The reporting quality of clinical guidelines in China based on Reporting Items for Practice Guidelines in Healthcare (RIGHT)

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Abstract

Background: Clinical guidelines are an important tool for improving service quality. However, the benefits of guidelines depend on their reporting quality.

Objective: To assess the reporting quality of clinical guidelines in China using the RIGHT instrument.

Method: We searched the electronic databases of Chinese Biomedical Literature Database, China National Knowledge Infrastructure, The VIP Database and Wan Fang Database published from January, 2015 to December, 2015 to include the clinical guidelines. The RIGHT instrument was used by two independent assessors to conduct a systematic appraisal in 22 items. To assess the degree of compliance, every item was rated as “Yes” for total compliance, “Unclear” for partial compliance or “No” for non-compliance, respectively. The number and proportion of reported items for each items were also calculated.

Results: A total of 74 guidelines were included. Of the 74 guidelines, 24 (32.4%) guidelines described the approach used to assess the certainty of the body of evidence, 41 (55.4%) guidelines described the year of publication of the guideline, 46 (62.2%) guidelines reported the processes and approaches used by the guideline development group to make decisions 6 (7.8%) reported considering patients’ values, 12 (16.2%) guidelines reported the funding source but none reported the role of the funders, 8 (10.8%) guidelines reported the draft guideline underwent independent review and 2 (2.7%)was external review.

Conclusions: Although numerous guidelines were developed in China in 2015, the reporting quality was generally low. Focusing on improving the quality of Chinese guidelines, rather than continuing to produce them in great quantity, is urgently needed.