

Global Commitment to Impact Evidence-Based Healthcare

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Evidence-based healthcare, considered to be the best healthcare in the world, is a premise that many believe has become the norm in the United States. However, there are several reasons why this is not always the case. For example, one traditional standard is the empirical approach of teaching in the medical profession, “see one, do one, teach one,” which is not necessarily based on current best evidence. This method may have been the best available in the past, but as research and medicine are moving more quickly than ever before, healthcare providers need additional tools to keep abreast of advances founded on evidence-based research.

Because I am a believer in the importance of evidence-based care, one of my goals was to assist in any way possible as a layperson in effecting change not only in support of evidence-based practice but also toward advancing shared decision making in our healthcare system. Originally, I had no idea striving toward this goal would lead to a global journey. I began by traveling on a fellowship to Salzburg, Austria, in December 2010 to attend the Salzburg Global Seminar Session 477, “The Greatest Untapped Resource in Healthcare: Informing and Involving Patients in Decisions about Their Medical Care.” This effort resulted in an important step toward patients partnering with physicians: “The Salzburg Statement on Shared Decision Making.” What has amazed and delighted me is to see how far and wide this initiative has reached since its publication on February 7, 2011, as shown by ‘googling’ the statement title!

My search continued when I became a consumer reviewer for the Cochrane Gynaecological Cancer Group in the United Kingdom. The Cochrane Collaboration (www.cochrane.org) is an inde-

pendent network of healthcare providers, researchers, and patient advocates from over 120 countries working together to produce trustworthy, accessible healthcare information free of industry sponsorship and other conflicts of interest.

In addition, after attending the Cochrane Colloquium in Keystone, Colorado, in 2010 as an advocate, I became a member of Consumers United for Evidence-Based Healthcare (CUE) (www.uscochrane.org/CUE). CUE is a national alliance of health and consumer advocacy organizations established in 2003 by the United States Cochrane Center and dedicated to advancing consumers’ ability to engage in and mandate high-quality healthcare.

In 2013, I was nominated and elected as CUE’s representative to the Steering Committee for Guidelines International Network/North America (G-I-N/NA). G-I-N/NA is a regional community representing various stakeholders from Canada, Mexico, and the United States in the Guidelines International Network (www.g-i-n.net). G-I-N/NA is committed to improving the effectiveness, thoroughness, and efficacy of guideline development, adaptation, dissemination, implementation, and performance measurement.

As part of this commitment, G-I-N/NA offers a series of educational webinars, regional training conferences, social media, and special events. The webinars are monthly, except December, and cover vital aspects of guideline development from all facets. In September 2014, I was moderator for the webinar “Involving Consumers in Guideline Development: A Case Study,” which focused on how a G-I-N/NA member organization successfully involved consumer representatives in its development of clinical practice guidelines. The panel represented not only the

member organization’s viewpoint but also the consumers’ perspective and personal experience.

In addition, Richard Rosenfeld, MD, MPH, discussed why it is critical to involve consumers in guideline development and how to orient and integrate consumers into the process. Dr Rosenfeld is professor, chairman, and program director of otolaryngology at SUNY Downstate Medical Center; former editor-in-chief of *Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery*, the official journal of the American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery; and chair emeritus of G-I-N/NA. He has also chaired numerous national committees and is the author, coauthor, or editor of 5 books and more than 280 scientific publications and textbook chapters. Dr Rosenfeld has given over 650 scientific presentations and is an international authority on guideline development and evidence-based medicine.

I had the pleasure of hearing Dr Rosenfeld’s presentation several years ago in which he encouraged the vital participation of consumers on guideline development. This was long before the current paradigm shift to involve consumers as important stakeholders in medicine and research. I acknowledge Dr Rosenfeld as a visionary and thank him for his efforts!

October’s webinar topic was also one of importance to advocates: “Enhancing Shared Decision-Making at the Point of Care: The SHARE-IT Project & MAGICapp.” The focus of this webinar was to provide information on how to overcome challenges by using decision aids that can facilitate shared decision making, particularly when designed to be used in the clinical encounter. The webinar presented the initial success of the SHARE-IT project in applying a new approach for the generic produc-

tion of multi-layered and interactive decision aids, directly linked to recommendations in clinical practice guidelines. Additional information can be found by visiting G-I-N/NA at www.g-i-n.net/regional-communities/g-i-n-na.

Topics for January and February 2015 webinars will lead up to the G-I-N/NA conference in March 2015, “Evidence-Based Guidelines Affecting Policy, Practice and Stakeholders (E-GAPPS II): The Challenges of Implementation.” This will be the second such conference cosponsored by G-I-N/NA and the Section on Evidence Based Health Care (SEBHC) of the New York Academy of Medicine. The first was held in December 2012.

E-GAPPS II, which is also funded in part by Doctor Evidence, LLC, will be held at the New York Academy of Medicine, New York City, on March 2-3, 2015, and will focus on promoting constructive dialogue in guideline development, dissemination, and implementation. It will be an exciting, timely, and important conference to attend, as all stakeholders, including a strong contingent of consumers and advocates, will participate throughout in keynotes, plenaries, and breakout sessions. Further information and details can be found at <http://www.nyam.org/events/2015/evidence-based-guidelines-conference.html> or by contacting ebmny@nyam.org.

There is no doubt that an escalation of commitment and emphasis is occurring to overcome any and all challenges to the successful achievement of evidence-based healthcare and participation of consumers in guideline development not only in this country but worldwide. ■



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