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## An international survey about the updating process of Clinical Practice Guidelines

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**Background:** Scientific evidence is a dynamic body as it is constantly and rapidly changing. Clinical practice guidelines (CPGs) as other forms of research synthesis get outdated similarly quickly. Unlike guideline development the updating of CPGs is not well standardized and there is little research published so far.

**Purpose:** The objective of the study is to survey the main institutions developing guidelines worldwide about the process they use to update their guidelines.

**Methods:** We surveyed the most important institutions included in the National Guideline Clearinghouse, G-I-N member organisations and those proposed by a group of experts. We contacted all institutions by e-mail and used an on-line questionnaire to collect the data. Additionally we asked the 22 G-I-N organisations to inform us about methodological handbooks or materials they use or which they were aware of.

**Results:** The online questionnaire included four domains: institution characteristics, the updating process, users, and challenges. In total we surveyed more than a 120 institutions from 40 countries around the world. Data collection is almost complete. Regarding the request for methodological handbooks or materials about updating guidelines 50% of the G-I-N organisations replied. Only two of them reported that they had documents about the updating process. More data will be available at the conference.

**Discussion:** Methodological information on the CPG updating process is scarce. Our study will provide an important overall picture of this important topic from the main institutions developing guidelines around the world. There is considerable room for standardization and improvement. Our results will provide pivotal information to define future strategies for this important stage to keep CPGs alive.