



enGINE Newsletter – March 2021

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A Word from the Chair



In Spring, the GIN Board usually has a face to face meeting to discuss the forthcoming conference and key strategic issues for the organisation. This year of course, it was all done remotely - like most of my life, both professional and personal! Video conferences generally work remarkably well, but the main drawback of virtual working for international collaboration is the time zones! Some Board members inevitably have to get up really early, while others have the opposite issue, the problem of staying awake.

Nevertheless, we had a very productive meeting and reflected on opportunities and challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the most positive outcomes has been excellent international collaboration in relation to new research, to sharing findings and to working together on the development of guidelines. GIN and many members of GIN have played an important part in this international endeavour. We must build on this work, retain the vital links of collaboration, and ensure that the world has up to date information about how to manage and treat COVID-19 in the future.

Planning for the 2021 GIN virtual conference is going well, and we will ensure we make best use of virtual technology to create an engaging, accessible conference for all our members, wherever they are in the world. The Board reflected on whether we should have more virtual events in the future, outside the regular conference. This might include more regional meetings, following the successful model in North America, or working group events to showcase the important efforts they make to guideline development and implementation. Large international meetings will always be at heart of GIN's global remit, but smaller more focussed events may be useful ways of collaborating using the benefits of virtual technology. If you have any thoughts on this for the future, please do let me know.

It's great to see that vaccines are now being rolled out to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the future. Let's hope we are soon able to meet again in person, while retaining all the positive collaboration and ways of working that have been generated during the pandemic.

Very best wishes to everyone, and good health.

Gillian Leng, GIN Chair

Chief Executive Officer's Update



It seems hardly any time since I wrote to you all in December, but at the same time, it feels like an eternity. It has been an incredibly busy time for everyone working in the world of health, with not much in the way of breaks or holidays to look forward to. In the GIN office, we all welcomed the Christmas shutdown even more eagerly than usual!

Working with the GIN board is normally punctuated by two highlights each year – our March mid-term meeting and our conference. In the past six months we have missed both. We did have an online meeting of the board, where we concentrated on governance and we have a longer meeting planned in April, where we will focus on strategy. Like everyone, we are

looking forward to the days when we can meet in person again.

Since our AGM in September, the secretariat staff have been concentrating on our key digital projects: rolling out GIN Connect - our membership platform, aimed at enhancing communication with and between members, supporting members to adapt to the new library and renewing our website.

We have invited a total of 1,202 members to sign up to GIN Connect and add their photos, bios, publications, skills and interests. To date we have 439 profiles. Every member, who was listed on the website is now listed in GIN Connect, but you will only be able to find and contact them if they have signed up to the platform. Please encourage your colleagues to sign up to GIN Connect. Anyone who needs support, please contact our membership manager, [Alice Bird](#).

We are very excited to be launching our new website at the end of the month – it has a brand new look and feel, in keeping with last year's rebrand. You should find it easier to navigate and find information. A login will no longer be required, as all of the member-related information will be stored on GIN Connect, as it is now.

Despite the pandemic and the disruption it has caused to everyone's lives, there has been some amazing work going on within the network – please take a few minutes to read the updates provided by GIN Public and their continuing work to update the GIN Public toolkit, GIN North America and their 2-day event, as well as GIN ANZ and their webinar series, which is ongoing. Our work on the [INGUIDE](#) programme, as well as the [Covid-19 recommendations map](#) also continues at high speed.

All in all, our members are shining through this difficult time – so much focus and innovation have been borne out of this crisis. I genuinely thank you all for the great work that you continue to carry out in the name of GIN.

Stay safe and keep shining,

Elaine Harrow, CEO

GIN Registry & Library Update

We launched the new GIN Library and Registry at the end of 2020. Thank you to everyone who has engaged in the new library. It all seems to be working well and we now have almost 3,000 entries, which is fantastic!

As a reminder, the new library and registry is completely separate to the GIN website (although it can still be accessed via a link on the GIN website). It can be accessed directly via <https://guidelines.ebmportal.com/> The library is accessible to everyone and you do not require a password to use it.

We are particularly keen to expand the registry of guidelines in development. Member organisations are able to upload these at any time, but non-member organisations are also very much encouraged

to register their guidelines in development. Please email library@g-i-n.net for further details.

For those who are moderators for the library, there are a number of “How to” guides available in the Library Downloads section [here](#). These show you how to edit existing information, how to upload guidelines either directly or using the batch facility, as well as a description of the data items and the template.

We will be establishing a user forum for the library over the coming months to review how the library is working and what developments users would like to see for the future. Please let us know if you are interested in being part of the forum.

If you have any issues using the library, please email library@g-i-n.net. Sara or Jenna will be available to assist you.

