

Physiotherapy Clinical Practice Guidelines for people with Spinal Cord Injury

Conflict of Interest Policy

Scope of this policy

This conflict of interest policy is to minimise potential conflicts biasing the recommendations in the Physiotherapy Clinical Practice Guidelines for people with SCI. It applies to the clinical practice guidelines management committee, the clinical practice guidelines development committee and any contributors to or reviewers of the guideline.

Definition

Conflict of interest may occur from any direct or indirect financial or non-financial interest. Non-financial interests can include but is not limited to publishing research that may be used in the guideline, being considered an opinion leader and having personal experience of a disease.

Process for appointing chairs and Clinical Practice Guideline Development Committee

The chair of the Guideline Development Group and Project management Committee is appointed by the Chief Investigator of the Project/Grant. Should the chair resign the Chief Investigator will appoint a new chair. Development committee members are representative of as many areas of SCI care as possible (across the continuum of care and across states/countries). Groups representative of areas of care will be approached and asked for a representative/s. The representative will be chosen by the service/area of care. The Development Group will not contain members from the funding agency (icare). Reviewers of the guidelines will be appointed by the Project management committee and Guideline Development Committee.

Guidelines for accepting sponsorship

The physiotherapy clinical practice guidelines are funded by icare. Further funding may be received from government, hospital or association grants. No funding will be accepted from a commercial enterprise that has interest in the outcome of the guidelines.

Process for identifying conflicts of interest

The conflict of interest policy will be given to all members of the Project Management committee, the Guideline Development Committee and Reviewers. All parties will be explicitly asked but the chair if they have any conflicts of interest. If conflicts are known but not declared, the chair will contact the individual involved for clarification. The conflict of interest process is ongoing over the course of the project. If conflicts arise members should update their status.

Process for disclosing interests

Conflict of interest can be declared in committee meetings or via email to the chair. If conflict of interest is declared in a committee meeting it will be recorded in the minutes. If conflict of interest is emailed to the chair it will be declared and placed in the minutes at the next committee meeting.

Process for managing conflicts of interest

1. Identify conflicts of interest at the beginning of and throughout the process of guideline development
2. Record conflict of interest and provide this information within the final guideline
3. Exclude any representation of the funding body from the clinical practice guidelines development committee
4. Implement an anonymous voting process for all decisions related to the recommendations.
5. Record the results or the votes for each recommendation. Declare the number included in the vote and the result for each recommendation.
6. Exclude authors from voting where their publications constitute the only evidence on a recommendation.