ESCMID manual for clinical practice guidelines and other guidance documents

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Publication  
Dissemination  
Updating  
Translating published guidance into languages other than English
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AD</td>
<td>Advisory Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGREE</td>
<td>Appraisal of Guidelines Research and Evaluation Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGI</td>
<td>Clinical Guideline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGI-SC</td>
<td>Clinical Guideline SubCommittee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>Clinical Microbiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMI</td>
<td>Clinical Microbiology and Infection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoI</td>
<td>Conflict of interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPG</td>
<td>Clinical Practice Guideline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG</td>
<td>Drafting Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoI</td>
<td>Declaration of Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>ESCMID Executive Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIC</td>
<td>Editor In Chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCMID</td>
<td>European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD</td>
<td>Guideline Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GO</td>
<td>Guideline Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS</td>
<td>Guidelines Subcommittee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADE</td>
<td>Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IC</td>
<td>Infection Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICMJE</td>
<td>International Committee of Medical Journal Editors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Infectious Disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAM</td>
<td>National Academy of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICE</td>
<td>National Institute for health and Care Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCP</td>
<td>Public Consultation Procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PICO</td>
<td>Population, Intervention, Control, Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Subcommittee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>Study Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOP</td>
<td>Standard Operating Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>To Be Determined</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Introduction and purpose

The European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ESCMID) actively supports the publication of high-quality evidence-based guidance documents to support best practice in the diagnosis and management of infectious diseases (ID).

Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs) have been defined as systematically developed statements to assist practitioner and patient decisions about appropriate healthcare management for specific clinical circumstances (National Academy of Medicine - NAM). Evidence-based medicine is a coherent approach to clinical decision making and is dependent on the integration of best evidence and clinical expertise which incorporates group values and patient preferences. (ref) Well-developed guidelines have the potential to improve the appropriateness and quality of patient care, lead to better clinical outcomes and improve the cost effectiveness of management. Furthermore, they assist in identifying areas requiring further research, and also serve as an educational tool. The development of these guidelines is intended to be evidence-based, systematic and transparent in order to fulfill these objectives.

1.1 Scope of guidance

ESCMID supports development and maintenance of CPGs and other guidance documents that are used for the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of infectious diseases.

1.2 Types of guidance documents by rigour of development


The following table summarizes major characteristics.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Definition/Scope</th>
<th>Preferred development methods</th>
<th>Proponents and drafting group composition</th>
<th>ESCMID Officer(s) to contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESCMID clinical practice guidelines*</td>
<td>Detailed course of action or clinical algorithms in a clinical area</td>
<td>Evidence-based recommendations via the GRADE approach, AGREE II tool</td>
<td>Proposed by EC, Guidelines subcommittee, Study groups Multidisciplinary composition (at least ID and CM)</td>
<td>Medical Guidelines Director and Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCMID consensus document</td>
<td>General guidance, particularly in areas in which a body of scientific evidence is available, but controversy exists</td>
<td>Consensus development method</td>
<td>Depending on scope, ESCMID Study Groups officially involved</td>
<td>Medical Guidelines Director and Officer, Publication Officer, Scientific Affairs Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Label</td>
<td>Definition/Scope</td>
<td>Preferred development methods</td>
<td>Proponents and drafting group composition</td>
<td>ESCMID Officer(s) to contact</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCMID state-of-the-science document</td>
<td>Summary of evidence and recommendation of future directions for research</td>
<td>Consensus development method</td>
<td>Depending on scope, ESCMID Study Groups officially involved</td>
<td>Medical Guidelines Director and Officer, Publication Officer, Scientific Affairs Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCMID position paper</td>
<td>Opinion about an issue or a course of action, with sound supporting arguments</td>
<td>Delphi/RAND, NGT, Consensus development method</td>
<td>Depending on scope, ESCMID Study Groups officially involved</td>
<td>Medical Guidelines Director and Officer, Publication officer, Scientific Affairs Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCMID White papers</td>
<td>Policy documents to launch debate</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>ESCMID EC</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Guideline Director (GD), Guideline Subcommittee (GS) and Guideline Officer (GO) have to be notified regarding position papers. Other forms of summary documents (e.g. reviews) will not be
officially endorsed or managed by the ESCMID Executive Committee (EC), but should be referred to the ESCMID Scientific Affairs Officer for final approval.

1.3 Aims of this document

Most of this document will focus on clinical practice guidelines, but the same principles and processes will apply to other types of ESCMID guidance documents, with any differences arising only from the methodology and rigour of development.

The main aims of this document are:

(1) To underscore the ESCMID principles in developing guidance documents.

(2) To provide guidance on the guideline development process, including when operating with other professional Societies.

(3) To highlight differences between clinical practice guidelines and other types of guidance

It is strongly suggested that ESCMID members participating to the development of guidance documents familiarize themselves with the details in this document.

2 ESCMID definitions

2.1 Types of guidance documents

- **ESCMID guidance documents:** guidance document developed by ESCMID only, usually through one or more of its Study Groups.

- **ESCMID co-lead guidance documents:** ESCMID develops a joint Clinical Guideline (CG) with one or more other Scientific association. In this co-leadership, the development process should be defined and agreed from the CG inception, with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) from the onset to be signed by the ESCMID GO and President. This form of collaboration requires co-chairs from each organization and an equal representation on the panel.

- **ESCMID cooperative guidance documents:** in this form of association ESCMID contributes to CG developed by a Scientific society partner. The leadership is provided by the partner. In this situation, ESCMID requests to delegate one or more representatives in the panel. The decision of cooperation will be taken by the ESCMID EC after the GO and GD have checked the details of the operating procedures for the development of CG of the proposing Society or stakeholder.
2.2 Stakeholder

An individual, group or an organization that has an interest in the content and the outcome of the guidance document. This may include experts, health care providers, professional societies and colleges, research institutions, policy makers, patients, and general population (not included in NICE).

2.3 Internal review

Peer review of a guidance document conducted by ESCMID subcommittee or by selected ESCMID advisors, not involved in the production of the guidance document. It is intended to ensure the guidance document validity.

2.4 External review

Review of a guidance document conducted by experts fully independent from the development of the guidance document and by registered stakeholders. This last review is only applicable for Clinical Guidelines developed or co-lead by ESCMID.