GIN Conference 2021

Each year GIN presents an international conference that brings together its members and other stakeholders to discuss key issues in the development and implementation of evidence-based healthcare guidance. The event usually takes place in a different country each year and has in the past been hosted by a different local member organisation.

However, due to the effects of the ongoing global pandemic, the GIN Board have made the decision to host this year’s event fully online from 25-27 October. We hope to turn the current situation into an opportunity and bring everything you would expect from a GIN conference to you virtually!

The 2021 virtual conference promises to be innovative as always and deliver the very best of what you will have come to expect from GIN including:

- pre-conference course (INGUIDE)
- a programme that covers cross-cutting issues in the field
- e-poster sessions
- concurrent streams of focused content

Keep your eyes peeled for more updates in the near future!

Meet the board.....Roberta James



Roberta James has been the Programme Lead at SIGN 10 years and over that time has overseen changes in the methodology of developing guidelines, development of different formats to help dissemination, implementation and patient centred care, such as apps, decision aids and patient booklets.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that great things can be achieved when we work collectively and that in a crisis, healthcare professionals need guidelines rapidly. GIN is at the forefront of this thinking and as a Trustee Roberta is keen to be part of this exciting new chapter for GIN and to be instrumental in helping GIN to make great strides into providing more patient-centered, context specific guidelines in collaboration and partnership.

Roberta has an interest developing methods of keeping guidelines current whilst making best use of scarce resources. She is member of the of the GIN Updating Guidelines working group and has contributed to recent research and publications from the group. She is also a member of the Implementation working group, which aims to progress the science of guideline implementation by generating knowledge and associated outputs/products on how to plan, undertake, enable and evaluate guideline implementation.

Along with colleagues at Healthcare Improvement Scotland, Roberta is part of the Erasmus funded Cost Conscious Care Consortium. The consortium has developed an educational programme to be used for residents across Europe. The objective of the programme is two-fold: to teach residents the basics of developing and implementing high quality, evidence-based guidelines and to equip residents with the competences to work in a cost-conscious manner. The programme was launched in 2019 two cohorts of residents have completed the course.

Previously Roberta collaborated with Health Protection Scotland (HPS) to introduce methods to develop evidence-based guidelines for health protection in Scotland which has led to a strong working relationship between the two organisations and an ongoing interest in using evidence that falls out with the recognised hierarchy to develop guidelines. Roberta was also a member of the expert group that developed the European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC) Technical Report on evidence-based methodologies for public health and went on to be a member of an EU funded Project on a Framework for Rating Evidence in Public Health (PRECEPT). The project led to publication of an evidence assessment framework for evaluating and grading evidence and strength of recommendations in the field of infectious disease epidemiology, prevention and control.

Roberta started her career as a research scientist after undergraduate and post graduate study at Edinburgh University and prior to joining SIGN spent 10 years as a research scientist at the Medical Research Council Human Genetics Unit in Edinburgh, the Roslin Institute and the Cancer Research UK labs at the University of Edinburgh.

Roberta lives in Edinburgh and is currently working from home with her husband, who is Head of IT for Scottish charity (and frequently plays his electric guitar in the office), her eldest son who is studying mechanical engineering and younger son who is working hard at virtual school (!) and writing a fantasy novel.

Introducing ... Alice Bird

A warm welcome to Alice Bird who joined us in January as our new Office & Membership Manager!

Alice says "I joined GIN in January and have come on board, full time, as the new Office & Membership Manager as well as PA to our CEO, Elaine. I am based in the South of England and have come from a background as a PA and Office Manager for a boutique Executive Search Organisation who, much like GIN, are all home based so I am already very adapted to working from home.

For the last 6 years I have also helped manage my family farm in West Sussex. I am hugely looking forward to establishing relationships with everyone at GIN and getting to grips with this fascinating industry".

Welcome to the team, Alice!



GIN ANZ webinar



On 12th March 2011, GIN ANZ hosted the Guidelines and impact: the art of storytelling, webinar.

The webinar, led by Dr Alex Aitkin and Dr Kiah Evans, described ways in which you can use data and present impact through case studies. Dr Aitkin is NHMRC's lead developer of NHMRC impact case studies and has worked with a number of Australian guideline developers to craft guideline impact stories. Dr Kiah Evans will speak about her experience with the 'National Guideline for the Assessment and Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum

Disorders.' The recording of this video can be found [here](#).

ANZ are also delighted to be hosting The Living Guidelines Approach – is it achievable and sustainable? webinar on 11 June 2021. More information including how to register for this event will be shared very soon!

GIN PUBLIC Toolkit – New Chapters!

Over the last few months there has been some exciting innovative work going on within our GIN Public working group who have been developing an updated GIN Public Toolkit: Patient and Public Involvement in Guidelines.

The “Toolkit” assembles international experiences and best practice examples of successful patient involvement and aims at supporting guideline developers who consider involving patients in guideline development or dissemination.

