

Guidelines International Network

Strategic Plan 2010-2013

1. Introduction

The Guidelines International Network (G-I-N) – founded in 2002 - is open to all those with an interest in guidelines. It is an international not-for-profit association and membership currently (October 2010) spans 37 countries with 94 organisational and 76 individual members.

The Guidelines International Network is constituted as a Scottish Charity and, as such, needs to meet the requirements of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). The governance arrangements for G-I-N are addressed in its Articles of Association and the standing operating procedures, which are regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

This document sets out the strategic plan for the Guidelines International Network for the period 2010 to 2013. It is a living document which might evolve over the years and detailed annual plans for achieving the strategy will be presented at each Annual General Meeting.

2. Mission of the Network

The Guidelines International Network's mission is to lead, strengthen and support collaboration and work within the guideline development, adaptation and implementation community.

3. Rationale and aims of the Network

The main purpose of the G-I-N is to:

- foster and support collaboration among all relevant stakeholders: guideline developers, implementers, researchers, students, users in all health disciplines, policy makers, health technology assessment agencies, administrators and patients.
- promote awareness of the value of guidelines in facilitating high quality, evidence-based health care
- disseminate, improve access to and reduce duplication by promoting awareness of existing guidelines and methodological resources
- improve guideline development and application in clinical and public health practice
- grow the science of knowledge translation, particularly guideline development, adaptation and implementation.

G-I-N supports evidence-based health care and improved health outcomes by supporting work to reduce inappropriate variation in practice throughout the world. It does this by addressing the following three aims:

1. to provide a network and partnerships for guideline-developing organisations, implementers, users (such as healthcare providers, healthcare policy makers and consumers), researchers, students and other stakeholders

2. to assist members reduce the duplication of effort and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of evidence-based guideline development, adaptation, dissemination and implementation appropriate to the healthcare settings within which members work
3. to promote best practice through the development of opportunities for learning and building capacity, and the establishment of high quality standards of guideline development, adaptation, dissemination and implementation.

4. Actions planned to meet our aims

4.1. Strategic use of the Guidelines International Network's conferences (Aims 1, 3)

G-I-N will use its conferences to provide opportunities for people around the globe to meet, learn and share information and expertise. The conferences focus on topical guideline issues in the context of healthcare delivery, for example, activities including implementation and quality improvement. They will also be a forum for effective networking among our members and partners.

G-I-N conferences will actively contribute to the sustainability of the Network and to building its capacity and membership.

The Conferences and Education Committee's role is to advise the Board on the location of the conference and the composition of the Conference Scientific Committee; as well as on ways to raise funds, evaluate conferences and explore opportunities to join with partners.

4.2. Development and increased use of strategic alliances and partnerships (Aim 1)

Partnerships with other organisations are actively encouraged. Different levels of partnerships and collaboration will be identified based on the aims and objectives of the organisations, as well as the type of activities performed. G-I-N encourages, and will invest in, the development of joint activities, including panel sessions at partners meetings and conferences that increase and promote knowledge about guidelines and evidence-based activities. Such activities will enable G-I-N to highlight its work as well as collaborative opportunities and links with the work of other groups in the fields of systematic review and health technology assessment.

4.3. Development of innovative networking opportunities and creation of mechanisms and tools to foster and share knowledge, skills and expertise (Aims 1, 2, 3)

In addition to its conferences the Network will provide other networking opportunities including the development of working groups and communities, the strategic use of its website and newsletter and forums, and the development and delivery of tutorials and training courses on guideline development, adaptation and implementation in diverse health care systems.

The Network may also develop fellowships to facilitate interactions and exchange of knowledge and to build capacity.

4.4. Development and support of the working groups and communities (Aims 2, 3)

The Network's working groups and communities of interest are project-based and have specific objectives. They were created to answer identified needs and challenges. By supporting its groups and developing new groups G-I-N will ensure that useful projects and deliverables are developed and that new knowledge is disseminated to our members and the guideline community at large.

4.5. Production of position papers and white papers on important issues; setting standards; development of new products/databases (Aims 2, 3)

G-I-N will produce policy statements and position papers on topical guideline issues. Topics will be chosen based on the current challenges encountered in the guideline world as well as on the needs and interests of our members.

G-I-N will also set high quality standards of guideline development, adaptation and implementation, through its working groups and communities of interest, which are disseminated and implemented worldwide. Setting such standards will further facilitate the reduction of duplication of effort and the exchange of documents and expertise. New products and activities will evolve from the needs of our members and working groups.