2.5 Public Consultation Procedure (PCP)

Important step of the endorsement phase. If applicable, the approved draft of the guidance document is made available to all ESCMID members for comments (see chapter 11.4).

3 General principles of guideline development

Quality of CPG (and of other guidance documents) is paramount to their credibility and implementation by the intended users. To ensure that ESCMID guidance documents are of an appropriate quality, ESCMID supports the principles detailed in the Appraisal of Guidelines Research and Evaluation Collaboration (AGREE II) self-assessment tool (https://www.agreetrust.org). The AGREE instrument employs 6 domains of quality:

1. Scope and purpose.
2. Stakeholder involvement.
3. Rigour of development.
4. Clarity and presentation.
5. Applicability.

In the publication of the guidance document, the methods part shall refer to the AGREE II criteria and shall specify that they have been applied for data collection, DG assembly, assessment of author conflicts and applicability of the guidance document. The quality of the evidence should be categorized and the strength of the recommendations graded (Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development and Evaluation - GRADE System; http://www.gradeworkinggroup.org, [1]). Where the evidence/recommendations are weak this should be stated and recommendations for future research included.

4  Roles and responsibilities for development of guidance documents (ESCMID guidelines functional chart)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Reward/compensation (if any)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represents ESCMID in agreements with other Societies</td>
<td>ESCMID President and Guideline Officer</td>
<td>Voluntary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approves the guidelines prioritization and collaborative projects with other professional Societies and stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocates budget to guidance documents projects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs the memorandum of understanding for cooperative projects with other Societies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directs and oversees guidelines programme</td>
<td>Guideline Officer</td>
<td>Voluntary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participates to EC meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure budget for guidelines activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversees prioritization of GL topics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaise between the EC and the GL Director and Guideline Subcommittee</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive Office</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinates communication.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receives proposals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain a log of activities, minutes of meetings.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepares reports.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinates the public consultation procedure.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizes the prioritization exercise.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organises conference calls, teleconferences, and face to face meetings, including at ECCMID.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains log of activities, minutes of meetings.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizes the prioritization exercise.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizes training course.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluates financial issues on the guidance document portfolio.</td>
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</table>

| Scientific assistant (full time)  |
| Assistant (half-time)  |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinical Guidelines Director</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oversees ESCMID’s guidelines portfolio and the development/updating of guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess preliminary proposals in collaboration with the ESCMID Officer .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess CoI of drafting groups in collaboration with the ESCMID Officer .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice drafting groups on methodology and other issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan and oversees training courses on GL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guideline Director</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guideline Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guideline Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scientific assistant (full time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant (half-time)</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voluntary</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>plus Education Officer (for educational activities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plus Budget Officer (for budget issues)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voluntary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>plus Education Officer (for educational activities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plus Budget Officer (for budget issues)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The term of office is two years with a maximum duration of eight years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The term of office is two years with a maximum duration of eight years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The term of office is two years with a maximum duration of eight years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Manages prioritization exercise (every two years).
Issues SOPs in collaboration with the ESCMID Officer.

Represents in collaboration with the ESCMID Officer ESCMID’s interests in relation to medical guidance documents to external stakeholder.

Oversee guidelines Advisory Group (AG), DGs and GS.
Coordinate prioritization exercise (every two years).

### Guidelines Subcommittee

The GS supports the Guidelines Director in shaping and running the society’s guidance documents programme.

Cooperates and assists GL Director in:
- **Advice on call for guidelines/setting priorities.**
- **Review of new proposals.**
- **Constant evaluation of the need of update of existing GL.**
- **Advice on the composition of the GL drafting groups.**
- **Review of Cols.**
- **Protocol review at the proposal stage.**
- **Review of manuscript before it enters the public consultation.**
- **Prepares/updates Standard Operating Procedures and forms.**

The GS is chaired by the Guidelines Director and has up to 10 members including the Guideline Director.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Six full ESCMID members (2 ID, 2 CM, 1 expert in EBM/ SR/ GRADE methodology, 1 IC)</td>
<td>Free participation to ECCMID Free participation to one ESCMID workshop per year Can participate to one GL project per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least one full experience in a guideline development</td>
<td>Selected by the GD and GO and approved by EC after an open call The term of office is four years with the option to extend for a further two years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Officer, Past President/Communications Officer and one representative of the *Clinical Microbiology and Infection (CMI)* editorial board. The inclusion of a guideline’s methodologist is highly recommended. The GS convenes once per year during ECCMID. GS members must declare their Conflicts of Interest (CoI) and these are assessed under the same conditions as guideline DG members. GS members have to get the prior approval of the Guidelines Director, if they would like to participate in a specific guidance document DG.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guideline Advisory Board</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advises the Director and Subcommittee on topics, proposals, panel, and COIs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodologist can advise on project quality and be called to participate to guidance documents projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The members are proposed by the ESCMID Subcommittee involved, the GL Subcommittee and the ESCMID EC for 4 years renewable for other 4 years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guidelines Evidence Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 full senior ESCMID members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education committee (1).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Affairs committee (1).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Affairs committee (1).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>CMI</em> Editorial Board (1).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected experts in CM, ID, and IC (6).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

with approval from the EC.
Performs abstract selection, full-text selection, data extraction and quality of evidence assessment in individual guideline projects.
To be included in a guideline development process need to complete the ESCMID training for guidelines development (once a year, free for ESCMID members).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20 full ESCMID members</th>
<th>20 full ESCMID members</th>
<th>ECCMID fee waiver (after a successful completion of a guideline data extraction)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junior professionals with a basic training in evidence based medicine</td>
<td>Junior professionals with a basic training in evidence based medicine</td>
<td>20 full ESCMID members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No more than 1 project per year each</td>
<td>No more than 1 project per year each</td>
<td>20 full ESCMID members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chair of the drafting group

The proponent of a guideline project can apply to be chair or proposed another ESCMID member. Alternatively the ESCMID Guidelines Director will appoint the DG chair who will also be approved by the EC.
The minimum requirement for all panel members (including the chair) is to complete the online McMaster training on the GRADE approach (8 videos) available to ESCMID members in ESCMID website.

