



Challenges to developing guidelines for a public dental service



C Parnell, P James, H Whelton
Oral Health Services Research Centre, Cork, Ireland



Irish Context

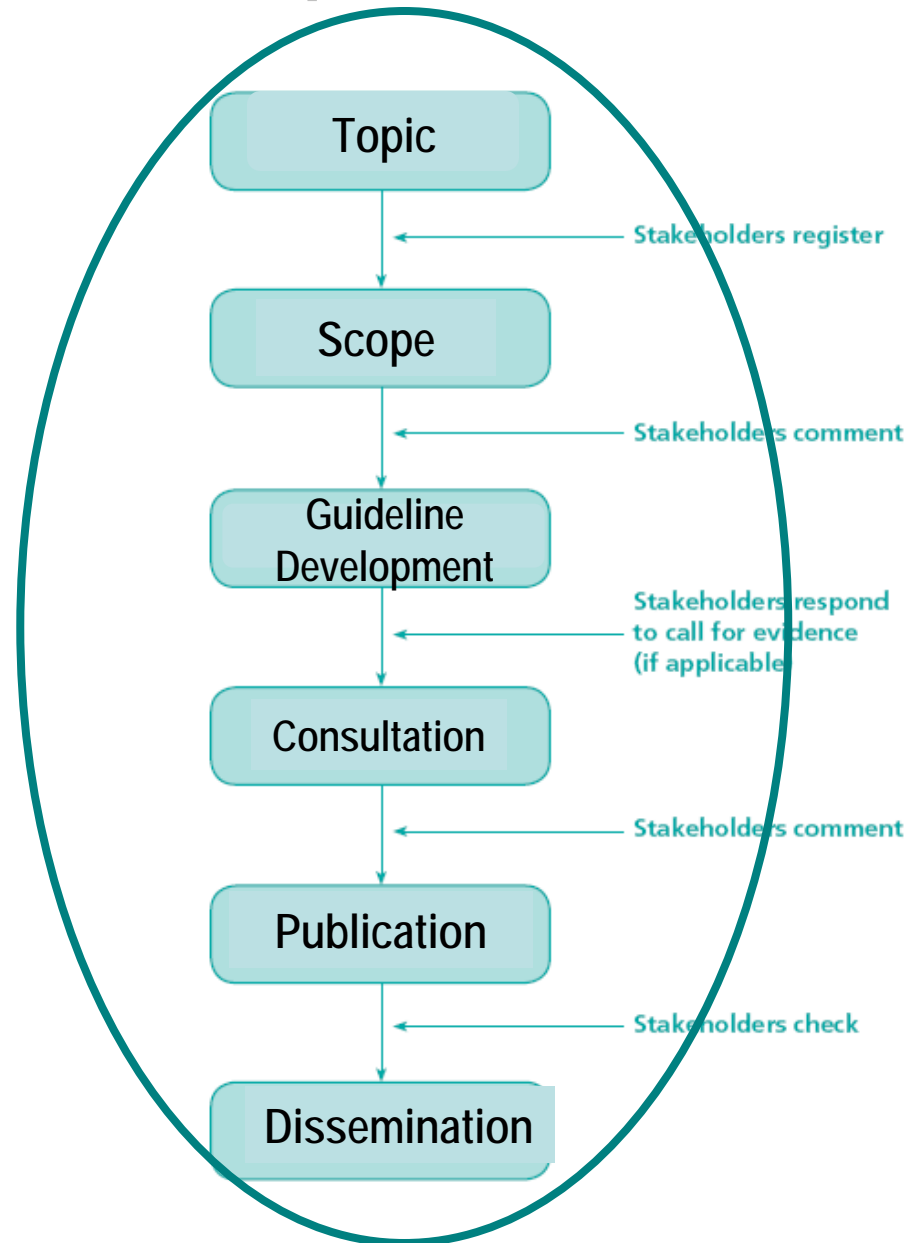


- ◆ Oral Health targets for children not met
 - Variation in service delivery between dental service delivery areas
- ◆ Several DoH reports calling for guidelines for children's dental services



Guideline Development

- ◆ Department of Health
 - Policy
 - Priorities
- ◆ Health Service Quality Initiatives
- ◆ Professional Organisations





Contextual challenge to guideline development

- ◆ Department of Health
 - Policy
 - Priorities
- ◆ Health Service Quality Initiatives
- ◆ Professional Organisations



- ◆ Lack of oral health leadership in DoH or Health Service Executive
- ◆ No culture of guideline development

“Improving quality in the health system requires implementation of internationally-recognised, evidence-based guidelines...”

Department of Health, 2001

National funding agency for health research



Strategic Health Research and
Development Research Award



Irish Oral Health Services Guideline Initiative



- ◆ Oral Health Services Research Centre
 - Establish centre for systematic reviewing and guideline development
- ◆ Collaboration with
 - UK Cochrane Centre
 - Public dental service



Irish Oral Health Services Guideline Initiative

- ◆ Priority topics for guideline development:
 - Clinical practice (core procedures)
 - Service operational issues



Guideline Development Process

- ◆ AGREE Principles
- ◆ NICE & SIGN technical manuals



Process challenges to guideline development



Lack of experience

- ◆ Researchers
- ◆ GDG members
- ◆ Stakeholders
 - Unrealistic expectations
 - ◆ Time required
 - ◆ Evidence



Lesson

- ◆ Guideline Development will take longer
- ◆ Contact your Cochrane Group early in the process!
- ◆ Benefits to all involved
- ◆ Enthusiasm is important!

