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Transnational collaboration on guideline development: the way forward!

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Background: CPGs are an important tool to enhance the quality of care. However, similar strategies are undertaken to achieve similar goals. CoCanCPG, as a transnational collaboration, aims to reduce duplication of effort. To put collaboration in practice, several joint activities between guideline developing organizations have been set up. This lecture reports on the exploration of a collaboration between institutes from Belgium (KCE) and The Netherlands (ACCC), with the gastric carcinoma guideline chosen as a case study.

Purpose: To improve guideline development, gain trust and build a basis for sustainable collaboration.

Methods: A stepwise approach is undertaken to retrospectively compare the guideline development procedures and outputs.

1. Comparison of methodologies
2. Gastric carcinoma CPG chosen as case study
3. Comparison of key questions
4. Comparison of syntaxes used
5. Comparison of evidence tables
6. Comparison of recommendations
7. Inquire professionals opinion on comparison study

Results: The comparison of the guideline developing methodologies revealed an extensive coherence; no barriers for collaboration were detected. The case study was performed on two key questions of the gastric carcinoma guideline. The search selection criteria only differed on timeframe and study type. Explanations for the differences in articles synthesized in the evidence tables could be found in the sensitivity or specificity of the search. The vast majority of the recommendations were similar or highly comparable.

Discussion: The case study provided insight in each other's guideline development procedures. Both guideline development protocols were adjusted based on experiences from the other partner. This, combined with the outcome of the study, created a solid basis for future joint activities. All CoCanCPG joint activities will be evaluated during the summer of 2009, the results of these surveys will be part of the CoCanCPG vision for sustainable