4.6. Implementation of a membership strategy to ensure global coverage (Aim 1)

G-I-N is an international organisation that aims to interact with every part of the globe in order to ensure wide dissemination of knowledge and exchange of expertise in the field of guideline development and implementation. To achieve this, G-I-N will develop a membership strategy that will enable GIN to reach out to areas of the world where membership is low and include the capacity to respond to the needs of these areas. The Membership Committee's role is to provide advice on areas where increased focus would be desirable as well as on a strategy for achieving this.

4.7. Increase the involvement of members and foster greater links between members (Aim 1)

The Network has both organisational and individual members. In recent years we have welcomed a growing number of individual members. G-I-N will review its policies and procedures to support the involvement of both types of members and the provision of benefits relevant to all members.

Furthermore, as G-I-N depends on voluntary support from members, ways to further engage and acknowledge the work of members (organisational and individual) will be explored.

Due to the variety of membership and the diverse input each member can offer, the Network will ensure that a policy on the declaration and management of real or potential conflicts of interests is developed by the Membership Committee.

The Membership Committee will perform an annual members' survey, as well as hold focus groups with members, to gain a better understanding of the expectations and suggestions of current and potential new members.

The Membership Committee's role is to advise the Board on these issues.

4.8. Development of a sustainable organisation (Aim 1)

In order to develop and properly support its activities and ensure the delivery of promised deliverables, the Network needs to ensure that it remains sustainable.

To ensure sustainability in the long term it is essential that G-I-N further increase its membership and continue to provide members with value for money in its activities and deliverables.

Sustainability needs to be achieved by ensuring compliance with Scottish Charity regulations. To ensure this, standing operating procedures have been developed and maintained. There also needs to be ongoing maintenance and development of the GIN Website and other forms of communication, such as the enGINE newsletter. The Finances and Risks Committee's role is to advise the Board on these issues.

4.9. Development of a website strategy (Aim 3)

The Network considers its website to be an important tool for communicating the benefits, added value and products of G-I-N - both with current members and with potential new members and stakeholders.

G-I-N's website was re-designed during 2009. As an international organisation, the Network relies heavily on communication via email and its website to exchange information with members and to pursue its work. Hence, the use of the website, which allows access to many useful resources and information from across the world, will be maintained and encouraged.

While the website is an essential vehicle for communicating with existing and potential new members, it is not yet used to its full capacity and investment will be made to attract more traffic. A website strategy will be developed and implemented by the Membership Committee. Such a strategy will further grow the influence of the Network, increase opportunities for networking and sharing of expertise, and broaden knowledge about the G-I-N and its activities.

5. Risks and opportunities for the Network

5.1. Opportunities

G-I-N is the first international organisation to be established to focus on guidelines. It plays a leadership role internationally and is a valued source of knowledge and information in the guideline and knowledge transfer arena.

The flexibility of the Network's structure allows for its development and that of its working groups in areas of interest for current and future members.

Opportunities for G-I-N include:

- Promoting membership during its annual meeting and conference to the guideline community at large
- Using information technology to allow those who cannot attend conferences to benefit from hearing the presentations
- Undertaking outreach activities in many regions of the World: North America, South America, Africa, Asia
- Forming partnerships with strategic organisations (e.g. HTAi, Cochrane) and potential funders (WHO, European Commission, Canadian Institutes of Health Research)
- Developing and delivering training courses on guideline development, adaptation, dissemination and implementation
- Developing new products, such as a registry of evidence summaries database, position papers and other publications to reduce duplication of effort in the field and increased cooperation with other organisations
- Setting international standards for developing high quality guidelines
- Promoting the use of existing tools such as the AGREE II Instrument and the ADAPTE method
- Becoming an international leader in the area of patient and public involvement

- Increasing and recognising the involvement of members who are willing to invest more time into the activities of G-I-N and in the development of strategies, tools and resources for members
- Responding to the needs of the membership.

