

A state of genuine uncertainty as to which of two or more alternative [health technologies](#) should constitute the standard of care, considering benefits and harms.

**Note 1:** Equipoise is widely viewed as necessary for a trial to be ethically justified, especially when participants are assigned to trial arms randomly. This view is underpinned by the idea that physician-researchers cannot waive their duty to act in the best interests of their patients.

**Note 2:** As specified by the definition, equipoise usually refers to the state of uncertainty inhabited by the scientific and medical community, but it can also refer to the state of uncertainty inhabited by the researchers conducting a trial or by patients and the public.