history, demography (CHA2DS2-VASc-characteristics), medication, procedure complications (containing both procedural and long-term complications) and relapse. Comparisons between
the registered events in medical records and NDAD were investigated by McNemar’s test with continuity correction. In order to validate the registered entries in the database, positive (PPV) and negative predictive values (NPV) with 95% binomial confidence intervals (CI) were obtained through the Wilson method. The PPV- and NPV-estimates were obtained by 2 × 2 tables comprising the proportion of correctly registered binary clinical variables. The true positive and true negative results represent how reliable a registration (PPV), or the absence of it (NPV), in the database is. Values above 90% were interpreted as high reliability.

In addition, overall median PPV and NPV for the six main categories are also provided, along with an interquartile range (IQR). As a result of low complication rates, some predicted values did not produce meaningful confidence intervals; thus, composite complication endpoints (defined as overall procedural and late complications) were considered binary clinical variables. The true positive and true negative results represent how reliable a registration (PPV), or the absence of it (NPV), in the database is. Values above 90% were interpreted as high reliability.

The median age was 63.1 (IQR: 54.9 days–68.4 days) years and 424 (71.0%) of the patients were males. Further demographic characteristics are presented in Table 1. The patients were equally distributed among the six participating ablation centres.

### Ethical considerations

The collection of data was approved by the North Denmark Region and Danish Data Protection Agency (ID-number: 2017-238). According to Danish law, no consent is needed from participants when using registry data. Data from NDAD were acquired after approval from the Steering Committee of NDAD. In order to comply with GDPR data regulation laws, the data were collected into a REDCap (Research Electronic Data Capture) database hosted on servers at Aalborg University Hospital. [21, 22]

NDAD is financed through unrestricted grants from the medical industry (Johnson & Johnson, Medtronic and Abbott). The registry is controlled by members representing each ablation centre in Denmark.

### Results

In 2016, 1979 patients underwent percutaneous ablation for AF in Denmark, of which 597 (30.2%) were selected for this study. The median age was 63.1 (IQR: 54.9 days–68.4 days) years and 424 (71.0%) of the patients were males. Further demographic characteristics are presented in Table 1. The patients were equally distributed among the six participating ablation centres.

