Administrative registers provide an inexhaustible source of information that is exploited in growing trend by social researchers. Register based research differs in some ways from traditional ways of making research. The purpose of this study was to examine the possibilities that register data provides for equity in health care research and to illustrate how the project can be conducted in practise.

The process of register based research was examined through actual research data. Study data was a part of the STAKES research data originally collected to identify and examine differences in treatment of coronary heart disease population in Finland in 1995-1998. Originally for other purposes compiled register data was reworked into retrospective cohort study setting. The purpose was to examine possible socioeconomic differences in treatment histories among patients that underwent their first revascularisation in 1995-1998. Statistical methods used in this study are commonly used in epidemiological research, including logistic and multinomial logistic regression, Poisson regression and Cox regression.

Based on previous research it was known that higher socioeconomic groups received more revascularisations than those worse-off in 1990s. This study aimed to conclude whether patients in high socioeconomic groups received the operation in earlier stage of the disease based on their treatment history. According to the results, statistically significant differences that favoured those better-off existed in 1995-1998 in pathways to revascularisation. Patients from higher socioeconomic groups were operated sooner after being diagnosed and had less acute hospitalisations due to coronary heart disease in their treatment histories. The study used several graphic and statistical methods to gain a more detailed picture of the pathways to revascularisation.

**Avainsanat-Nyckelord**
- register data
- register based research
- socioeconomic status
- coronary heart disease
- patient treatment

**Säilytyspaikka-Förvaringsställe**
Where deposited

**Muita tietoja-Övriga uppgifter**
Additional information