

Objective:

Evaluate the value of conducting industry-sponsored clinical drug trials in Finland.

Knowledge gained:

Clinical trials create considerable societal value, most of which comes from health benefits.

Analysis:

Analysis of observable realised effects and value based on the available historical data.

Key message:

The number clinical trials conducted in Finland has been declining for decades. Immense societal value could be lost, if the trend is not reversed.

Direct and Indirect Benefits of Clinical Trials for the Public Health Care: Finnish Society Gains 10 Million Euros of Value per Trial

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BACKGROUND

Medicines require clinical research evidence and health technology assessments (HTA) for marketing authorisation, labelling, market access, and lifecycle management. However, clinical drug research itself is rarely subjected to HTA. The value of conducting clinical drug trials in the Finnish public healthcare setting has not been estimated before.

OBJECTIVES

We evaluated how Finland may benefit from the industry-sponsored clinical drug trials conducted in the public healthcare, compared to counterfactual situation where industry-sponsored trials are not performed.

METHODS

The HTA was carried out within the PICOSTEPS analysis and reporting framework¹, based on data requested from 30 organisations (5 university hospitals, 16 central hospitals, 5 hospitals under Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, and 4 well-being service counties without central hospital)², annual investment surveys by Pharma Industry Finland³, public statistics⁴⁻⁵, and available literature⁶⁻¹³. The assessment excluded vaccine trials.

COMPONENT	CONTENT
Population	Public healthcare patients participating in industry-sponsored clinical drug trials conducted in Finland (i.e., study subjects), and the other patients treated in hospitals carrying out clinical drug trials, who are subject to indirect effects arising from the clinical drug trials.
Intervention	Industry-sponsored clinical drug trials conducted in the Finnish public healthcare.
Comparator	Counterfactual scenario, where industry-sponsored clinical drug trials are not carried out in Finland.
Outcomes	The economic value of the clinical drug trials, in nominal value: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) the average value per trial and 2) in total on a societal level
Setting	Analysis of the observable realised effects and value based on available historical data. ²⁻⁵
Time	Realised value and sources: Past 6 years (2018-2023). Analyses were carried out using annual model cycles; continuation corrections or discounting were not applied.
Effects	<p>Direct value of care provided to patients participating in clinical drug trials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment and monitoring covered by contract payments² • Drugs paid by the study sponsors (study sponsor pays for the drugs administered during the trial)² • Health benefits for the study subjects, valued at €49,940 per QALY gained⁶⁻⁷ <p>Benefits obtained elsewhere in healthcare:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost benefits elsewhere in healthcare⁸⁻¹⁰ • Health benefits elsewhere in healthcare, valued at €29,997 per QALY gained^{2,7,11,12} <p>Numbers of studies^{2,4}, average study sizes^{2,3}, and average trial duration^{4,13} were sourced from the available literature. Health benefits were measured in quality-adjusted life-years (QALYs).</p>
Perspective	Finnish public healthcare payer perspective.
Sensitivity analyses	Not conducted.