### Table 1. Population characteristics.

| Variables                      | Medical record, (%) | NDAD, (%) | P-value |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|---------|
| **Total**                      | 597                 | 597       | 1.00    |
| **Ablation centre**            |                     |           |         |
| Aalborg                        | 91 (15.2)           | 91 (15.2) |         |
| Aarhus                         | 96 (16.1)           | 96 (16.1) |         |
| Gentofte                       | 103 (17.3)          | 103 (17.3)|         |
| Odense                         | 108 (18.1)          | 108 (18.1)|         |
| Rigshospitalet                 | 96 (16.1)           | 96 (16.1) |         |
| Vold                           | 103 (17.3)          | 103 (17.3)|         |
| **CHA2DS2VASc characteristics**|                     |           | <.05    |
| Congestive heart failure       | 108 (18.1)          | 68 (11.4) | <.05    |
| Hypertension                   | 251 (42.0)          | 215 (36.0)| <.05    |
| Age 75+                        | 29 (4.9)            | 29 (4.9)  | 1.00    |
| Diabetes                       | 34 (5.7)            | 28 (4.7)  | .21     |
| Ischaemic stroke/TCI           | 52 (8.7)            | 41 (6.9)  | <.05    |
| Peripheral artery disease      | 45 (7.5)            | 27 (4.5)  | <.05    |
| Age 65-74                      | 214 (35.8)          | 214 (35.8)| 1.00    |
| Female sex                     | 168 (28.1)          | 168 (28.1)| 1.00    |
| **CHA2DS2VASc-score**          |                     |           |         |
| 0                              | 147 (24.6)          | 156 (26.1)| .22     |
| 1                              | 156 (26.1)          | 179 (30.0)| .05     |
| 2                              | 154 (25.8)          | 148 (24.8)| .58     |
| 3                              | 81 (13.6)           | 84 (14.1) | .79     |
| 4                              | 43 (7.2)            | 23 (3.9)  | <.05    |
| 5                              | 15 (2.5)            | 5 (0.8)   | <.05    |
| 6                              | 1 (0.2)             | 2 (0.3)   | 1.00    |
| **Prior cardiac history**      |                     |           | <.05    |
| Ischaemic heart disease        | 58 (9.7)            | 48 (8.0)  | <.05    |
| Dilated CM                     | 31 (5.2)            | 19 (3.2)  | <.05    |
| Hypertrophic CM                | 11 (1.8)            | 11 (1.8)  | 1.00    |
| Arhythmogenic RV               | 0 (0.0)             | 0 (0.0)   | 1.00    |
| Congenital heart disease       | 1 (0.2)             | 0 (0.0)   | 1.00    |
| Mitral stenosis                | 1 (0.2)             | 1 (0.2)   | 1.00    |
| Mitral regurgitation           | 10 (1.7)            | 18 (3.0)  | .099    |
| Aortic stenosis                | 5 (0.8)             | 2 (0.3)   | .25     |
| Aortic regurgitation           | 4 (0.7)             | 6 (1.0)   | .48     |
| No prior cardiac disease       | 470 (78.7)          | 496 (83.1)| <.05    |
| **Prior cardiac interventions**|                     |           |         |
| PCI                            | 44 (7.4)            | 40 (6.7)  | .39     |
| CABG                           | 11 (1.8)            | 13 (2.2)  | .48     |
| Aortic valve surgery           | 6 (1.0)             | 6 (1.0)   | 1.00    |
| Mitral valve surgery           | 5 (0.8)             | 5 (0.8)   | 1.00    |
| Congenital surgery             | 1 (0.2)             | 1 (0.2)   | 1.00    |
| AF ablation                    | 64 (10.7)           | 60 (10.1) | .45     |
| Ablation, other                | 84 (14.1)           | 73 (12.2) | <.05    |
| No prior cardiac interventions | 379 (63.5)          | 404 (67.7)| <.05    |
| **Arrhythmia characteristics** |                     |           |         |
| Paroxysmal AF                  | 379 (63.5)          | 378 (63.3)| 1.00    |
| Persistent AF                  | 183 (30.7)          | 154 (25.8)| <.05    |
| Below two years,               | 40 (6.7)            | 44 (7.4)  | .62     |
| Above two years                | 5 (0.8)             | 6 (1.0)   | 1.00    |
| Dyspnea                        | 441 (73.9)          | 469 (78.6)| <.05    |
| Syncope                        | 11 (1.8)            | 10 (1.7)  | 1.00    |
| Dizziness                      | 120 (20.1)          | 73 (12.2) | <.05    |
| Palpitations                   | 428 (71.7)          | 488 (81.7)| <.05    |
| Pacemaker                      | 1 (0.2)             | 1 (0.2)   | 1.00    |
| No pacemaker                   | 0 (NaN)             | 1 (0.2)   | 1.00    |
| **Baseline medication**        |                     |           |         |
| Beta blockers                  | 389 (65.2)          | 400 (67.0)| .17     |
| Calcium antagonists            | 37 (6.2)            | 37 (6.2)  | 1.00    |
| Digoxin                        | 52 (8.7)            | 52 (8.7)  | 1.00    |
| Class 1 C antiarrhythmics      | 73 (12.2)           | 72 (12.1) | 1.00    |
| Sotalol                        | 1 (0.2)             | 3 (0.5)   | .48     |
| Dronedarone                    | 3 (0.5)             | 6 (1.0)   | .25     |
| Amiodarone                     | 108 (18.1)          | 108 (18.1)| 1.00    |
| VKA                            | 510 (85.4)          | 501 (83.9)| .27     |
| Thrombin inhibitors            | 12 (2.0)            | 44 (7.4)  | <.05    |
| Factor Xa inhibitors           | 48 (8.0)            | 21 (3.5)  | <.05    |
| **Complications**              |                     |           |         |
| Death                          | 0 (0.0)             | 0 (0.0)   | 1.00    |
| Cardiac tamponade              | 2 (0.3)             | 4 (0.7)   | .48     |
| Haematomata                    | 3 (0.5)             | 1 (0.2)   | .48     |
| Atrioventricular block         | 0 (0.0)             | 0 (0.0)   | 1.00    |
| Embolus                        | 1 (0.2)             | 0 (0.0)   | 1.00    |
| Pneumothorax                   | 0 (0.0)             | 0 (0.0)   | 1.00    |

(continued)
The overall median PPV between the medical records and the NDAD was 92.2% (IQR: 79.5%–100%). The highest PPV-estimate was seen in the CHA2DS2-VASc-category, in which “Age 65–74” had an estimated PPV of 100% (95% CI: 98.2%–100%). In contrast, the lowest PPV-estimate was found in the complication category at baseline, in which Mild/moderate procedural complications had an estimated NPV of 45.5% (95% CI: 16.3%–98.2%).

