



ASCCP Guideline Review

Introduction

ASCCP engages in the review of clinical practice guidelines to recognize the high quality work of other guideline-developing organizations, to avoid duplication of effort, and to offer harmonized recommendations across guideline development groups and major stakeholder organizations.

ASCCP considers guidelines for review on topics of interest to the society and its membership. This can be done through ASCCP's identification of recently released or published guidelines, or organizations may submit their guidelines to ASCCP for consideration of endorsement. This document lays out the process and criteria used by ASCCP for review consideration.

Definitions

- **ASCCP Endorsement** – Endorsement of a peer organization's clinical document denotes that ASCCP fully supports the clinical guidance in the document. Clinical documents endorsed by ASCCP are considered official ASCCP clinical guidance. In general, ASCCP endorses documents that are developed with ASCCP's participation from the beginning of document development.
- **ASCCP Support** – Support of a peer organization's clinical document denotes that ASCCP deems the document to be of educational value to its members, although ASCCP may not agree with every recommendation or statement in the document.
- **ASCCP Comment** – Comments to a peer organization's clinical document denotes that ASCCP does not agree with the recommendation, and feels the need to formally voice that opinion through public comment. ASCCP often will work with other peer organizations to create a formal comment, but this is not required.

Characteristics of Guidelines Eligible for Review

ASCCP considers the following criteria in its decisions about guideline review:

Guideline Development

- The developing organization is an established developer of high quality clinical practice guidelines
- The developing organization shows commitment to a rigorous and independent process for guideline development.
- Guidelines are developed using a systematic review-based methodology.
 - Consensus recommendations are acceptable if a lack of suitable evidence was identified in the course of the systematic review.
- Evidence is quality-appraised either formally or informally.
- Guideline recommendations are actionable and clearly presented. Recommendations reflect the strength of the evidence and the strength of the recommendation is reported using common methods (e.g. GLIDES, GRADE, etc.)



Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Management

Organizations should detail their Conflict of Interest Policy or procedures. Guideline provisions of the CMSS Code include:

- Guideline panel members, contributors and reviewers must disclose potential conflicts of interest before and during guideline development.
- All relevant disclosures must be published in conjunction with the guideline.
- ASCCP will consider the potential impact of the disclosures of guideline panel members and may include this information as an aspect of a decision about whether to endorse/support a guideline.
- Disclosure by itself may not be adequate, and ASCCP may choose to not endorse/support guidelines where conflicts may have influenced the recommendations, whether or not the conflicts were disclosed.
- ASCCP may consider the presence of non-financial conflicts of interest in their decision

Financial Independence

Guidelines must meet financial independence and transparency standards. These include:

- No organization participating in the guideline will accept direct financial support from for-profit health care companies for the guideline being developed or for any updates.
 - Support from non-profit foundations (other than the foundations of for-profit health care companies), government bodies, or individuals is acceptable as long as the supporter does not have the ability to influence the guideline (see next bullet).
- Guideline development must be independent from the influence of funding sources. Independence from funding sources means that the funders do not have any ability to influence topic selection, prioritization, and timing of topic development, clinical questions, panel composition, review procedures, publication, or any content of the guideline.

Selection of Guidelines for Consideration of Review by ASCCP

When a guideline is identified or submitted for consideration of review, the ASCCP Executive Committee determines if the guideline is timely and clinically relevant to the ASCCP membership in the context of overall guideline development at ASCCP. If the guideline is of interest and sufficient resources are available:

- The Executive Committee discusses the request for review and decides if they want to proceed with reviewing the guidelines.
- The request is put to vote by the committee. If the motion is approved, the recommendation to review is sent to the Board of Directors for consideration and vote.
- ASCCP recognizes that members of its executive board or board of directors may serve multiple organizations and be involved in the development of other organization's guidelines. These members should recuse themselves from voting on guidelines they had significant roles in developing.
- As part of its deliberations, the board may seek additional information from the developing organization about its development process.
- Board members will sign and comply with nondisclosure agreements requested by organizations requesting guideline endorsement. Board member signatures/forms are collected at ASCCP and forwarded to the authoring organization. The organization will then release the guidelines to ASCCP.



Guideline Review Process

- The Board of Directors review the candidate guideline, discuss their agreement or disagreement with the recommendations via email or phone, vote on next steps, and proceed to draft the final review: comment, support, or endorsement.
- As the Board drafts its review document, it is free to use language for contextualization, clarification, or to address new evidence that was published after the release of the guideline. The essence of the recommendations must be clear to readers and remain intact as the original developer intended.
- The original guideline developers/organization may opt to review the penultimate support/endorsement draft.
- The review is reviewed and approved by the ASCCP Board.

Guideline Endorsement Publications and Derivative Products (optional)

- ASCCP approved endorsements are submitted to the original authoring organization and copyright holder for review and permission to reprint any copyright material.
- Guideline endorsements are submitted for consideration of publication to the *Journal of Lower Genital Tract Disease*
 - If accepted for publication, the JLGTD published endorsement generally contains the following information:
 - Guideline title and the group responsible for development of the guideline
 - Purpose and rationale
 - Target population
 - Major recommendations
 - Commentary summarizing the ASCCP perspective including any additions or modifications specific to the ASCCP membership
 - Selected references
- A summary of the endorsement is also submitted to the *Journal of Lower Genital Tract Disease* for consideration of publication. The summary consists mainly of the recommendations and any relevant discussion points.
- Derivative products such as slide sets, recommendations table, and patient materials are developed for non-commercial use and re-prints are available for endorsement materials.

Conclusion

By communicating the criteria and method that ASCCP uses to assess whether a guideline endorsement is feasible, the goal is to clarify and streamline the endorsement process and to engage with other guideline developers in a transparent manner. Endorsement efforts are intended to reduce duplication of effort, highlight the work of other development groups, and to present harmonized recommendations to better serve the respective memberships and the patients that they treat.

Please contact info@ASCCP.org for further information on the endorsement process.

This policy has been reviewed, approved and adopted by the Board of Directors on October 5, 2019