RELEVANCE OF THE NATIONAL GUIDELINE CLEARINGHOUSE (NGC) GUIDELINE REPOSITORY FOR ADULT CHRONIC NON-CANCER PAIN CARE

Suneel Upadhye, MD MSc FRCPC
McMaster University

INTRODUCTION / AIM

Clinical practice guidelines (CPGs) are higher-order evidence documents that can be used to inform and guide clinical practice for pain clinicians worldwide. Accessing these products, however, can be a challenge if one does not know where to find them.

The National Guideline Clearinghouse (NGC) is the world’s largest free open-access online repository of clinical practice guidelines (CPGs). The objective of this study was to determine the relevance of NGC CPGs to the practice of adult chronic non-cancer pain (CNCP) care.

METHODS

The NGC Index list (accessed May 1, 2015; n=2390 titles) was screened by 4 reviewers. Relevance of CPGs to CNCP practice was ranked as follows: "0" = not relevant, "1" = indirectly relevant, "2" = directly relevant, and "3" essential to EM practice. Evaluators met and reviewed the entire list in a single Delphi consensus process. Results were collated into "essential" and "relevant" lists.

RESULTS

Of the 2390 titles screened, 336 (15%) were deemed "essential" and 62 (3%) were deemed "relevant."

DISCUSSION / CONCLUSIONS

The NGC repository has a substantial number of clinically diverse CPGs important to CNCP practice. This repository can be an initial starting point for international pain clinicians looking for practice improvement information, and pain academicians for research opportunities. A number of clinical process improvements can be initiated with such CPGs, including creation of workflow protocols, patient shared-decision making aids, and uptake into computerized decision support systems. These CPG lists can also be further critically evaluated for methodological quality, variations in evidence grading/recommendation formulations, and adaptation across pain sub-specialties.

OTHER AUTHORS

Dinesh Kumbhare, MD MSc FRCPC
Liza Grosman-Rimon, PhD
James Henry, PhD