The corresponding median NPV was 99.3% (IQR: 95%–99.8%). High NPV-estimates were found in several categories (CHA2DS2-VASc, cardiac history, arrhythmia, medication and complications), in which both arrhythmogenic right ventricle, congenital heart disease, aortic valve stenosis, former aortic valve replacement, former mitral valve surgery, former congenital surgery, the use of Sotalol or Dronedarone at follow-up, mild and moderate procedural complications, severe late complications as well as the presence of pacemaker had an estimated NPV of 100% (95%: 99.4%–100%), whereas the lowest estimates was found in the complication category, in which No late complications had an estimated NPV of 45.5% (95% CI: 16.3%–61.2%). The estimated PPV’s and NPV’s for all included variables are visualized as forest plots in Figures 1–6 in Appendix.

The median PPV and NPV estimates across all variables were respectively 90.4% (95% CI: 68.5%–95.2%) (PPV) and 99.4% (95% CI: 98.4%–99.8%) (NPV) at baseline, and 91.7% (95% CI: 67.4%–95.4%) (PPV) and 99.3% (98.2%–99.3%) (NPV) at follow-up. The individual PPV’s and NPV’s for each main category are presented in Table 2. A total of 19 (3.18%) the patients did not have any registrations in the complication category (neither at baseline nor late-term complications); hence, they were transferred to the ’No’-complication-category. In all, there were registered 16 (2.68%) complications in the medical records, and nine (1.51%) in NDAD. All registered complications in the medical records and NDAD can be seen in Table 3. All PPV- as well as NPV-tables and plots are presented in Appendix.

There were some significant differences in the input of data between the two sources: the presence of dilated cardiomyopathy, congestive heart failure, hypertension, vascular disease as well as the use of factor Xa inhibitors or thrombin inhibitors (Table 1), beta blockers, DOAC or vitamin K antagonists at one year follow-up. In the majority of the variables, there was a general over-representation of registrations in the medical records than in NDAD.

### Discussion

Registry data of ablation for AF have various appliances, both in scientific research but also as a monitoring tool. The use of administrative databases in studies are widespread, and the registered data in these databases are often seen of as high quality, even though there have not been many validation studies on these data sources. To our knowledge, this is the first study that validates an ablation database. Furthermore, our study also authenticates the results from prior studies within similar subjects conducted in Denmark [7, 8]. Our study proves that NDAD is a database in which data to a large extent corresponds to what can be found in patients’ medical records and NDAD is therefore suitable as a tool for future studies. Even though there were some discrepancies, the overall PPV’s and NPV’s were high, and corresponds to a large extent to what was found in a similar Danish registry study performed by Kristensen et al [4]. As presented in Figures 1–5 in Appendix and Table 2, the NDAD suffer from lower PPV than NPV, especially among the medical drug variables. This may be due to the restricted access to the medication data in 5 of the 6 ablation centres in the study. Our study also confirms that the ablation procedures for AF performed at Danish ablation centres are conducted with a combination of high quality and safety, with expected complication rates between 0% and 0.8% for both severe procedural, post-procedural as well as long-term complications. These numbers are lower than described in previous studies, and this could be attributed to the ablation strategy in Denmark.
which is: few high-volume centres with few operators; this leading to highly qualified personnel conducting the procedures. Furthermore, our results suggest that the selection of patients for percutaneous ablation for AF is suitable. These findings are in line with prior studies in the field, which indicates that our study population to a great extent correspond to the general population that undergo ablation procedures for AF [23–25]. As a result of low complication rate among the patients in our study material, especially the PPV’s produced great confidence intervals. Even though the complications were pooled into three main categories in order to produce more meaningful confidence intervals, the observed complications were still low, which could explain the uncertainty among these variables.