We are delighted to have launched the first 4 updated chapters and 1 brand new chapter and these can be accessed [here](#).

These chapter will be converted to a more accessible digital format very soon and can be viewed here.

The newly launched chapters include:

- Updates of the 3 most widely accessed chapters:
 - How to recruit and support patients and the public and overcome barriers to their involvement in guideline development.
 - How to conduct public and targeted consultation
 - How to develop information from guidelines for patients and the public
- We are also delighted to launch 2 chapters authored by colleagues in partner international collaborations including Cochrane, which provide valuable advice and tools that can be adapted for work on Guidelines:
 - 1 NEW chapter on patient and public involvement in systematic reviews, authored by Cochrane Consumers
 - 1 updated chapter on tools to support patient involvement in health technology assessment by the HTAi Patient and Citizen Involvement Group

Lead authors, Chair and Vice Chair of GIN Public, Jane Cowl of [NICE](#) and Karen Graham of [SIGN](#) have been instrumental in delivering and coordinating the effort to get the document to this stage. This includes working with a professional editor.

The project has also been fortunate to have the valued input from a member of the public who spent time on the review panel. Kenneth McLean commented: “I became involved as a public partner with

GIN PUBLIC due to my interest in patient and public involvement in patient centred care. During this pandemic period of extreme pressure on all working in the healthcare environment, this diverse multinational group has persevered with tenacity to do the right thing on behalf of the public and patients and the result is an internationally co-produced toolkit which should be an invaluable resource for guideline developers all over the world. I feel very privileged to have been on part of this journey and have learnt so much from colleagues from all over the world.”

For more details on our GIN PUBLIC Working Group please visit the [Working Group](#) pages on our website and [GIN Connect](#).

International Guideline Development Credentialing & Certification Program



INGUIDE is a comprehensive, evidence-based, and up-to-date training program for guideline recommendation and development. It is the product of a partnership between GIN and world-renowned experts in guideline research, development, and implementation at [McMaster University's Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence, and Impact](#).

The program (International Guideline Credentialing & Certification Program) launched in September last year and is a professional certification program in guideline development and its mission is to improve the quality of practice guidelines globally, as well as reduce the amount of time and resources required to produce guidelines.

The INGUIDE training:

- Encompasses the entire guideline development process, including planning, implementation, evaluation and updating.
- Is based on comprehensive, evidence-based methodological research.
- Examines the guideline development processes of international agencies, professional societies, and expert experiences.
- Offers online and - once safe again - in-person training formats which can be adapted to suit the needs of unique health conditions, populations, or professional backgrounds.
- Targets the required knowledge, skills and responsibilities of guideline panel members, methodologists, and chairs, as well as guideline development instructors.

The programme is broken down into various levels. Level 1 is ideal for anyone who is looking to be a guideline group member and will provide training based on selected domains of the GIN-McMaster Checklist. Level 1 is a pre-requisite for Level 2, which will provide delegates with in-depth training based on the complete GIN-McMaster Checklist, with the aim of becoming a guideline development methodologist. The adaptation to a fully online course for level 2 is currently being finalised and will launch in June (with Webinars in July) allowing enough time to complete the pre-requisite level 1 course. You can sign up to receive programme announcements [here](#).

Further information on the course descriptions and structure is available on the [website](#). Please note that GIN members qualify for discount on this programme.

COVID Recs Map



The COVID Rec Map team is currently seeking content experts to review and approve key variables extracted from COVID-19 guidelines prior to their publication in the catalogue. This is an important quality assurance step within our protocol to ensure that the most important variables presented in the catalogue have been accurately extracted and classified. In the very near future, we will invite those experts to provide commentary if desired

related to the recommendations.

We are seeking individuals with experience in guideline development, ideally with experience using the GRADE approach to join our pool of expert reviewers where you will be requested to review a maximum of one guideline per week in an area of interest.

All interested, qualified individuals should please contact Stephanie Duda, Research Coordinator, McMaster University at dudasj@mcmaster.ca.

This is a product of the collaboration between GIN and Cochrane Canada and other Cochrane entities, the WHO Collaborating Center for Infectious Diseases, Research Methods and Recommendations at McMaster University, GRADE centers, the Norwegian Institute of Public Health, the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE), WHO/PAHO, and many other institutions or organisations. More info can be found on the [website](#).

We are excited to be part of this important work - a huge number of our members are working tirelessly behind the scenes to review and appraise the guidelines as they are published so please share as widely as possible.

Important Dates



- New website launch – 31 March 2021
- INGUIDE Level 2 launch – June 2021
- ANZ Webinar - The Living Guidelines Approach – is it achievable & sustainable? – 11 June 2021
- GIN 2021 online conference – 25 to 27 October 2021

