

## Finding clinical practice guidelines

**C**linical practice guidelines are “statements that include recommendations intended to optimize patient care and are informed by a systematic review of evidence and an assessment of the benefits and harms of alternative care options.”<sup>1</sup> Their utility and limitations have recently been well described by D. Etches in *This Changed My Practice*.<sup>2</sup>

Given that many guidelines are created outside of the scholarly publishing industry, these documents are not necessarily indexed in databases such as Medline. This creates a challenge to locate and access current guidelines. Fortunately, the two other directories make finding guidelines easy:

- The Canadian Medical Association maintains CPG Infobase,<sup>3</sup> a directory of guidelines produced in Canada by health organizations, societies, governments, or expert panels or by similar non-Canadian groups. These guidelines have been created or reviewed within the last 5 years and are based on literature searches.

CPG Infobase provides a link to the online full-text version or contact information for the producer.

**For guideline suggestions or assistance locating copies of guidelines, please contact the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC library.**

- The National Guideline Clearinghouse<sup>4</sup> (NGC) is an American directory of guidelines with an international scope including Canadian guidelines and those from SIGN and NICE in the UK. The NGC provides remarkably detailed summaries and links to the full text where available. Criteria for inclusion in this directory are more rigorous than the CPG Infobase, requiring systematic literature reviews and explicit reflections on benefits and harms.

For guideline suggestions or assistance locating copies of guidelines,

please contact the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC library at 604 733-6671 or [medlib@cpsbc.ca](mailto:medlib@cpsbc.ca) or view a list of guideline sources on our Practice Guidelines page.

— **Karen MacDonell, PhD, MLIS**  
Director, Library Services

### References

1. Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on Standards for Developing Trustworthy Clinical Practice Guidelines; Graham R, Mancher M, Miller Wolman D, et al., editors. *Clinical practice guidelines we can trust*. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2011.
2. Etches D. *Guidelines. This Changed My Practice*. 21 Feb 2018. Accessed 7 March 2018. <http://thischangedmypractice.com/guidelines>.
3. CPG Infobase: Clinical practice guidelines. Canadian Medical Association. Accessed 7 March 2018. [www.cma.ca/En/Pages/clinical-practice-guidelines.aspx](http://www.cma.ca/En/Pages/clinical-practice-guidelines.aspx).
4. National Guideline Clearinghouse. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (US). Rockville, MD. Accessed 7 March 2018. [www.guideline.gov](http://www.guideline.gov).



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