There may be multiple explanations for the discrepancies seen in Table 1 and Table 4. First, the data collection in the medical records were obtained by screening the patients’ entire medical records, from birth to present day. The NDAD entries are carried out in a limited time period in a patient’s life; thus, one may exclude variables which are not directly relevant to the performed procedure in NDAD which can be found years prior to the procedure in the medical records. Second, as there were some important discrepancies among the medication variables, one can presume that the patients have been given either beta blockers, DOAC or VKA prior (years) to the procedure but may have been shifted to other medication drugs closer to the procedure. Patients who underwent ablation for AF in Denmark before 2017 were required to either take either VKA or Dabigatran prior to their AF ablation procedure. If a patient received e.g. Xarelto the years prior, the medical records would record this as a match for the free-text search, whereas the NDAD would only register the VKA or Dabigatran treatment, thus leading to a discrepancy. The same may be true for some the discrepancies found among cardiac conditions and prior procedures in Table 1: some cardiac conditions, such as the dilated cardiomyopathy, have a history of being reversible when found early. Tachycardia induced dilated cardiomyopathy is a reversible form of cardiomyopathy [26, 27], and a patient who no longer suffers from the condition will still be a “match” in the free-text search process during the data collection process, whereas the NDAD would not register it as a relevant condition during the ablation procedure. In addition, the observed difference in reported relapse of AF after ablation may be attributed to the lack of a universal definition of relapse.

**Limitations of the study**

**Data collection**

The study was based on variables and complications registered in the NDAD, and therefore limits the data and variables investigated to what is available in that particular database. There may be some rare, unknown complications in connection with percutaneous ablation that still are not known, and consequently are not registered. Furthermore, the follow-up period for patients who had undergone percutaneous ablation for AF in Denmark is one year, thus limits the detection of potential complications that may occur later. Some variables which have great clinical interest, e.g. rare but severe procedure-related and long-term complications, were not observed neither in the medical records nor in the database, which meant that no valid PPV’s could be obtained. In order to investigate rare complications, a larger study population is needed.

In our study, the patients’ medical records were used as gold standard. Even though medical records in general correspond well to reality, they are not perfect and also written in a clinical setting. As a consequence of limited time to

| Medication | Medical record, n | NDAD, n | p Value |
|------------|------------------|---------|---------|
| Amiodarone | 23 (5.5%)        | 19 (3.2%) | .071 |
| Beta blockers | 217 (36.3%) | 260 (45.1%) | <.05 |
| Calcium antagonists | 20 (3.4%) | 19 (3.2%) | 1.00 |
| Class 1 C antiarrhythmics | 11 (1.8%) | 14 (2.3%) | .25 |
| Digoxin | 11 (1.8%) | 13 (2.2%) | .48 |
| DOAC | 73 (12.2%) | 184 (30.8%) | <.05 |
| Dronedarone | 1 (0.2%) | 1 (0.2%) | 1.00 |
| Sotalol | 2 (0.3%) | 2 (0.3%) | 1.00 |
| Vitamin K antagonists | 194 (32.5%) | 210 (35.2%) | <.05 |

NDAD: National Danish Ablation Database; DOAC: direct oral anticoagulants.
register data in clinical practice, an unknown degree of under-reporting can be suspected, both in the medical records but also in NDAD. If time is limited, one can expect only positive complications, findings or symptoms are registered, whereas variables that are uncertain or are time-consuming to investigate are left out. Due to privacy restrictions, the use of the FMK to collect medication data was restricted to patients in only one of the regions in Denmark [14]. Hence, the medication variables in NDAD were compared to medication data registered in two different data sources (medical records and FMK). As a consequence, the data collection from the remaining regions’ medical records was executed by free text-search, thus introducing the risk of type-one errors such as typos in either the medical records or in the search strings; a mismatch here would result in under-reporting. Especially one group variable (medication at follow-up) had high discrepancy between the medical records and the database registrations. An alternative approach to utilizing medical records as gold standard could be to use other, already validated, Danish databases, thus improving the completeness and validity of data. There was only one person who was responsible for the data collection for this article and can obviously be a source of error. Even though the majority of the variables were binomial, there were still continuous variables which could be interpreted in various ways leading to either under-or over-reporting. The registered severe complications in both the NDAD and medical records were double-validated by one of the other co-authors.