Coordinates guideline projects.
Communicate with GL director.
Oversees CoIs of panel members.
Develop protocol for guidelines development.
Decides on PICOs and other questions.
Advice the Guidelines Evidence Group members on keywords and other issues.
Manages Evidence-to-Decision process.
Oversees publication of guidelines (including communication with CMI EIC).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chair of the GL</th>
<th>Chair of the GL</th>
<th>Voluntary</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Voluntary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Voluntary
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drafting group members</th>
<th>Usually 9-15 ESCMID members, selected for their expertise.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participate in the development of the guidance documents.</td>
<td>The Chair proposes 2-4 members without COI (see details in the dedicated section); 2-4 members without COI are suggested by the GL Subcommittee and the ESCMID EC; 2 members are selected by the GL Subcommittee and approved by the EC after open call.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviews protocol for guideline project.</td>
<td>The minimum requirement for all panel members is to complete the online McMaster training on the GRADE approach (8 videos) available to ESCMID members in ESCMID website).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develops PICO$s$ and their decisions related to the project.</td>
<td>Members of other scientific societies and patients representative need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacts with the evidence-based working group.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applies the evidence-to-recommendation framework to issue specific recommendations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviews the manuscript and takes responsibility for its content.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to fulfill the same rules for SOP of the ESCMID members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 Proposal and prioritization of topics for clinical practice guidelines

5.1 Purpose of prioritization
ESCMID will develop and update a list of topics, within the field of infectious diseases (ID), clinical microbiology (CM), and infection control (IC), where guidance is needed, with a global perspective and transparent criteria. The aim is to avoid duplication of efforts and join forces with major relevant societies and stakeholders. These topics will form the basis for open calls for project proposals, which will finally lead to the ESCMID endorsement funding of selected guidance document projects.

Setting priorities is an essential component of developing CPGs in the field of healthcare. This process ensures that resources and attention are devoted to those areas in which clinical recommendations will provide the greatest benefit to patients, clinicians, and policy makers.

The process of identification, prioritisation and selection of topics for new ESCMID guidance documents, including external consultation with stakeholders, as well as the process of issuing an open call for project proposals for guidance document development, their assessment, selection, and approval for funding are described in the ESCMID operating procedure “Prioritization of topics for Clinical Practice Guidelines”

5.2 Process of prioritization of topics
The process of prioritization of topics for guidance documents will be repeated at alternate calendar years and will be used to plan activities in the following years.

5.2.1 Identification and invitation of stakeholders
The ESCMID Guideline Director, in collaboration with the ESCMID Guidelines Officer and supported by the ESCMID GS, will identify a comprehensive, global list of relevant Societies and stakeholders in the field of ID, CM, and IC. The ESCMID Executive Office will generate and keep a dedicated database including all stakeholders contacts and keep a log of answers and communication.

5.2.2 Submission of topic proposals by the stakeholders
The ESCMID Guideline Director or designee will contact the representatives of relevant international Societies and stakeholders to suggest high priority topics for CPGs in the field of ID, CM, and IC.

The ESCMID Executive Office will support in the exchanges with the stakeholder representatives and will compile tables with all the proposed topics.
The process will be performed according to the Delphi technique. In the first round, the representatives will be asked to propose a list of topics (up to three for each representative). The ESCMID Guideline Director or designee will review the list of topics, make comments and propose harmonization (i.e. unification of similar topics). In the second round, the full list of topics, including the proposals by the ESCMID Guideline Director, will be shared with the stakeholder representatives asking for comments, including advice on the prioritization. Following the second round, the ESCMID Guideline Director or designee will resolve all the comments to generate a quasi-final list of topics. In the third round, this list will be shared with the stakeholder representatives for final comments and endorsement.

5.2.3 Prioritization of the topics

Each topic will be assessed according to a pre-established list of criteria (below). For each criterion, the ESCMID Guideline Director, in collaboration with the ESCMID Guidelines Officer and supported by the ESCMID GS, will assign a mark between one and nine, with one being the lowest and nine the highest evaluation. The arithmetic mean of all marks will be calculated and will represent the final evaluation mark of each topic; major criteria will have twice the weight of minor ones for this purpose.

For each criterion, the median score across all participating stakeholders will be calculated. To generate a final score, scores of each criteria will be added up (for minor criteria, scores will be weighted 0.5 of the original score).

A priority list will be compiled including all the topics, ordered according to their final evaluation mark.

The list of criteria is the following:

Major criteria:

- Public health importance (the magnitude of the problem in terms of disease or condition burden or prevalence);
- Guidance document addresses an unmet need;
- Level of contribution towards achieving one or more of the ESCMID targets, specified in the ESCMID bylaws;
- Availability of evidence to support assessment of the topic (e.g. primary studies, systematic reviews, pooling studies, survey data, published in peer-reviewed journals as well as unpublished reports and other evidence from the grey literature);
● Suitability of ESCMID to produce the guidance document (i.e. does the topic fall under the remit of ESCMID).

Minor criteria:

● Potential need for development of rapid or interim guidance document, or updating existing guidance document, resulting from a public health emergency (e.g. disease outbreak);
● Commitments to update existing guidance document;
● Ongoing and/or planned guideline development work of other societies/scientific groups that might overlap.

5.2.4 Approval of the priority list

The ESCMID Executive Office will transmit the priority list of topics to the ESCMID Guideline Director and Guideline Officer.

The Guidelines Director and Guidelines Officer provide comments to the priority list based on the pipeline of guidance document from other Societies and stakeholders, ESCMID strategy plan, and budget.

The ESCMID EC will evaluate and approve the priority list. Comments and proposed modifications will be sent back to the Guidelines Director.

5.2.5 Publication of the priority list

The ESCMID Guideline Director or designee and the ESCMID EC will diffuse the approved priority list through publication in peer-reviewed journals (i.e. Clinical Microbiology and Infection) or other publications as needed.

The ESCMID Executive Office will advertise the publication of the priority list through ESCMID channels (i.e. website, newsletter, social media).

5.3 Project proposals and their selection

5.3.1 Call for project proposals for guideline development

An open call for project proposals for guidance document development will be issued yearly or every other year, based on the number of guidance documents prioritized. The scope of the call will be the guidance document topics identified as “top priority” in the priority list during the latest prioritization exercise.