Lack of experience

Feedback

- Obtaining feedback
- Preference for verbal feedback

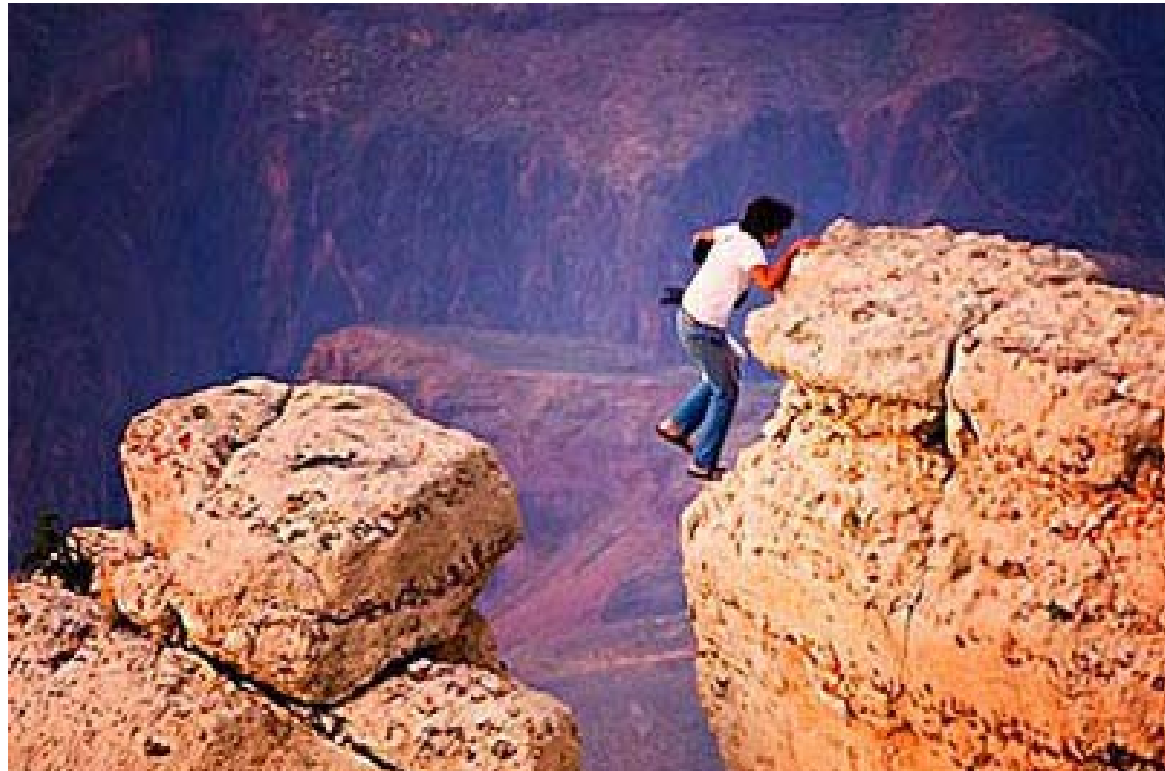


Lesson

- ◆ Use the telephone for GDG feedback
- ◆ Keep documentation for GDG and stakeholders as short as possible
- ◆ It takes time to establish your credentials as a guideline developer



Gulf between evidence and current practice





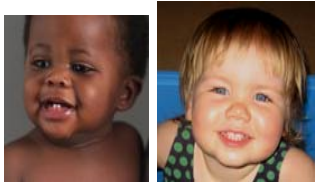
STRATEGIES TO PREVENT DENTAL CARIES IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Guidance on identifying high caries risk children and developing
preventive strategies for high caries risk children in Ireland



Gulf between evidence and current practice

Evidence



6 mths



7-8 yrs



Current practice

Implementation challenges

Identification of high caries risk children	Grade of recommendation
Public health nurses should have training in the identification of high caries risk children	D
An oral assessment should be incorporated into each child's developmental visit...	D

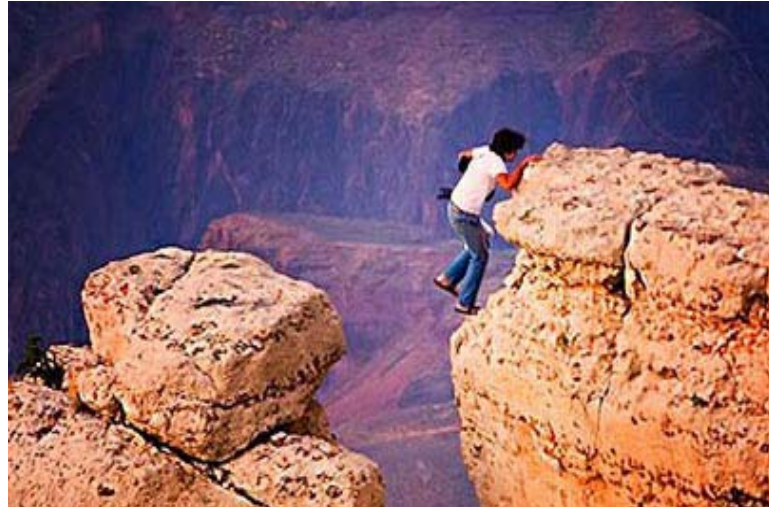
Implementation challenges

Identification of high caries risk children

- ◆ No oral health component in Public Health Nurse (PHN) university course
- ◆ Limited and outdated training in oral health for PHNs in post

into each child's developmental visit...

Gulf between evidence and practice



Lesson

- ◆ Stick with the evidence – change the system!
- ◆ Guideline becomes a *resource* for change rather than the instrument of change
- ◆ Enthusiasm is even more important!

Positive Impacts

- ◆ Raised profile of evidence-based practice
- ◆ Foundation for pilot caries prevention programme
- ◆ Contributed to successful grant application (addressing knowledge gaps)



In Conclusion



Thank you!

