

UNDERSTANDING CLINICAL GUIDELINES

LIBRARY & INFORMATION SERVICE

Guidelines have become an established tool to improve the quality of healthcare for patients.

WHAT ARE CLINICAL GUIDELINES?

Clinical guidelines aim to help health professionals make the best decisions about treatment or care for a particular condition or situation. The guidelines are typically written in statement form by a reputable organization. The authors of guidelines review the research literature and take advice from experts to gather the current evidence on which to base the recommendations in a guideline.

WHY USE CLINICAL GUIDELINES?

Clinical guidelines build on Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM) and have the following advantages:

- ☒ To improve healthcare outcomes for patients and drive up the quality of patient care
- ☒ To reduce unwanted variations in practice
- ☒ To summarise research findings and make clinical decisions more transparent
- ☒ To support clinical audit activities

CICER Online Module: Clinical Guideline Development in Ireland: A Guide for Health Professionals



Professionals



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Tacaíocht don Treoirline Chliniciúil
Clinical Guideline Support

The **Quality & Safety in Practice (QSIP) Committee** produce **General Practice Updates (GPUs) & Practice Points (PPs)** on topics of relevance to general practice. They are education tools to assist GPs in providing care for their patient.

<https://www.irishcollegeofgps.ie/Home/Clinical-Hub/General-Practice-Updates>

WHERE TO FIND CLINICAL GUIDELINES?

There are a large number of clinical guidelines available to GPs developed by a range of bodies, from Medical Specialist Societies, the Royal Colleges and National Organisations such as the NICE and SIGN.

TRIP Database: www.tripdatabase.com is a useful database to search for clinical guidelines.

BMJ Best Practice: <https://bestpractice.bmj.com/> is ranked one of the best clinical decision support tools for health professionals worldwide. Contains links to guidelines and clinical summaries.

National Clinical Guidelines (Department of Health)

The National Clinical Effectiveness Committee (NCEC) was established in Ireland by the Minister for Health in September 2010 to develop National Clinical Guidelines. They aim to provide guidance and standards for improving the quality, safety and cost effectiveness of healthcare in Ireland.

NICE (National Institute for Clinical Excellence)

NICE clinical guidelines set out the clinical care that is suitable for most patients with a specific condition in the NHS in England and Wales.

SIGN (Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network)

SIGN develops and publishes evidence-based clinical practice guidelines for use by the health service in Scotland.

GIN (Guidelines International Network)

The global network supporting evidence-based guideline development and implementation.

Antibiotic Prescribing Guidelines (HSE)

HSE guidance for healthcare professionals for antimicrobial prescribing and antimicrobial stewardship.

Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland (HIQA)

The National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) has developed the Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland. The guidelines provide up to date and accurate information about vaccines and immunisation for healthcare professionals.

National GP Referral Guidelines (NCCP)

The NCCP have a suite of national GP referral guidelines providing evidence-based criteria to help GPs identify patients who require timely assessment for suspected cancer.

Medical Fitness to Drive Guidelines (RSA)

This publication summarises Irish medical guidelines of fitness to drive. The information in these Guidelines is intended to assist doctors and other healthcare professionals in advising their patients on fitness to drive, requirements for reporting to the National Driver Licence Service (NDLS) and guidance on review of stability, progression or improvement of these conditions. More information can be found online: <https://www.rsa.ie/services/licensed-drivers/medical-fitness>

HSPC Guidelines for GPs and Primary Care

The Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) provides clinical and public health guidance for Irish GPs. Key resources include infection control measures, notifiable disease case definitions, Mpox testing pathways, and antibiotic prescribing resources.

Infection Prevention and Control for Primary Care in Ireland: A Guide for General Practice

Good infection prevention and control practices are essential to ensure that people who use primary care services receive safe and effective care. This guide is intended for use by all staff working in general practice including all clinical, nonclinical administrative and support personnel.

Professional Conduct & Ethics (Medical Council)

In Ireland, the Medical Council's *Guide to Professional Conduct and Ethics for Registered Medical Practitioners* outlines the core standards for doctors. The framework is built on 8 domains of good professional practice..

RCPI Clinical Guidelines

Access clinical guidelines from the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland.

ASOI - Obesity in Adults: A 2022 Adapted Clinical Practice Guideline for Ireland

These guidelines will act as a guide to high quality evidence-based obesity care, and in conjunction with the Model of Care for the Management of Adult Overweight and Obesity, improve the standard of care for individuals with obesity in all regions of Ireland.

National Guidelines on Referral and Forensic Clinical Examination Following Rape and Sexual Assault (Ireland)

This document is designed to facilitate all aspects of a responsive and coordinated service for people who have experienced sexual violence.

GINA Guidelines (Asthma)

The Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA) guidelines are intended as an evidence-based asthma management strategy.

GOLD Guidelines (COPD)

The Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease strategy document for the diagnosis, management and prevention of COPD.