The ESCMID Executive Office will advertise the opening of the call for proposals through ESCMID channels (i.e. website, newsletter, social media).
The call will be open to all ESCMID study groups. Individual ESCMID members can present proposals for guidance documents; they are, however, strongly encouraged to contact relevant study groups for joined proposals. The submission will be performed through an online platform using a pre-specified form, designed according to the AGREE-II items of quality guidance documents. The call will be open for a total duration of approximately two months.

5.3.2 Assessment and selection of projects

After the closure of the call, the ESCMID Executive Office will collate and transfer all the project proposals which meet the requirements to the ESCMID Guideline Director and ESCMID Guideline Officer.

The ESCMID Guideline Director and the ESCMID Guideline Officer, supported by the ESCMID GS, will assess the guidance documents project proposals and propose those with sufficient quality.

5.3.3 Approval of funding of selected project proposals

The ESCMID Guideline Director and Guideline Officer will transmit the list of selected guidance documents project proposals to the ESCMID EC.

The ESCMID EC will evaluate and approve the endorsement and funding of the selected guidance documents project proposals. Comments and proposed modifications will be sent back to the Guidelines Director.

5.4 Development of guidelines jointly with other organizations

It is accepted that guidance document may be jointly produced in cooperation with other societies or organizations. Under such circumstances the DG chair will usually be identified by the lead organization. Each organization must have representation on the DG panel and share costs associated with the development of the guidance document, generally in proportion to the number of members. All requests should be submitted to the ESCMID Guidelines Director for assessment.

Proposals for publication should also be agreed in advance. The final document should be reviewed by all participating societies/organizations before publication and must undergo internal and public review through ESCMID; a public review period through other participating societies/organizations is desirable and should be discussed with the publication plan. Consideration should be given to submission of the final document to *Clinical Microbiology and Infection* (CMI). When it is agreed that the full report is to be published in a journal other than CMI, consideration should be given to
publishing a Short Report or a Summary Document (as a co-publication) in *CMI* subject to the permission of the publishing journal and agreement by the Editor-in-Chief of *CMI*. It is a prerequisite of a collaborative guidance document that the final published document is posted on the ESCMID website and be freely available.

### 5.5 Panel composition

- The ESCMID Guidelines Director will evaluate the declared CoI of the DG chair.
- The ESCMID Guidelines Director suggests the DG chair to the EC for approval.
- The approved DG chair together with the ESCMID Guidelines Director and supported by the GS will agree on the guideline panel (= DG members), their acceptance based on the declaration of CoI, the guideline timelines and estimated budget. Once agreed, the Guidelines Director informs the EC before the panel begins with its work.

Guideline panel composition must respect the following rules:

- Panel membership officially starts only after review and approval of the declaration of CoI by the ESCMID Guidelines Director.
- The panel should be mixed in composition: 1/3 suggested by the group leading, 1/3 by the EC, GL Director, and GL Committee, and 1/3 by open call not limited to ESCMID members.
- The open call for inclusion would consider the following criteria to select and appoint the three to five members based on the following criteria:
  - Free from financial CoI (see section 6).
  - Best curriculum vitae on the topic for which CPG is being developed (applicants will need to indicate their 10 best papers on the topic).
  - Experience in GL development and GRADE method (preferable, but not mandatory).
- In case of candidates with similar evaluation among the above criteria, further elements for consideration will be given to gender and country balance, and being an ESCMID member.
- The panel should consist of nine to 15 members from different (predominantly European) countries.
- The DG should include both specialists in the narrow field under discussion, and people with a wider perspective.
- The chair and the members of the panel should be drawn from the membership of the Society whenever possible.
• The participation of a least one member or an advisor proficient in the methodology of systematic reviews is strongly recommended.

• When assembling the DG, the balance in terms of gender and country of origin should be sought. Guidance on this issue is provided by the ESCMID Parity Commission.

• It is strongly advised to include a representative of the patient population or of the lay public into the guideline panel. In future years, this might become a requirement.
6 Conflicts of interest

6.1 Background and motivation
Guidance documents should be based on high quality evidence and should be free of bias [2]. Conflicts of interest (CoI) can bias guidance document recommendations towards certain treatments, diagnostic tests or products. If CoI are not appropriately managed and dealt with prior to guidance document development, this will affect the credibility and reliability of the guidance document.

Conflicts of interests do not necessarily imply improper motivation or require immediate exclusion of a person from involvement in guidance document development, but since they can influence decision-making, all CoI (even those only considered “potential”) should be declared, transparently reported, identified and properly managed in order to limit bias.

6.2 Who should disclose?
The list of required disclosure required is the following:

- ESCMID Guideline Officer.
- ESCMID Guideline Director.
- ESCMID SubCommittee members.
- Chair of CPG, DG.
- Members of CPG, DG.
- CPGs advisors and consultants.
- CPGs Staff.

The Declaration of Interests (DoIs) declarations of all authors must be completed and published in the final guidance document.

6.3 What should be disclosed?
Interest is defined as any direct or indirect financial or nonfinancial interest besides the development of the CGPs itself, i.e. to the purposes of the guidance document development represents a “secondary interest”.

A conflict of interest (CoI) arises when there is a risk that the professional judgement of an author regarding the specific guidance document will be influenced by a secondary interest.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Explanation/Examples</th>
<th>Threshold/mitigation</th>
<th>Time limit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct financial interest</td>
<td>Payment for services from a company (consultancies, speaker’s fees, membership), indirect payments (e.g. funding for travel, accommodation, professional development, hospitality), stock ownership, royalties, directorships, grants received or pending, patents, received or pending.</td>
<td>None (all direct financial interests shall be declared)</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect financial interest</td>
<td>Representation or having roles in organizations with financial links or affiliations with companies that will benefit or be affected by the guidance documents recommendations.</td>
<td>None (all indirect financial interests shall be declared)</td>
<td>3 years from grant conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-financial interests</td>
<td>Including, but not limited to, academic advancement, clinical revenue streams, community standing, scientific interest, public comments and testimony, leadership role on a panel, substantial career efforts/interests, previously published opinions, and advocacy or policy positions</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>On a case-by-case basis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Non-financial interests might not always considered problematic (sometimes they are even considered an added value). On the other hand, they can induce bias, and therefore need to be disclosed. Examples include publishing or being involved in research that may be used in the guidance document, being considered an expert or opinion leader on an intervention or treatment that will be considered in the guidance document etc.