5.2. Risks

Key current net risks identified in the Risk Register include:

- Limited staff resources and dependence on voluntary time investment by Board and working group members to develop plans and undertake activities
- Potential perception of G-I-N as irrelevant, with other organisations perceived as more attractive
- Slow speed of development of products and guidance identified by the membership as helpful (this may be due to lack of resources, procedural delays, as well as the undertaking of a too large number of activities)
- Potential for impact on membership and attendance at conferences due to the global financial crisis

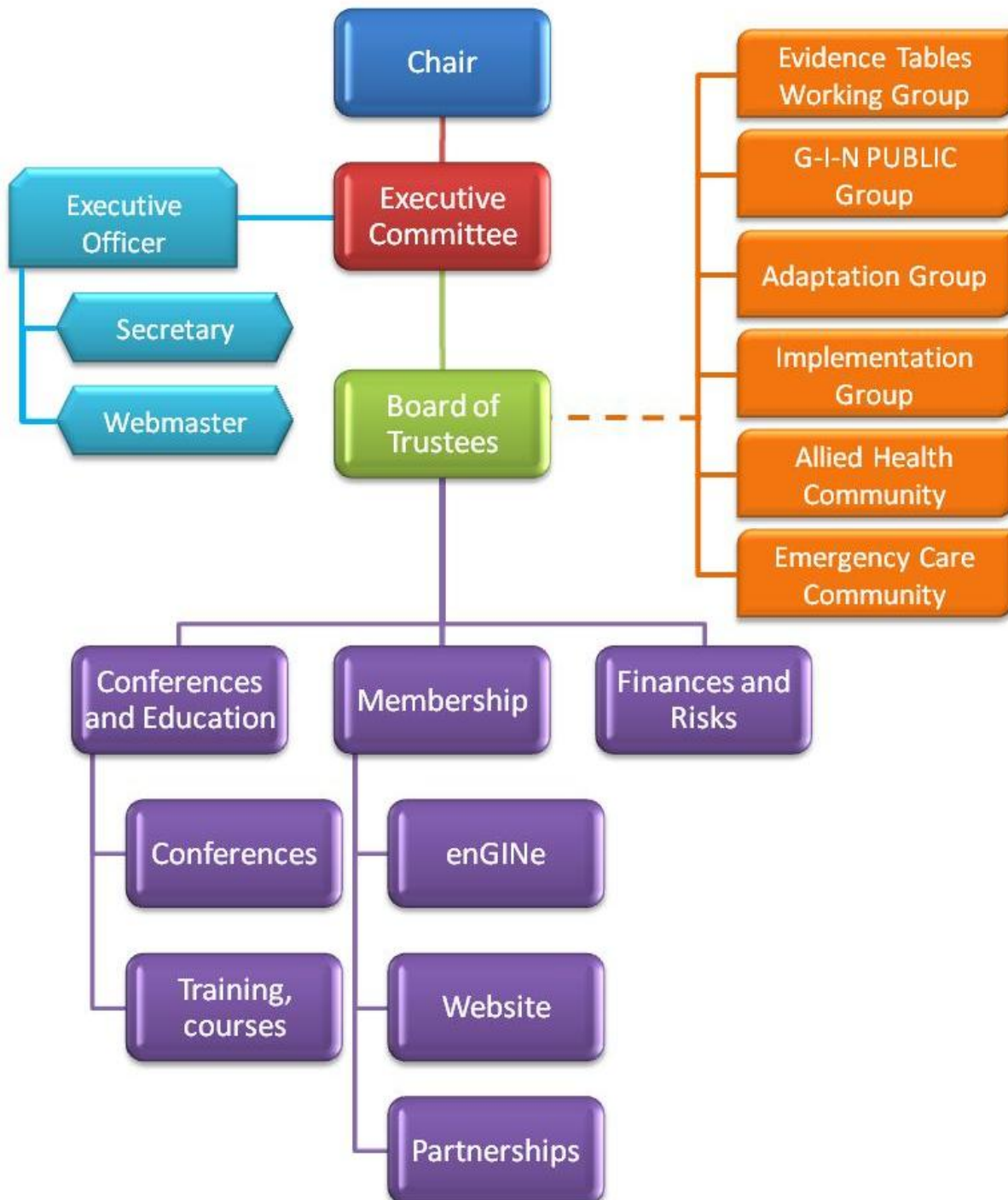
6. Critical success factors over the next three years

- Increasing membership in under-represented regions and retaining the membership of major guideline developing organisations around the world
- Ensuring continued financial sustainability
- Developing the G-I-N guideline assessment process as an imprimatur of guideline quality, akin to that of Cochrane in relation to systematic literature reviews
- Production of position papers and standards
- Development of tools (registry of evidence summaries, toolkit for allied health involvement in guidelines and for patient involvement in guidelines)
- Development and running of training courses (including basic online courses) for guideline developers, adaptors and implementers.

7. Acknowledgements

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8. Mapping of the Network



Legend:

Orange boxes on the right of the chart represent the working groups and communities of G-I-N. These groups are usually project based, they evolve throughout the year.

Purple boxes represent the standing subcommittees of the Board; they are part of the governance of the Network.