

## **The methodological quality of Traditional Chinese Medicine clinical pathway in China**

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### **Abstract**

**Background:** More than thousands of Clinical pathways (CPs) have been developed in China to assure quality, reduce risks, increase resource efficiency and control costs.

**Objective:** To evaluate the methodological quality of TCM CPs with Integrated Care Pathway Appraisal Tool (ICPAT).

**Method:** A systematically search of the Chinese Biomedical Database (CBM), China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), and the Wanfang Database was conducted from inception to February, 2017. In this study, we extracted relevant characteristic information, and evaluated the methodological quality of TCM clinical pathways with ICPAT.

**Results:** A total of 27 TCM CPs were included. The publication years ranged from 2010-2016, among which 74.1% (20/27) TCM CPs were developed based on published guidelines. The evaluation of ICPAT showed that all of the TCM CPs identified the relevant patients in the title; about 22% (6/27) TCM CPs reported references, 18.5% (5/27) TCM CPs conducted a literature search, which indicated these CPs were evidence based during the developing process; 30% (7/27) TCM CPs conducted a pilot test before published formally.

**Conclusions:** Our study demonstrated that most of the TCM CPs were at low methodical quality which suggested more efforts should be done to improve the quality of TCM CPs according to ICPAT.