During our study period, the CHADS2 score was superseded by the CHA2DS2-VASc score in 2012, and therefore affects the potential variable input of the patients included prior to this date. As our study only included one patient before 2012, the effect is expected to be minor. Lastly, the decision to pool the complications into three main complications reduces the applicability of the results, but was required in our study in order to produce meaningful estimates and associated confidence intervals. This is a “consequence” of highly skilled ablation cardiologists in Denmark, thus resulting in a low-risk, high-gain procedure.

Ablation in Denmark compared to other countries

Denmark is a country in the northern part of Europe and have a tax financed public health system. As illustrated in the 2017 EHR A White Book and as well as Raatikainen et al. [28, 29], the number of ablations performed per capita in Denmark are high, and only a few invasive cardiac centres are performing these. This is not a commonly seen in other countries [29]. Consequently, the validity and the expected rate of procedural and late complication in the present study may not compare to countries with a different health care or ablation set-up.

Missing validation aspects

Our study was restricted to only examine the agreement between the database and medical records, but did not investigate the intra- or interobserver variation of the two data sources. Even though the NDAD is designed to be as simple as possible when registering data, there will still be a slight variation between two persons submitting data, or for one observer on two different occasions, which will affect the validity of NDAD. The variation in the medical records are expected to be even larger. Also, as both medical doctors and technicians are responsible for submitting data, it may also influence the degree of completeness of the data submitted.

This study was performed on data regarding ablation for AF and the results cannot be transferred to other types of ablations. However, the amount of data which is inserted in NDAD for AF ablations is much more comprehensive compared to data input for simple ablations as for accessory pathways. We can therefore assume that also data regarding simple ablations in NDAD are valid.

Conclusion

The Danish Ablation Database is a reliable database that in great extent corresponds to the patient’s journal records and it can be a useful tool in registry research in the future. In order to validate severe but rare complications in the database, a greater study population is needed.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors

Funding

This study was funded by NDAD and the AF Study Group at Aalborg University Hospital in order to cover expenses for transport and salary of the author responsible for the data collection.

ORCID

Filip Lyng Lindgren http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1939-580X
Kristian Kragholm http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9629-8670
Sam Riahi http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1849-9463

References

[1] Benjamin EJ, Muntner P, Alonso A, et al. Heart disease and stroke statistics-2019 update: a report from the American heart association. Circulation. 2019;139(10):e56–e528.
[2] WHO. Top 10 Causes of Death [Internet]. WHO; 2019 [cited 2021 Mar 17]. Available from: http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/the-top-10-causes-of-death.
[3] Adelborg K, Sundball J, Munch T, et al. Positive predictive value of cardiac examination, procedure and surgery codes in the Danish national patient registry: a population-based validation study. BMJ Open. 2016;6(12):e012817.
[4] Kristensen AE, Larsen JM, Nielsen JC, et al. Validation of defibrillator lead performance registry data: Insight from the Danish pacemaker and ICD register. Europace. 2017;19:1187–1192.
291

[5] Sundbøll J, Adelborg K, Munch T, et al. Positive predictive value of cardiovascular diagnoses in the Danish national patient registry: a validation study. BMJ Open. 2016;6(11):e012832.

[6] Schmidt M, Schmidt SAJ, Sandegaard JL, et al. The Danish. National patient registry: A review of content, data quality, and research potential. 2015.

[7] Giemh-Reese M, Lukac P, Kristiansen SB, et al. Outcome after catheter ablation for left atrial flutter. Scand Cardiovasc J. 2019; 53(3):133–140. Available from

[8] Giemh-Reese M, Kronborg MB, Lukac P, et al. Recurrent atrial flutter ablation and incidence of atrial fibrillation ablation after first-time ablation for typical atrial flutter: a nation-wide Danish cohort study. Int J Cardiol. 2020; 298:44–51.

[9] Pedersen CB. The Danish civil registration system. Scand J Public Health. 2011;39(7 Suppl):22–25. Internet Available from 10.1177/1403494810387965.

[10] Schmidt M, Pedersen L, Sørensen HT. The Danish civil registration system as a tool in epidemiology. Eur J Epidemiol. 2014;29(8):541–549. Internet Available from

[11] Jacobsen PK, Djurhuus S, Heen Hansen P, et al. Årsberetning 2016 [Internet]. DCS - The Arrhythmia Working Group; 2016. Available from: https://ssl.ablation.dk/download/Aarsberetning2016.pdf.

