Institute for Science Technology and Policy

Standards for Quality Guidelines

I. Establishing Transparency

ASCP guidelines development is supported and financed either independently, or in collaboration with relevant non-profit organization stakeholders. No industry or special interest partner funds are accepted to support development.

II. Management of Conflict of Interest (COI)

ASCP maintains a bias-free development process through initial and continuous review of conflicts, both real and perceived, which could be construed as influencing the final guideline. While some potential panel members may have ties to industry, the majority of the authoring panel is to be devoid of any conflicts as required through a disclosure process maintained throughout development with all disclosures shared in the final publication.

III. Guideline Development Group Composition

ASCP engages subject matter experts in the area of need to create multidisciplinary expert and advisory panels, with experts representing the collaborating organizations in areas of pathology, laboratory medicine, oncology, genetics, patient advocates, and other experts as deemed appropriate. Staff provides expertise in methodology, library science and project management, as well as having a scientific background.

IV. Clinical Practice Guideline – Systematic Review Intersection

ASCP works alone or with stakeholder collaborating organizations to query the medical literature in a systematic fashion, based on establishment of key questions to search for unbiased published medical evidence that meets guideline best practices. Additional sources of information may include professional expert opinion and the review of “grey literature” such as abstracts from scientific meetings that has value.

V. Establishing Evidence Foundations For and Rating Strength of Recommendations

ASCP engages with collaborating organizations to employ an evidence grading system that assigns a judgment on the strength of evidence for each recommendation. Factors considered include quality/source, quantity and consistency of all evidence; patient benefit/harms; value; costs; public comments and expert opinions.

VI. Articulation of Recommendations

ASCP guidelines are written in clear, concise language with scientific methodology supplements that assist the target audience with understanding and implementation of the recommendations, with a goal of measuring that implementation.

VII. External Review

During development, ASCP supports an Open Comment Period whereby draft guideline recommendations are revealed to medical professional stakeholders and affected patient groups in an online forum for comment. These comments are reviewed by the guideline authors to address concerns and refine the final recommendations.

ASCP employs the oversight of an Independent Review Panel (IRP) with medical and legal expertise germane to the subject matter, screened for Conflict of Interest, and not involved with the development of guideline.

VIII. Updating

ASCP guidelines are reviewed at a minimum of 4 year intervals, or earlier if published quality evidence reveals medical advances that could alter or augment original guideline recommendations.