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Current Status and Quality of Clinical Practice Guideline for last 10 years in South Korea

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Background: In the last 10 years, development of Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs) has been constantly increased in South Korea. Many clinicians and health policy makers have a great concern about their quality. However there is little evidence on this topic. The objective of this study is to describe the current status of guideline development and to assess the quality of CPGs in Korea.

Methods: We did a cross sectional study to describe guideline development in Korea between 2000 and 2009. We identified CPGs through search for specific website, Korean electronic database and Medline and survey of academic societies. We applied explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria to select CPGs. Selected CPGs were assessed by 4 reviewers by using the AGREE instrument.

Result: We are in the process of survey of 500 academic societies. We identified 123 potential CPGs by this time. The explicit inclusion criteria for selecting CPGs were an existence of explicit recommendation for helping decision making between health care provider and patients, and bibliographic references. The exclusion criteria were 1) narrative review, 2) guidelines targeted patients only, 3) manual for education, 4) simple translation of foreign guideline and 5) critical pathway. We are going to describe the current status of CPGs (ex: distribution of topics, development group characteristics, proportion of evidence based CPGs, clarity of recommendation) after we've identified total amount of CPGs. Then, 4 reviewers are going to assess quality of CPGs by using AGREE Instrument according to plan.

Conclusion: Our study was one of the first that systematically identified, selected and assessed the quality of CPGs in Korea. There was a constant increase of guideline development but their methodological quality was very limited. Our findings suggest that further efforts should be required to improve the quality of CPGs as much as possible in Korea.