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The importance of guidelines

Clinical practices guidelines (CPGs) play an important role in improving healthcare and patient outcomes by helping clinicians make the best evidence-based decisions. They include statements and recommendations intended to optimize patient care. They are informed by a systematic review of evidence and an assessment of the benefits and harms of management options. Not only are they intended to improve the quality of care for patients, but they also empower patients, influence public policy, and enhance the development of quality performance measures and evaluations.

In fact, the CUA CPGs are consistently viewed as one of the most valuable activities by our membership. We currently have 47 guidelines, best practice reports, and consensus statements in our portfolio, covering all major urologic subspecialties, and several of our oncology-based guidelines have undergone annual or bi-annual reviews — particularly in the field of prostate cancer — to reflect the quickly changing landscape. We take great pride in the quality of our CPGs, which are not only used by Canadian urologists and physicians but are often quoted by many around the world.

Frequently, we are asked why we invest in creating CPGs when there are existing ones in the literature. Indeed, there are many excellent CPGs produced by a variety of reputable organizations around the world (AUA, EAU, NCCN, etc.); however, in clinical areas where the evidence is not so strong and expert opinion becomes “the evidence” (which is unfortunately often the case), it is critical to consider Canadian context in developing practice recommendations. This is why the CUA must continue generating CPGs for Canadians.

We recognize that producing high-quality, standardized CPGs is time-consuming and labor-intensive. Moreover, CPGs require periodic revisions based on the evolution of evidence, which also requires significant resources. The CUA Board of Directors recently held a retreat focused on expanding and improving our CPG activities and is developing an action plan to assist the Guidelines Committee by providing the resources for additional administrative and editorial support.

Finally, I want to thank Dr. Bobby Shayegan for chairing the CUA Guidelines Committee for the past five years as he nears the end of his term, and Ms. Adriana Modica for her tireless efforts and attention to excellence in our CPG portfolio.

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The CUA exists to
promote the highest
standard of urologic
care for Canadians and
to advance the art and
science of urology.