[12] Danish Health Data Authority. The Shared Medicine Card [Internet]. 2020. Available from: https://www.danishhealthdata.com/find-health-data/Faelles-Medicinkort.

[13] Jacobsen PK, Djurhuus S, Universitetshospital O, et al. Årsberetning 2016 [Internet]. DCS - The Arrhythmia Working Group; 2016. Available from: https://ssl.ablation.dk/download/Aarsberetning2016.pdf.

[14] World Health Organisation. ICD-10: International statistical classification of diseases and related health problems [internet]. 2nd ed. Geneva: World Health Organisation; 2004. Available from http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21793458 https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/42980.

[15] R Development Core Team 3.0.1. A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing [Internet]. [R Foundation for Statistical Computing]; 2013. Available from: http://www.r-project.org.

[16] Xie Y, Allaire JJ, Grolemund G. R markdown: the definitive guide [internet]. Boca Raton, Florida: Chapman; Hall/CRC; 2018. Available from: https://bookdown.org/yihui/rmarkdown.

[17] Wickham H. tidyverse: Easily Install and Load the `tidyverse` [Internet]. 2019. Available from: https://cran.r-project.org/package=tidyverse.

[18] Schloerke B, Cook D, Larmarange J, et al. GGally: Extension to 'ggplot2' [Internet]. 2020. Available from: https://cran.r-project.org/package=GGally.

[19] Telmo Nunes MS, Heuer C, Marshall J, et al. epiR: Tools for the Analysis of Epidemiological Data [Internet]. 2020. Available from: https://cran.r-project.org/package=epiR.

[20] Ha ACT, Wijeysundera HC, Birnie DH, et al. Real-world outcomes, complications, and cost of catheter-based ablation for atrial fibrillation: an update. Curr Opin Cardiol. 2017;32(1):47–52.

[21] Perez-Silva A, Merino JL. Tachycardia-induced cardiomyopathy [Internet]. 2009. Available from: https://www.ecardio.org/Journals/E-Journal-of-Cardiology-Practice/Volume-7/Tachycardia-induced-cardiomyopathy.

[22] Steinbeck G, Sinner MF, Lutz M, et al. Incidence of complications related to catheter ablation of atrial fibrillation and atrial flutter: a nationwide in-hospital analysis of administrative data for Germany in 2014. Eur Heart J. 2018;39(45):4020–4029.

[23] De Greef Y, Strøker E, Schwagten B, et al. Complications of pulmonary vein isolation in atrial fibrillation: predictors and comparison between four different ablation techniques: results from the Middelheim PVI-registry. Europace: European pacing, arrhythmias, and cardiac electrophysiology: journal of the working groups on cardiac pacing, arrhythmias, and cardiac cellular electrophysiology of the. Europace. 2018;20(8):1279–1286.

[24] Ha ACT, Wijeysundera HC, Birnie DH, et al. Real-world outcomes, complications, and cost of catheter-based ablation for atrial fibrillation: an update. Curr Opin Cardiol. 2017;32(1):47–52.

[25] Perez-Silva A, Merino JL. Tachycardia-induced cardiomyopathy [Internet]. 2009. Available from: https://www.ecardio.org/Journals/E-Journal-of-Cardiology-Practice/Volume-7/Tachycardia-induced-cardiomyopathy.

[26] Umana E, Solares CA, Alpert MA. Tachycardia-induced cardiomyopathy. Am J Med [Internet]. 2003;114(1):51–55. Available from:https://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0002934302014729.

[27] Harris PA, Taylor R, Minor BL, et al. Research electronic data capture (REDCap)-a metadata-driven methodology and workflow process for providing translational research informatics support. J Biomed Inform. 2009;42(2):377–381. Available from Harris PA, Taylor R, Minor BL, et al. The REDCap consortium: building an international community of software platform partners. J Biomed Inform. 2019;95:103208. Available from

[28] Pallisgaard JL, Gislason GH, Hansen J, et al. Temporal trends in atrial fibrillation recurrence rates after ablation between 2005 and 2014: a nationwide Danish cohort study. Eur Heart J. 2018; 39(6):449–459.

[29] Raatikainen MJP, Arnar DO, Merkely B, et al. A decade of cellular electrophysiology of the. Europace. 2018;20(8):1279–1286.