Col of first degree relatives and close personal relationships (e.g. partner) need also be disclosed.

6.4 How to disclose?
All Dols are to be included into the dedicated EsCMID form, suitable for all ESCMID-related activities.
6.5 When to disclose?

Since this document adopts a broad definition of interests, in particular non-financial ones, it would be virtually impossible for most professionals to declare all of them at any specific point in time. Besides, most “interests” become “conflicts of interest” only relating to the task to be performed. Therefore, interests will be declared at specific times:

- when applying to serve
  - in an official ESCMID position (EC, Director, Study Group (SG), SubCommittees etc).
  - as chair of a ESCMID guidance document project.
  - as DG member of an ESCMID guidance document project.
- during the development of a ESCMID guidance document project: at least every 12 months (earlier, in case of intervening new CoI) or alternatively, at major milestones (PICOs definition, summary of findings finalization).
- at the time of submission for PCP.

In these cases, the declarations will be assessed as detailed below.

Drafting groups may choose to add an open discussion of DoI of all participants at the beginning of each meeting.

6.6 Who will assess whether an interest represents a conflict of interest?

The DoI will be assessed as per the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate to task of:</th>
<th>DoI assessed by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guideline Officer</td>
<td>EC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guideline Director</td>
<td>Guideline Officer and EC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS members</td>
<td>Guideline Director and Guideline Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG chair</td>
<td>Guideline Director, Guideline Officer, EC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG members</td>
<td>DG chair, who then reports to Guideline Director, GS*†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG advisors and consultants</td>
<td>DG chair†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG staff</td>
<td>DG chair†</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The DoI will be assessed by the ESCMID Guidelines Director and at least one other member of the subcommittee, prior to inclusion as DG member.

† The final composition of the DG will be approved by the EC, after a recommendation by the GD and GS.
### 6.7 Requirements for individual roles/tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role/task</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Mitigation (if any)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guideline Officer</td>
<td>no current or recent (i.e. past 5 years) direct or indirect financial CoI</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guideline Director</td>
<td>no current or recent (i.e. past 5 years) direct or indirect financial CoI</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS members</td>
<td>no current or recent (i.e. past 5 years) direct or indirect financial CoI</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG chair</td>
<td>no current or recent (i.e. past 5 years) direct or indirect financial CoI</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG as a whole</td>
<td>&gt;50% of members free from direct or indirect financial CoI</td>
<td>Indirect CoI might be assessed on a case by case basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines evidence group</td>
<td>no current or recent (i.e. past 5 years) direct or indirect financial CoI</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG members</td>
<td>No current or recent (i.e. past 5 years) direct or indirect financial CoI</td>
<td>&gt;50% of members free from direct or indirect financial CoI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 6.7.1 Risk levels of conflict of interest

The following list is an attempt to stratify risk of bias due to situations of CoI. The distinction in low and high risk CoI, however, is only tentative and certainly arbitrary: each potential conflict of interest needs to be assessed in the context of specific tasks.

**Low-risk conflict of interest:**

- Delivery of non-promotional talks in which the speaker has full control of the content and is either unpaid or paid by a third party that is responsible for ensuring that the event is free of influence of relevant industry (i.e. if the event has industry financial support, all planning and content must be free of industry influence, and any payment of expenses and honoraria must occur through a third party, such as the medical society or institution sponsoring the event, or an event manager acceptable to them, rather than directly by a commercial entity with an interest in guideline subject matter or its agent).
- Honoraria for speaking at company sponsored meetings or events.
● Support in the form of fellowships, travel grants, in-kind donations, etc.

● In case any enumeration is paid to the department (and not to an individual): pharma/medical device company – investigator.

● Participation in clinical trials.

● Officer or board member of another medical society.

● Editorial positions with publications.

● Program oversight of meetings (e.g., program organiser or guidance documents publications).

High risk conflict of interest:

● Research grants, partial or full salary support from a commercial organisation for self or employees for whom you are managerially responsible (i.e. laboratory technical/research fellow) or for the participant’s institution.

● Research funding from a government program or non-profit organization that receives funding from industry with business interests in the content of the guidance document.

● Consultant or advisor to pharma/medical device company including positions on medical or scientific advisory boards.

● Equity interests (or entitlement to same) of stocks, stock options, royalties, etc, including income from patents or copyrights. Or a family member (first degree/spouse), holding stock, etc...

● Service as a director or employment by a commercial organisation, whether or not remuneration is provided for such service (or a close family member holding this position/stock etc...).

● Sole ownership, partnership, or principal of a commercial enterprise (idem for a close family member holding this position).

● In case a salary is paid to the individual for: research grants, partial or full salary support from a commercial organisation for self or employees for whom you are managerially responsible (i.e. laboratory technical/research fellow).

● Investigator initiated trials, sponsored by company.

● Participation on a data and safety monitoring board concerned with research that is relevant to the content of the guidance document and is funded by an industry with business interests in the content of the guidance document, or by a government program or non-
profit organization that receives funding from industry with business interests in the content of the guidance document.

● Participation in industry-funded research, scientific advisory committees, consulting roles, non-promotional speaking engagements, or expert testimony on matters that are unrelated to guidance document subject matter but the company involved is known to have business interest in the guidance document subject matter.

● If a potential recommendation of the guidance document would jeopardize or enhance the panelist’s professional work or professional group fundamentally (definition of intellectual CoI of the Institute of Medicine, *National Academy of Sciences, Clinical Practice Guidelines We Can Trust, 2011*).

**6.8 Evaluation and its outcome**

The evaluation will consider both the nature of the interest, the relevancy to the task at hand and the potential impact.

The possible outcomes of the evaluation are:

● Activity (appointment or ongoing participation) approved; no financial interest are disclosed or disclosed interest is considered not a possible source of bias.

● Activity prohibited; disclosed interest are in unacceptable conflict with the task at hand, and could lead to bias; appointment may be rescinded if activity has already commenced.

● Activity approved with limitations; relevant interests are noted, but the need for expertise outweighs the potential conflict; participation is allowed, but some tasks are prohibited (e.g. drafting or voting on guidance document text/recommendations, or guidance document approval) in areas related to the relevant interest.

