Trial design and development
• Identify evidence gaps and provide justification for a new or confirmatory trial
• Provide evidence regarding which agents are the best candidates for (further) evaluation
• Assess the underlying evidence to re-evaluate drugs for use in other settings (re-purposing)
• Inform selection of appropriate:
  • Comparator arms; trial population and effect size(s) to target; relevant outcomes to collect
  • Encourage the design and launch of new trials via systematic review collaborations

Trial conduct and analysis
• Consider the external evidence accumulating during course of trial to inform trial amendments
• Maintain the relevance of ongoing and/or long-term trials via research recommendation(s)
• Prospectively influence the conduct of ongoing new trials e.g. by encouraging accrual
• Inform the adjustment (stratification) of trial analyses e.g. by relevant risk groups

Trial reporting
• Place the results of completed trials in the context of other, similar trials
• Encourage publication of unpublished trials (usually included in IPDMA)

Clinical practice and healthcare policy
• Help to resolve uncertainty about particular treatment interventions
• Inform the targeting of treatment to those patients who would benefit the most
• Help guideline developers to make evidence-based recommendations
• Identify areas where research is lacking in order to inform funding needed for future research