WEEK 9: Seminar questions

Question 1
You are designing a trial to answer the following questions:

1. Are probiotics effective in the prevention of winter infections?
2. Are probiotics effective in the treatment of colds?

Think of as many as outcomes as you can looking for different points of view, including use of health services. How would you measure these outcomes?

Question 2
If there are a number of outcomes from a trial what are the implications for trial reporting and for carrying out systematic reviews?

Question 3
A trial randomised babies suffering from sepsis (a severe infection) to two different antibiotic drugs, A and B. The babies were followed up until they were discharged from hospital or died.
The following figures are the length of stay in days for babies who died and babies who survived for each treatment group.

Group A Alive

1	5	10	15	21	34	64
2	5	10	15	22	36	69
3	5	11	17	22	37	72
3	6	12	17	24	37	74
3	7	13	17	27	40	75
3	7	13	17	29	46	80
3	8	13	18	29	51	82
4	8	13	18	30	52	89
4	9	14	20	31	60	90
5	9	14	20	32	61	94

Group A dead

1	11

Group B alive

0	8	13	29	49	67	99
1	8	14	30	49	69	109
2	9	14	30	50	72	114
2	9	15	30	50	79	117
3	10	16	37	52	81	
4	10	16	37	52	82	
5	10	16	37	53	84	
5	12	26	37	61	85	
6	12	27	47	62	95	
8	13	27	48	65	96	

Group B dead

0	1	15	31	51
1	15	19	42	

What summary statistics would you use to summarise and compare the two groups?

What graphical way could you present the data?

Your tutors will hand you out a graph when you have discussed this point.

Which figures/graphs are most useful when explaining the results to a) other colleagues b) parents c) the bed manager?