● Further review required; final decision referred to higher ranking ESCMID role.

Members may be asked if they are willing to disinvest from a relationships prior to a final decision.

**6.9 Publication of the conflict of interest declarations in the final document**

Individual declarations of each DG member will be combined together into a single but detailed statement, added to the manuscript undergoing public consultation, which will also be included in the final publication.
6.10 Approval and updates of the conflict of interest management policy

The present document will be updated every four years, by the ESCMID Guideline Director and GS, reviewed by the Guideline Officer and approved by the EC.
7 Timeline of the guidance project

The recommended time from appointment of the DG chair to submission of the finalized guidance document to the ESCMID Guidelines Director/EC should be approximately 12–18 months. Once appointed, the DG chair shall submit a draft timeline to the ESCMID Guidelines Director for discussion and approval.
8 Budget and expenses of the guidance project

ESCMID guidance document development is financially supported by the Society. All parties involved should be committed to maintain the costs at a reasonable scale. Along with the timeline, the DG chair will send the ESCMID Guidelines Director a tentative budget for approval. ESCMID staff will be responsible for monitoring and communicating on budgetary issues, overlooked by the Guidelines Director. When funds other than those provided by ESCMID are to be used, this should be clearly detailed in the budget proposal. Financial contributions from industry (e.g. pharmaceutical or diagnostic companies) are not accepted.

Note: All ESCMID guidance documents published in CMI benefit from open access for the public, without any surcharge.

ESCMID funds can be used to cover e.g. meeting expenses including travel and accommodation for the DG members, costs for literature search, salary for project coordinator.
9 Methodology: GRADE approach

ESCMID adopts the GRADE approach for guideline development.

All members of the drafting group will need to complete the online McMaster training on the GRADE approach (8 videos) available to ESCMID members in ESCMID website.

9.1 Scope and questions addressed by the guideline

We encourage formulation of background and foreground questions. The background should provide information on the prevalence and incidence of the disease and its forms (either severity or other); the mechanisms of the disease and of the interventions; and others. The background should also be used to justify the decisions that were taken in formulating the foreground questions. For example, if the population of interest in the foreground question is divided into subpopulations, the background should make clear why this division is needed; if a comparator was used in a foreground question, why this comparator is relevant (or why another comparator is not).

The foreground questions are the main part of the guidance document, and they should contain population, intervention, comparator, main outcome, and other outcomes of interest. Population should address different epidemiological settings (e.g. pathogen distribution and resistance rates). These components can be further divided into sub-components (e.g. patients in affluent countries and in resource poor countries; by drug availability; by age; etc...).

The choice of relevant outcomes is of utmost importance. They should include both the beneficial effects of the intervention and damage caused by the intervention. The beneficial outcomes should be divided into the main outcome (the one that matters most to the patient); other important outcomes; and less important outcomes. The ecological impact of recommended interventions, i.e. what is known and what is expected regarding resistance selection and development should be addressed among outcomes. Costs may be included in the important outcomes or among the less important, depending on the main outcome/s.

Systematic review methods should be used to examine interventions and diagnostic tests. The methods used to search the scientific literature and to synthesize the evidence (qualitatively or quantitatively through meta-analyses) should be defined. We encourage the use or update of existing systematic reviews. We recognize that not all recommendations will be based on empirical evidence; such recommendations should be provided with explicit acknowledgment that they are based on expert opinion. Empirical evidence can be extended to similar interventions based on
experts’ opinion using a similar mechanism (e.g. recommendation on ciprofloxacin where evidence exists only on levofloxacin).

Key questions to be addressed by the guidance document should be developed using the Population, Intervention, Control, Outcome (PICO) format.

9.2 Literature search
The systematic literature review for the development of the guidance document should be performed following the methodology outlined in the Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions Version 5.1.0 (www.handbook.cochrane.org).

The databases searched need to be specified in the manuscript and should always include PubMed, EMBASE, the Cochrane Database. The search terms used need to be specified in the manuscript and the inclusion and exclusion criteria for identified articles need to be detailed (including study design, language, publication dates).

9.3 Evidence synthesis
All studies identified by the search process detailed above need to be screened for eligibility by two independent reviewers and key data should be extracted using standardized data collection forms.

9.4 Quality of evidence assessment
The risk of bias for all included studies should be assessed following the recommendations of the GRADE guidelines [3]. The selected literature has to graded for the quality of evidence, and classified as high, moderate, low or very low, using the GRADE approach (http://www.gradeworkinggroup.org).

9.5 The ESCMID Evidence Review Group
ESCMID will train a group of motivated professionals into the methodology of systematic reviews, meta-analyses and the GRADE approach. The course will be free of charge, but the participants will need to commit formally to be available in future ESCMID guidelines projects for tasks described in 9.2, 9.3, and 9.4.

Each trained professional will be asked to participate to a maximum 1 project per year, in the 5 years following his/her training. When appointed/he will closely work will the drafting group, but in an independent fashion.
9.6 Development of recommendations

The strength of recommendation assigned to each infection control measure was classified as strong or conditional, as outlined by the GRADE guidelines [4].
10 Manuscript format

All ESCMID guidance documents will be published in CMI.

Guidance documents will be published as an Executive Summary of no more than 4,000 words. This summary should contain a short introduction of the background topics, the foreground questions together with the guide on each question, GRADE and recommendation, G-I-N checklist and a very short explanation. The Executive Summary will be published in CMI. A larger document that provides greater detail and has the same format as the Executive Summary will be available on the [ESCMID website](http://www.escmid.org).
11 Review and endorsement process

11.1 Purpose

The endorsement phase is mandatory for all guidance documents developed by ESCMID (CPG, consensus papers, state-of-the-art papers, position papers), as a sole responsible or in partnership with other scientific organizations; it has the aim of ensuring that ESCMID position, as a whole, is represented. Position papers might undergo less strict requirements, discussed in a dedicated paragraph.

This phase is the last step before publication of a new and an updated guidance document.

We distinguish the four following situations:

- ESCMID-only guidance documents.
- ESCMID co-lead guidance documents.
- ESCMID cooperative guidance documents.
- Guidance prepared by other societies.

