

Integrating a gender perspective into the development of clinical guidelines: a course for guideline developers

Joke Haafkens¹ Debby Keuken¹ Gerben ter Riet¹ Clara Moerman¹ Niek Klazinga²

¹ Department of General Practice, Academic Medical Center Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands

²Department of Public Health and Social Medicine, Academic Medical Center Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands

There is increasing evidence that being male or female has an important impact on health. Clinical guidelines are an important means to make this evidence available to the practitioner. A previous study revealed that sex and gender specific data are not systematically taken into account by organizations for guideline development, who work according to the internationally agreed upon methodology of guideline development (AGREE). To improve this we developed a course on how attention to sex and gender differences can be improved in the methodology of guideline development. The course focuses on 6 subsequent steps of guideline development: the definition of key questions, retrieval and assessment of data, formulation and presentation of recommendations and evaluation. The course was given to 20 scientific advisors of two Dutch organizations for guideline development: The Dutch Institute for Health Care Improvement and the Dutch College of General Practitioners. The course was evaluated positively and was useful for raising awareness of the gender issues among guideline developers. The long-term effect of the course will be evaluated by measuring, motivation, competence of guideline developers and the content of the clinical guidelines they constructed. The course is recommended training material for clinical guideline development organizations. This presentation describes the six key elements of the course and how it was evaluated.