

American Academy of Orthotists & Prosthetists (AAOP)  
**Process for Clinical Practice Guideline  
Endorsement**



*Professionals Advancing Care through Knowledge*

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**Process for Clinical Practice Guideline  
Endorsement**

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Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs) are systematically developed statements that can help clinicians decide on the best care for their patients. It must be emphasized that CPGs should never substitute for the clinician's knowledge of patient specific presentations, diagnoses, and treatment.

CPGs must be created and evaluated in a rigorous, transparent manner in order to earn the confidence of the profession and the public. The Academy aims to develop and endorse high-quality guidelines to facilitate evidence-based practice in orthotics and prosthetics.

**To request Academy endorsement of an existing CPG, the following materials should be submitted to the SSPC:**

- A list of guideline authors, their affiliations, and any potential conflicts of interest.
- The CPG and any associated appendices. The CPG will ideally include the following:
  - Documented key words and search engines used to identify associated systematic review(s) to facilitate reproducibility.
  - Assessment of quality of evidence for each CPG (preferably using the Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development and Evaluation (GRADE) system.
- The systematic review(s) used in the creation of the CPG as PDF files.

**Following submission of the aforementioned materials, the following process will be used to assess the suitability of the CPG:**

1. The SSPC will appoint a facilitator and provide suggestions for panel members. The facilitator will then convene the review panel to assess the CPG.
  - a. The panel facilitator will be a member of the SSPC with no conflict of interest.
  - b. This panel will consist of 4-7 people, including the facilitator. Panel members should not have a conflict of interest nor should they be directly connected to CPG author(s).
  - c. The panel will optimally be comprised of interdisciplinary subject matter experts, suggested as follows: 1-3 prosthetist-orthotists, 1-2 researchers, 1 physician and/or 1 therapist.
2. Each panel member will independently review the CPG.
  - a. The Appraisal of Guidelines for Research & Evaluation Instrument (AGREE II) instrument will be used to assess the CPG and facilitate panel discussion
  - b. The Panel Facilitator will set up a coordinated group appraisal via ([www.agreetrust.org](http://www.agreetrust.org))<sup>1</sup>
  - c. Panel members should complete independent reviews (scores and comments) via the My Agree Plus platform (<https://www.agreetrust.org/my-agree/>) .
3. The panel will meet in person or via conference call to discuss their reviews and decide on a recommendation for the Academy Board of Directors (BOD) to consider. If pre-established, a domain score threshold and/or domain prioritization will be considered during discussions.
4. The facilitator will author a report to communicate the panel's recommendation to the Academy BOD. The report will detail the AGREE II domain percentages to provide perspective to the recommendation. The report will also include pertinent comments and suggestions for the BOD's and authors' edification. Additional information regarding the details of the assessment will be provided to the BOD upon request.

Note: Approximately two months should be allowed to complete this process.

**The Academy BOD will review the panel’s recommendation and make one of the following decisions:**

- Endorse
- Endorse, with revisions or amendments
- Do not endorse, but provide an affirmation of value of the topic area
- Do not endorse at this time

Note: Between one-to-two months should be allowed for BOD review and final decision.

**A representative from the Academy BOD will share the final decision and reviewer comments with the CPG author(s).**

- Endorsed CPGs will be disseminated to membership through publication on the Academy website.
- CPGs that require revision will be returned to the authors, and the authors will have the opportunity to address reviewer comments. Revised CPGs will need to be resubmitted to the Academy for a additional review prior to endorsement.

**If the Academy requests assessment of an existing CPG that the authors have not specifically submitted to the Academy for endorsement, the same process for assessment will be utilized minus the need for author involvement.**

**Academy-endorsed CPGs will be reviewed by the SSPC no less frequently than every 5 years.**

#### **References:**

1. Brouwers MC, Kho ME, Browman GP, et al. “The Appraisal of Guidelines for Research & Evaluation II – the AGREE II instrument; Advancing guideline development, reporting and evaluation in healthcare.” CMAJ 2010;182LE839-842; Updated December, 2017 [<https://www.agreetrust.org/>].