11.2 Selection of ESCMID representative(s) for ESCMID co-lead guidance documents and cooperative projects

This section applies only to ESCMID co-lead guidance documents and cooperative projects, where ESCMID has been invited by another society. This section does not apply to ESCMID-only guidance documents, since those are subject to separate call for proposals.

Analogously, it does not apply to position papers (see relevant section) by ESCMID study groups.

The selection of ESCMID representative(s) responds to a formal and transparent process:

- EC, Guideline Director, and advisory group propose names.
- The Office checks for their ESCMID membership, CV and CoI. If not available, the office will contact them to obtain an updated CV and to assess CoI and availability. The topic of the guidance document project will not be specified in the letter.
- The Guideline Director and guideline office present the list to the entire EC. The final decision on ESCMID representative(s) is made by the EC.
- The list is presented to the leading organization.
- During the guidance document development process, the ESCMID representatives commit to provide update (in written) to the ESCMID Director at least every 6 months, or in case any relevant issue arises.
A specific MoU should give details of the agreement between the parties and identify the roles and responsibilities of the ESCMID representatives in the development of the guidance documents, dealing with ESCMID comments and endorsement and publication outcomes.

11.3 Endorsement Process

11.3.1 Endorsement of guidance documents developed or co-lead by ESCMID (general process)

The DG submit the guidance document draft by email to the Guideline Manager (guidancedocuments@escmid.org), requesting final endorsement by ESCMID; she/he will include a report on the project management, and up-to-date DoI of all DG members.

The DG chair can also propose up to two peer reviewers for external review, detailing affiliation, contact details and reason for selecting. These must not be ESCMID members, but need to be chosen among other stakeholders (other/potential endorsing organizations, patient representatives). If applicable, one or two other reviewers are selected by co-lead partner organization.

In parallel, submission to CMI will be initiated, so that CMI peer review and ESCMID PCP proceed in parallel as to expedite the review process.

If ESCMID is in a co-lead guidance document, the management of the whole process is included in the MoU (provided in a separate document).

ESCMID Guidelines Director and CGI-SC bring forward the consultation process, if applicable, from the beginning of the guidance development or updating, to enable stakeholders with an interest to comment on guidance document development at specific stages.

Overview of ESCMID CGL review and endorsement process and timeline
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>step</th>
<th>role</th>
<th>task(s)</th>
<th>deadline*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Receives request and check if report and DoI have been submitted. Contact peer reviewers (either proposed by the GD or suggests by the Guideline director/sc), checks their availability and requests their DoI (by email).</td>
<td>3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>GL director and one or more of the SC</td>
<td>Reviews the manuscript for adherence to ESCMID Manual (under preparation as of 14/03/2019) and to the AGREE Reporting checklist (<a href="http://www.agreetrust.org/resource-centre/agree-reporting-checklist/">http://www.agreetrust.org/resource-centre/agree-reporting-checklist/</a>), to assess the comprehensiveness, completeness and transparency of reporting in the guideline. DoI of the DG chair and members are reviewed according to the relevant chapter in this manual. Appoints external peer reviewers. Appoints 2-3 internal peer reviewers, chosen among the appropriate SG(s)</td>
<td>7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Produces and disseminates a timeline/calendar with expected deadlines for all concerned participants. Initiate the PCP (see chapter 11.4)</td>
<td>3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ESCMID members, internal peer reviewers, external peer reviewers and</td>
<td>Provide comments (PCP)</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step</td>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Timeframe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Officer</td>
<td>collects comments and send them to Guideline Director and SC</td>
<td>3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>GL director and one or more of the SC</td>
<td>reviews and approves comments</td>
<td>3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Sends comments to DG</td>
<td>1 day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>DG</td>
<td>responds to comments, revises manuscript, and sends to Officer</td>
<td>at their earliest convenience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>GL director and one or more of the SC</td>
<td>assess responses and advice EC for final endorsement (see relevant chapter)</td>
<td>7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>EC (via Officer)</td>
<td>final endorsement</td>
<td>nearest EC meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* in case of any issue, deadlines will be rescheduled

- The external review is made by the previously selected Col-cleared ESCMID external peer reviewers and stakeholders (other/potential endorsing organizations, patient representatives) and general public consultation. The consultation process varies between the different types of guidance document.

* Procedures of stakeholders’ registration for ESCMID guidance document and dealing with their comments are published as scoping or drafting of the guidance document.

**11.3.2 Endorsement of Clinical Guidance documents developed in collaboration with other stakeholders or Societies (includes co-leadership and participation of ESCMID members in the panel group of Guidelines documents lead by other Societies)**

The MoU signed prior to the cooperation start should include details of procedures agreed by the Parties.
The general steps for endorsement will apply. The only modifications are:

- The partner organization proceeds to its own external and internal review, while ESCMID will only follow the steps of an internal review process.
- In step 2, also the reports of ESCMID representatives are appraised and taken into account.

11.3.3  Endorsement of existing guidance document by ESCMID

ESCMID can endorse a large scope of appropriate guidance documents (guidelines, consensus, decision support tools for use, implementation resources...) produced by other societies/organizations, provided they comply with ESCMID principles and quality standards. ESCMID encourages other societies/organizations to seek collaboration or at least to inform as early as possible that a guidance document is being developed and that endorsement will be in due time requested.

The general steps for endorsement will apply. The only modifications are:

- The proposal for endorsement may be upon the initiative of ESCMID members, CGI-SC, SGs or the external organization, with a formal request to the ESCMID CGI-SC/GL Director.
- In step 2, relevance and appropriateness to the mission of ESCMID, among its priorities and not duplicative, are also assessed.
- CoI regulations, methodological aspects and format of the guidance document are developed according to ESCMID standards regarding.
- Any inappropriate support or influence from industry.

- In the appendix, an application form to be filled in by the resource producer and a checklist methodology of the assessment criteria for endorsement by ESCMID (TBD)

11.3.4  Procedures specific for position papers

Position papers represent the opinion of the DGs composed by ESCMID members or ESCMID Study Groups, and not necessarily represent the position of ESCMID as a whole.

In case the DG asks for ESCMID endorsement, the general procedures will apply.

