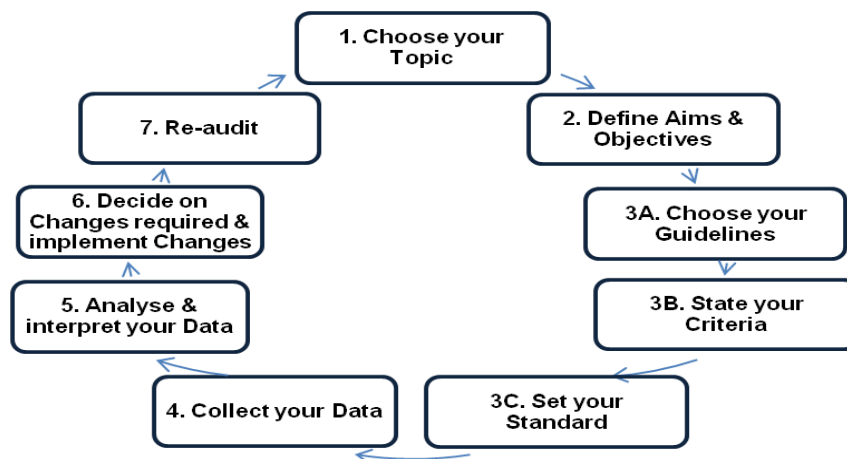# Applying the principles of audit to the process of writing, updating or reviewing a clinical care guideline

ICGP PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE

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Purpose of ICGP sample audits on specific topics

The purpose of the ICGP sample audit for each topic area is to provide practitioners with audit topic proposals and related tools in order to aid them in carrying out an audit in this topic area. For each topic, a specific guideline is chosen which identifies best practice for the relevant topic. Following this, criteria are listed from the guidelines along with a data collection tool to assist you to establish if you are adhering to the guidelines.

A separate document, the ICGP Audit Toolkit, provides detailed generic instructions on how to carry out and report your audit.

Sample Audit Topic: Writing/Updating a clinical care guideline

Evidence: AGREE II Guidelines
                                              http://www.agreetrust.org/resource-centre/agree-ii/

Professional Competence Domains: Professionalism

Disclaimer

In all ICGP sample audits, where 'your practice' is mentioned, this refers to the work you do/the activity in which you are engaged, not necessarily that you need to be based in one or any practice.

Criteria/Data Collection Tool

Your standard (sometimes known as your target) is your desired level of performance and is usually stated as a percentage.

If you are writing a new guideline, your target might be 100% i.e. to achieve all criteria (yes to all below).

If you are updating a guideline, you could look at how many of the criteria you achieved when you first wrote the guideline.

If you are reviewing an existing guideline, record your scoring with regard to whether the criteria was achieved when created.

Criteria	YES	NO
Domain 1. Scope and Purpose		
The overall objective(s) of the guideline is (are) specifically described.		
The health question(s) covered by the guideline is (are) specifically described.		
The population (patients, public, etc.) to whom the guideline is meant to apply is specifically described.		
Domain 2. Stakeholder Involvement		
The guideline development group includes individuals from all the relevant professional groups.		
The views and preferences of the target population (patients, public, etc.) have been sought.		
The target users of the guideline are clearly defined.		
Domain 3. Rigour of Development		
Systematic methods were used to search for evidence		
The criteria for selecting the evidence are clearly described.		
The strengths and limitations of the body of evidence are clearly described.		
The methods for formulating the recommendations are clearly described.		
The health benefits, side effects, and risks have been considered in formulating the recommendations.		
There is an explicit link between the recommendations and the supporting evidence.		
The guideline has been externally reviewed by experts prior to its publication.		
A procedure for updating the guideline is provided.		
Domain 4. Clarity of Presentation		
The recommendations are specific and unambiguous.		
The different options for management of the condition or health issue are clearly presented.		
Key recommendations are easily identifiable.		
Domain 5. Applicability		
The guideline describes facilitators and barriers to its application.		
The guideline provides advice and/or tools on how the recommendations can be put into practice.		
The potential resource implications of applying the recommendations have been considered.		
The guideline presents monitoring and/ or auditing criteria.		
Domain 6. Editorial Independence		
The views of the funding body have not influenced the content of the guideline.		
Competing interests of guideline development group members have been recorded and addressed.		

The next steps are:

- Establish how many of the criteria were reached and compare this to your target.

- When writing or updating a guideline: With regard to the criteria not reached, you should consider the impact on the relevance/usability of the guideline. Decide on what can be done to achieve the criteria not reached and in particular where these are considered to be crucial to the relevance and usability of the guidelines.

- Where you are reviewing a guideline, compare your grading of the guidelines against the other reviewers. If/Where they differ, review your assessment/grading based on the comparison.

- Implement changes where required and relevant in order that more of the criteria are reached or to ensure that the shortfalls are address in another manner in order to increase the relevance and usability of the guideline.

- Re-audit your (individual) practice by establish after the above action, how many of the criteria are now reached.

A detailed explanation of all of these steps can be found in the ICGP Audit Toolkit, which is available on the ICGP Website at: http://www.icgp.ie/audit