Let's AGREE! Use of an Instrument to Evaluate Clinical Practice Guideline Quality
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Problem
Many nurses have a limited awareness of how to assess the quality of clinical practice guidelines (CPGs). Because the quality of CPGs vary, it’s important to evaluate quality before considering a change in clinical practice. The purpose of this poster is to describe how a team of seven nurses appraised the National Kidney Foundation Kidney Disease Outcomes Quality Initiative (NKF KDOQI ™) Clinical Practice Guidelines for Chronic Kidney Disease using the Appraisal of Guidelines Research and Evaluation in Europe (AGREE) instrument (The Agree Collaboration, 2001).

Evidence
The AGREE instrument was chosen to evaluate clinical practice guideline quality because it is considered the gold standard with acceptable reliability for most domains (Cronbach’s alpha 0.64–0.88).

Strategy
The AGREE instrument consists of 23 items grouped into six domains which use a 4-point Likert scale for each item. A team consisting of seven nurses (two Nurse Practitioners, one Clinical Nurse Specialist, one Masters-prepared Outcomes Manager, and three staff nurses) used the AGREE instrument. The amount of time spent reviewing the CPG ranged from 60-180 minutes.

Practice Change
The KDOQI CPGs for Chronic Kidney Disease were judged appropriate for practice after assessment, despite identified limitations. The team has proposed renal screening prior to angiography using a prediction equation, consistent with the guidelines.

Evaluation
The AGREE instrument assessment domains included: scope and purpose, stakeholder involvement, rigor of development, clarity and presentation, applicability, and editorial independence.

Results
The AGREE appraisal instrument identified the strengths of the KDOQI CPGs. Three domains were appraised favorably while three others were not.

Recommendations (Further adoption suggestions)
Nurses require education regarding the AGREE instrument and appraisal of CPG quality.

Lessons Learned
The AGREE appraisal tool provides questions to assess clinical practice guideline quality. By using this tool, nurses can assertively recommend changes in practice.
Bibliography