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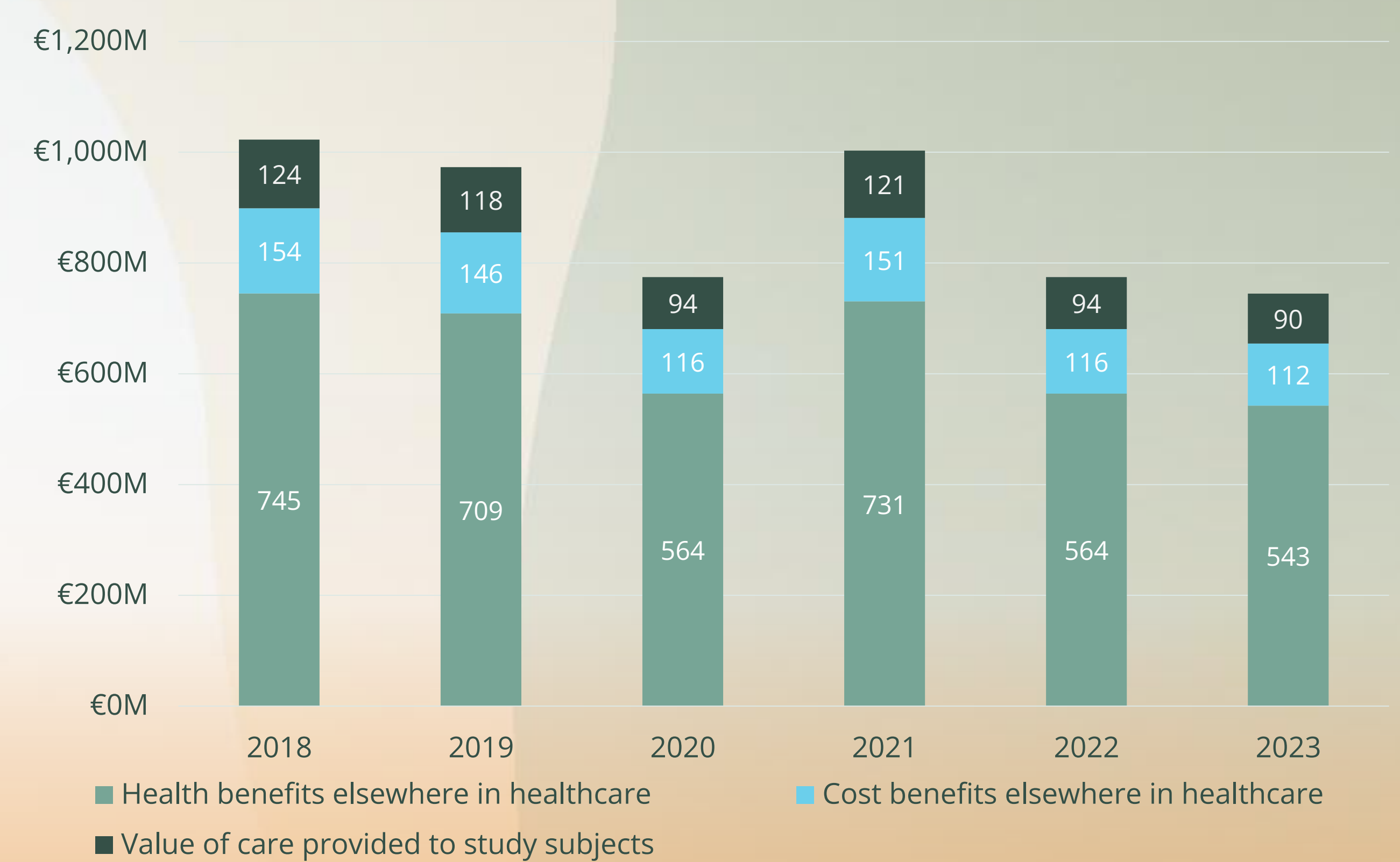
RESULTS

The average societal value of one clinical trial was estimated at around €10 million including the spill-over effects.

The average value of care provided in one trial was estimated at €1.2 million, i.e. approximately 12 % of the estimated societal value.

In total 20 organisations (67 %) responded to our data request; 10 were carrying out clinical trials at the time of data request.

The cumulative societal value of the clinical trials initiated annually from 2018 to 2023 was approximately €5.3 billion, of which around €640 million from the care provided to study subjects.



From 2018 to 2023, the societal value of the initiated clinical drug trials was around €880 million annually, of which €107 million was value of care provided to subjects.

CONCLUSIONS

Conducting clinical trials in public healthcare setting creates considerable value.

While study subjects benefit from the trials, most of the societal value comes from the benefits gained elsewhere in the healthcare.

The number of clinical trials carried out in Finland has been declining for more than 25 years. Much more societal value could be lost, and healthcare costs could increase, if the trend is not reversed.

