



European Commission



Translating clinical guidelines into performance measurements: The ECIBC example on breast cancer

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Background

The European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer (ECIBC) aims to improve quality of breast cancer (BC) services across European countries. The overall goal is to contribute to improve health, and reduce health inequalities in Europe.

Key tools:

1.1 Development of evidence-based recommendations on screening and diagnosis - the *European Breast Guidelines*

1.2 Collecting existing high-quality evidence-based guidelines on all processes of BC care on a *Guidelines Platform*

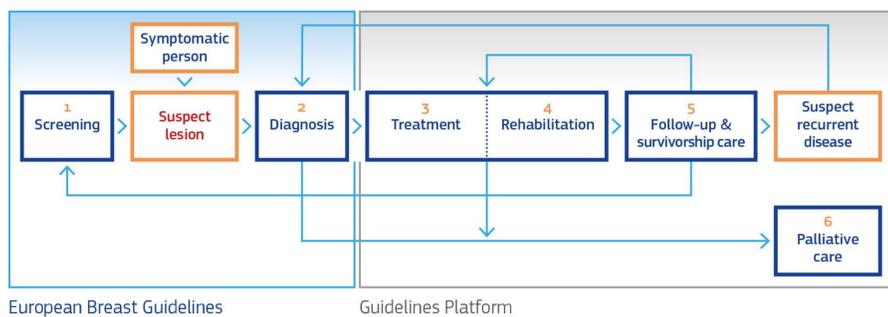
2. Development of a voluntary European Quality Assurance scheme for BC services - the *European Breast QA scheme* - to enhance and assess the implementation of the guidelines.

Results

The guidelines are web-based and specifically tailored for three profiles: citizens and patients, health professionals, and policy makers (see an example below). They will be translated into at least 24 languages.

The ECIBC model implies that requirements of the *European Breast QA scheme* are based on recommendations derived from the *European Breast Guidelines* and from existing guidelines (the *Guidelines Platform*) thus contributing in dissemination and implementation of high-quality and evidence-based guidelines for BC. In addition, a long-term monitoring strategy of ECIBC impact is planned.

The expected benefits of the ECIBC include greater confidence in the quality of the BC services and reduction of health inequalities in Europe.

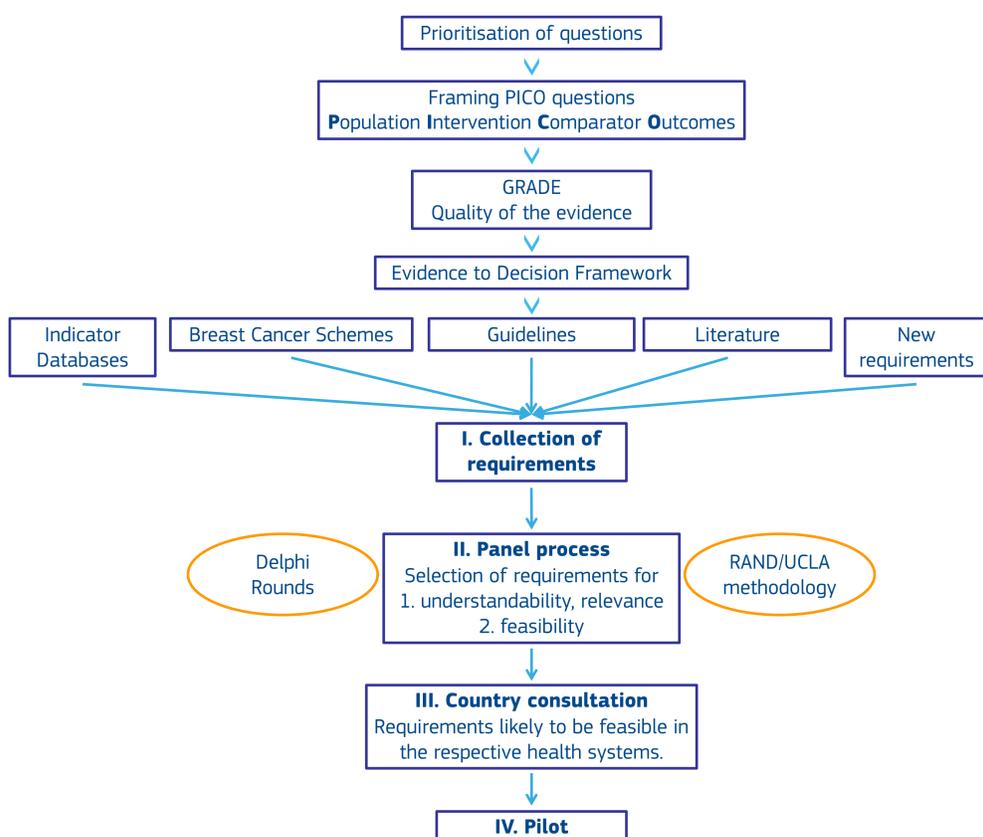


Aims

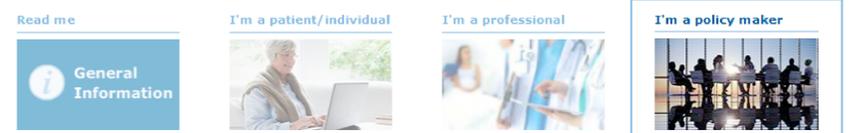
Provide insight on how the ECIBC model may effectively combine the development of evidence-based recommendations with their implementation through a QA scheme covering the whole BC pathway.

Methods

The recommendations in the *European Breast Guidelines* are formulated by the ECIBC Guidelines Development Group (GDG) using GRADE. The questions to be addressed are prioritised. Person-relevant outcomes are included.



Recommendations from European Breast Guidelines



Should organised mammography screening vs. no mammography screening be used for early detection of breast cancer in women aged 40 to 44?

Recommendation Justification Considerations Assessment Bibliography

Recommendation

For asymptomatic women aged 40 to 44 with an average risk of breast cancer, the ECIBC's Guidelines Development Group (GDG) suggests not implementing mammography screening (conditional recommendation, moderate certainty in the evidence).

Recommendation strength

Conditional recommendation against the intervention*

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Challenges

European Breast Guidelines

- 1) prioritisation of clinical questions
- 2) use of indirect evidence and modelling studies or even of good practice statements when direct evidence is scarce or lacking
- 3) time needed for experts to issue a recommendation.

European Breast QA scheme

- 1) basing requirements and indicators on evidence
- 2) ensuring they are relevant for persons
- 3) ensuring they are technically feasible in each country.

Conclusions

Requirements of the QA schemes must be **relevant, feasible** and **implementable** to have an impact on healthcare and reduce inequalities in countries (for ECIBC 35 involved so far, each with varied resources and healthcare systems). ECIBC aims for implementation via (i) a **multidisciplinary, transparent and robust development process**, (ii) **continuous involvement of all stakeholders**, particularly at national level, and (iii) use of the **European Breast QA scheme also as a tool to disseminate and assess implementation of high quality evidence-based guidelines**. If successful, ECIBC will also provide a **model transferrable to other diseases**.

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