

# **APPRAISING GUIDELINES**

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## **Abstract**

### **Background**

Clinical practice guidelines are increasingly used throughout the world to improve the quality of care. As for any new intervention or technology, guidelines should be assessed in the same way to ensure that they are likely to have a positive impact on patients' health. An international collaboration of researchers has developed the Appraisal of Guidelines for Research and Evaluation (AGREE) Instrument providing a systematic framework for assessing guidelines. In addition, the Yale University created the Implementability Rating Profile (IRP), which focuses on individual recommendations and could be used complementary to the AGREE Instrument.

### **Objective**

The aim of the workshop is to promote the concept of guideline quality and usability via the AGREE Instrument and the IRP. This workshop will be relevant to any conference participant who intends to assess clinical guidelines and implement them, whether for quality improvement purposes or for formal assessment in the policy context.

### **Methods and results**

#### 1. Welcome and introduction (20 minutes)

This will include two presentations:

- a) a brief background to the AGREE instrument, an outline of its structure and content and a summary of its development process and validation.
- b) a brief background to the Yale IRP, its purpose and use in the context of guideline development and implementation.

#### 2. Small group appraisal (40 minutes)

Participants will be divided into small groups of 6–8 people. All groups will appraise a pre-selected guideline using the AGREE Instrument or the IRP. Their work will be facilitated by the workshop leaders.

#### 3. Group feedback, plenary discussion and summary (30 minutes)

The groups will reconvene to present the results of their appraisal. This will be followed by a structured discussion about the usefulness of both the AGREE Instrument and the IRP and their application in practice.

### **Conclusions and implications**

Guideline quality is defined by validated criteria included in the AGREE Instrument. However, the AGREE scores should be interpreted cautiously. The clinical content as well as the implementability of the recommendations should help determine the selection of guidelines for local adaptation and use in practice. Clinical experts should always be involved in the appraisal process.