



# European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer (ECIBC): Development of the catalogue of international guidelines on breast cancer care

## Additional information on AGREE II

Clinical practice guidelines (CPGs) are developed with the intention of improving patient outcomes and healthcare systems. One instrument used to differentiate the quality of CPGs is the AGREE II tool. It assesses the quality and reporting of CPGs across 23 items, which are organised into six quality domains:

1. scope and purpose
2. stakeholder involvement
3. rigour of development
4. clarity of presentation
5. applicability
6. editorial independence.

Each of the 23 items is measured on a 7-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating better reporting. A quality score is calculated, as a percentage of the maximum possible score for each domain. Rather than the scores for each of the six domains being aggregated to produce an overall quality score, a subjective judgment is made, taking into account the scores for individual domains. The AGREE II tool allows obtaining an overall score for each domain and an overall score for the guideline appraised. The AGREE II tool has no set thresholds for scores.

Each document was assessed by two appraisers independently, following the guidance at the AGREE II Manual. Each appraiser had the opportunity to calibrate the AGREE instrument with a pilot testing consisting in the assessment of common guidelines that were cross checked for accuracy by one experienced researcher. The appraisers were researchers affiliated to the Iberoamerican Cochrane Centre (contractor appointed through a public tender procedure) with background and experience in the use of the AGREE II instrument, and most have published reviews on the quality of practice guidelines in different fields in peer reviewed medical journals.

### References

AGREE II manual: Brouwers M., Kho M.E., Browman G.P., Cluzeau F., feder G., Fervers B., Hanna S., Makarski J. on behalf of the AGREE Next Steps Consortium.

AGREE II: Advancing guideline development, reporting and evaluation in healthcare. Can Med Assoc J. Dec 2010, 182:E839-842; doi: 10.1503/cmaj.090449 (available from [www.agreetrust.org/](http://www.agreetrust.org/)).