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Cite as: Breau RH,
Siemens DR. Evolution
of CUA guidelines.
Can Urol Assoc J
2023;17(12):370. [http://
dx.doi.org/10.5489/
cuaj.8643](http://dx.doi.org/10.5489/cuaj.8643)

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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.

Evolution of CUA guidelines

Guidelines are among clinicians' most accessed resources and serve an important role in supporting the Canadian Urological Association's (CUA) vision "to promote the highest standard of urologic care for Canadians and to advance the science of urology." In fact, the CUA's mission statement specifically includes the development of practice standards and guidelines as part of its mandate.

The complete CUA guidelines portfolio represents an outstanding — albeit somewhat overwhelming — collection of work, bringing together volunteer members, experts in diverse fields, methodologists, and external readers to ensure these resources speak to the Canadian clinician and those with the urologic conditions they serve.

Over the past several years, the committee leading the charge has made strides to provide a variety of products to users. These include formal CUA guidelines, which aim to provide evidence-based guidance for a disease state; best practice reports, which highlight evidence around a specific clinical question; and consensus statements, which represent the collective opinion of experts. The CUA has also endorsed other association's guidelines, when appropriate.

Under the leadership of its new Chair, Dr. Rodney Breau, the Guidelines Steering Committee aims to revamp the CUA guideline process and products. This will include specific processes for product development, reclassification of current resources, and removal of products that are obsolete. Moreover, there will be a strong push to implement more rigorous and consistent methodology and format across all the CUA guideline documents, with regular training workshops provided to steering committee members and guideline authors.

This will, of course, be a relatively long and iterative process, especially considering the challenges of guideline production due to the dynamic nature of today's medical research ecosystem, which constantly yields new information/paradigms. Rapidly evolving data necessitates continuous revisions, putting pressure on guideline development. Additionally, Canada's diverse patient populations

and resource constraints complicate the task, as guidelines must cater to varying needs while remaining practical and sustainable. Thus, crafting effective guidelines requires a keen eye for synthesizing emerging research and adapting recommendations to suit the Canadian healthcare landscape.

In response to these challenges, some additional initiatives planned by the Guidelines Steering Committee in the years ahead will include: exploring opportunities for multidisciplinary collaboration within Canada; partnering with university-based evidence synthesis centers; developing a more formal plan for endorsing or adapting guidelines from other groups (representing significant savings while strengthening CUA relationships); and determining the best strategy for updating guidelines more quickly and efficiently, thus maintaining their relevance, particularly in fast-changing therapeutic areas such as oncology.

Equally important to their development is the ability to communicate guidelines clearly to our membership, ensuring they are user-friendly and readily implementable, and enabling physicians to provide the best possible care under complex conditions. The CUA Office of Education, with the support of the Guidelines Steering Committee, has conceived different vehicles to make sure recommendations or approaches are easily accessible to members, including tool cards/algorithms available through our online encyclopedia — UROpedia. Guidelines also form the backbone of the information provided in the CUA's patient information brochures and inform the many different educational events we organize annually.

Producing and maintaining guidelines for urologic care in Canada is at the heart of our association's work, serving as a vital compass for physicians and a cornerstone of our mission; however, their significance extends beyond the individual practitioner. They elevate the credibility and reputation of our association, demonstrating our commitment to excellence and patient safety. Moreover, they promote unity and collaboration within our community, fostering a sense of shared purpose and strengthening our association's role as a driving force in advancing urologic health.