ESC Guidelines Development Process

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A few ESC landmarks

- Founded 1950 by 14 NCS *(Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia)*.

*Now has 57 member countries.*

- First General Assembly 1950
- European Heart House built 1993 in Sophia-Antipolis, near Nice, France
- Brussels office opened in 2013
ESC Committee for Practice Guidelines (CPG)

- The first ESC Guidelines were published in Eur Heart J 1994 (CVD Prevention Guidelines)
- The CPG was created in 1994 by the ESC in order to oversee the process of guidelines development and their publication. The first EHH dedicated staff was hired in 2001.
- The CPG has the responsibility of selecting the topics for the documents in a timely manner as well as putting into place the Task Forces and Review Teams developing them.
- The CPG is responsible for the administrative supervision and coordination of all ESC Guidelines Task Forces (TF) following the development process and within the allocated budget.
ESC Guidelines = Evidence + expertise for clinicians

- Evidence-based recommendations developed by Task Forces of leading European experts
- Help physicians weigh benefits & risks of particular diagnostic & therapeutic procedures
- Formats include: full texts, pocket guidelines, slide-sets, books, mobile application...
The virtuous circle at the ESC

Research

Guidelines

EORP Registries

Education
ESC Guidelines Production: 3 phases

Goals and team definitions

Document elaboration & Review process

Publication

Details available on the ESC Web Site at: http://www.escardio.org/guidelines-surveys/esc-guidelines/about/Pages/rules-writing.aspx
Goals & Team Definitions (3 months)

CPG
Choice of titles and timelines

Board
Validation of titles and timelines

CPG
Choice of Chairs with Board validation pending DOI review by Board VPs

CPG
Choice of TF Members with call on specific expertise from specialty center and others

CPG
Invitations to TF members and check of their DOIs for final composition of TF
Document Elaboration (12-15 months)

Kick-off meeting
- Laying out of writing rules + table of contents + assignments + timelines + document search (literature + systematic reviews)

TF writing phase
- 2-3 face to face meetings and Task Force review phases (2-3)

CPG
- Choice of Review Coordinators with Board validation pending DOI review by Board VPs

CPG
- Choice of Peer Reviewers with call on specific expertise from specialty center and others

External peer review
- 2-3 rounds of peer review are necessary to obtain a final document
Publication Phase (3 months)

CPG + TF pub. → Endorsement phase → EHJ → EHJ Publication → Devlp of derivative products

Publication approval from all TF and CPG Members (as well as partner associations in the case of joint guidelines)

Systematic submission to EHJ via a fast track process + to specialty and partner society journals when appropriate

CME questions, Pocket Guidelines, Guidelines App, Slide-sets, Essential messages, Summary cards ...
Guidelines for Guidelines Writing

### Classification of Recommendations for Procedures and Treatments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes of Recommendations</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Wording to use</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class I</td>
<td>Evidence and/or general agreement that a given treatment or procedure is beneficial, useful, effective.</td>
<td>Is recommended or is indicated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class II</td>
<td>Conflicting evidence and/or a divergence of opinion about the usefulness/efficacy of the given treatment or procedure.</td>
<td>Should be considered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class IIa</td>
<td>Weight of evidence/opinion is in favour of usefulness/efficacy.</td>
<td>Should be considered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class IIb</td>
<td>Usefulness/efficacy is less well established by evidence/opinion.</td>
<td>May be considered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III</td>
<td>Evidence or general agreement that the given treatment or procedure is not useful/ effective, and in some cases may be harmful.</td>
<td>Is not recommended</td>
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## ESC Level of Evidence - LOE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of evidence</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Data derived from multiple randomized clinical trials or meta-analyses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Data derived from a single randomized clinical trial or large non-randomized studies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Consensus of opinion of the experts and/or small studies, retrospective studies, registries.</td>
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ESC Guidelines available on professional social networks