In case the DG does not ask for ESCMID endorsement, the only requirement is to notify the ESCMID Guideline Director, who will in turn notify the EC via the Guideline Officer.

1. at the start of the project, stating the provisional title, the scope of the position paper, the composition of the panel, and the expected delivery of the document.
2. at the time of submission for publication. The reporting items for publication, (detailed in the white paper [5]), should be followed if ESCMID commentary is requested by authors.
This procedure will allow to avoid duplication/redundancy of similar documents, and to prepare (if deemed necessary) an official response to it.

In all cases, the position paper will be peer-reviewed according to CMI procedures.

11.4 Public Consultation Procedures

The decision to start a PCP is taken by the Guideline Director, in coordination with Guideline Officer in the EC. The Guideline Director may appoint a SC member to oversee the process for individual projects.

For official ESCMID guidance documents and for documents where CMI Editorial board has declared interest into publication CMI, this step will be performed in parallel to CMI peer review. Coordination with CMI editorial staff will be ensured by the Guideline Director and the Guideline manager.

The Guideline manager publishes a notification on ESCMID channels (newsletter, twitter, website, linkedin, fb, etc). Deadline 4 weeks.

The PCP is restricted to ESCMID members, since it aims at representing ESCMID position as a whole. Only ESCMID members with at least one month prior membership can apply.

All external reviewers at the PCP will complete the ESCMID CoI form. Only reviewers free of financial CoI or financial relationship with companies will serve as guideline reviewers. Disclosure of any financial relationship with an affected company will be cause for recusal of reviewer comments by the CGI-SC.

Interested professional write to guideline manager, committing to confidentiality and to respond within the deadline.

At the deadline, guideline manager collects all comments and sends them to Guideline director or appointed SC members to review and give comments.

The Guideline manager sends the list of comments to the DG chair, for replying.

At the end of the process the DG chair respond in written to each of the comments, either accepting to modify the manuscript or justifying why not doing so. Also, the comments by CMI peer reviewers shall be added to the list by the DG chair, together with the DG responses.

11.5 Outcome of endorsement process

The outcome of the endorsement process can be:

1. Not endorsed.
2. Full endorsement.

3. Endorsement of the guideline with comments for consideration.

4. Conditional endorsement of the guidance document. In this situation, the Guideline Director appoints, a panel (through the corresponding SGs, EC, CMI editors, or any other reviewer) to review the document and approve or reject the endorsement.

5. Partial endorsement: when only relevant parts of the guidance documents fulfill reviewers’ criteria. In this case a detailed evaluation summary will be published together with the partially endorsed document on the guidance documents section of the ESCMID website.

In all cases, the final decision of endorsement is made by the Guideline Officer and EC.

12 Publication, updating and translation into other languages

12.1 Publication

Presenting guidance document, in part or full, in meetings or publications prior to publication is not permitted unless approved by the ESCMID Guidelines Director. Violation of this requirement will likely nullify their acceptance as ESCMID guidance document.

Presentation of the guideline document at ECCMID has also to be agreed with the ECCMID Guideline Director before the publication, possibly in an “open discussion” session, duly advertised, to improve the external review and public consultation of the final document (needs to be planned and coordinated with ECCMID GS).

In the publication of the guidance document, the methods part shall refer to the AGREE criteria and shall specify that they have been applied for data collection, DG assembly, assessment of author CoI and applicability of the guidance document.

Guidance document content may be adapted to other formats to increase usability (e.g. app, mobile website, pocket cards). This may be proposed and planned by the DG chair or the ESCMID Guideline Director during guidance document development to have these other formats ready at the time of guidance document publication.

12.2 Dissemination

All ESCMID guidelines will be published as open document in CMI and on the ESCMID website after agreement with the CMI Editor in Chief (EIC). Publication of ESCMID GL in other journals must be discussed with the ESCMID EC and the CMI EIC before starting the GL development process.
12.3 Updating

All ESCMID guidance documents should be kept up to date and reflect current evidence and clinical practice. The Guidelines Director will – with the practical help of the office – approach the DG of a guidance document (usually via its chair) for regular reviewing of the guideline document after it is published. During this regular contact, it is decided whether only a partial update of the guidance document or a full revision is needed. If the DG is unable to update the guidance document and the update is judged important by the GS, the Guidelines Director will appoint a new DG for updating the guidance document.

For the former, the emergence of significant new pieces of evidence that need to be incorporated into guidance document will be assessed using the processes described in this document. The working electronic document published on the ESCMID website will be updated with the appropriate version number. A comment will also be published by CMI, which will detail the changes and reasons for the updated guidance documents.

For the latter, the process is the same as for the proposal of a new guidance document.

12.4 Translating published guidance into languages other than English

Requests to translate published guidance document requires approval of ESCMID who will consult with the ESCMID Guidelines Director.

Conditions:

- The text must remain true to the original, must not be altered for commercial purposes and not contain any commercial material in the body of the published document. The draft translation has to be submitted to ESCMID for approval before publication. ESCMID reserves the right to appoint a reviewer fluent in both languages, or to ask for a back-translation if deemed necessary to ensure correct translation.
- Copyright of the official ESCMID guideline is owned by the publishers who must give their permission.
- The final text shall be made available for unrestricted availability on the ESCMID website and in addition may be published on a national infection society website.
- Neither part of nor the full translation must be presented/published before official publication of the original ESCMID guidance document.
13 Training

Training course on systematic reviews and meta-analyses and to development of clinical practice guidelines with the GRADE approach in the area of infectious diseases and clinical microbiology are organized by ESCMID. Please refer to the ESCMID website for more information.

The minimum requirement for all panel members is to complete the online McMaster training on the GRADE approach (8 videos) available to ESCMID members in ESCMID website.

In particular, ESCMID will organize a course to select and train ESCMID members for the Guidelines Evidence Review Group.

The training course will cover all steps of guidelines production, but will mainly focus on systematic reviews, meta-analyses and the GRADE approach. The course will be free of charge, but the participants will need to commit formally to be available in future ESCMID guidelines projects.

The course will be held once a year, and will consist of interactive lectures and practical exercises. CME credits will be provided.

Participant will agree to be available for systematic review (abstract screening, full text screening and data extraction) for ESCMID guidelines projects in the next 24 months.

14 Acknowledgements

15 Appendix

16 References