

**SUPPORTING AWARENESS AND
ADOPTION OF COVID-19
GUIDELINES**
DISSEMINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

APRIL 2020

CONTEXT

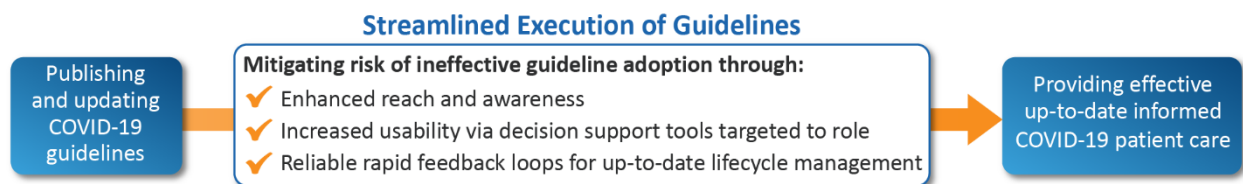
The COVID-19 outbreak has led to a reprioritization of initiatives across healthcare systems. Reliable and timely guidance is being developed and distributed across reputable institutions, such as Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), Department of Defense (DoD), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), to ensure that clinicians are equipped with the best guidance to meet the needs of their patient populations. However, providers often experience barriers to using clinical guidelines. Especially amid a pandemic, clinicians may lack 1) the awareness of where to find relevant information to best assess and treat patients and 2) the time to review lengthy, detailed guidelines. Ultimately, a guideline dissemination and implementation plan to ensure that organizations utilize an accelerated but standardized approach to manage and tackle the COVID-19 pandemic is critical to successful response efforts in the coming weeks.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Capability gaps present opportunities for organizations to enhance efforts to ensure front line staff are aware and understand the most up-to-date and relevant guidance. Having clear and effective messaging and guidelines ensure that clinicians are aware of necessary information to perform their duties and support their patients. Our Solution

Cognosante currently supports government agencies, such as DoD, in effectively and efficiently transitioning clinical practice guidelines from research into practice. To address this emergent COVID-19 pandemic, as illustrated in **Exhibit 1**, Cognosante uses implementation science best practices to facilitate awareness and adoption of established guidelines by 1) Assessing needs and gaps in current efforts 2) Identifying opportunities to enhance dissemination and implementation efforts across the organization; 3) Developing clinical decision tools to increase adoption of the clinical practice guidelines; and 4) Providing support for operationalizing governance and processes to maximize the reach and impact of information.

Exhibit 1: Dissemination and Implementation Approach



Lack of Guideline Awareness and Access. As noted in **Exhibit 1**, the organization’s primary responsibility is to develop best practices in the prevention and management of COVID-19. Typical challenges following development of guidelines include a general lack of awareness and inability to easily access information. Specifically, clinicians may have difficulty accurately interpreting guidance due to: 1) being inundated with COVID-19 information from different sources leading to difficulty determining which resources to use and why; 2) receiving overwhelming and contradictory guidance, making it arduous to identify recommendations that best addresses their needs; and 3) having limited time to review the guidelines and needing at-a-glance information to inform their decisions.

Based on the environmental scan, Cognosante can identify several key recommendations to increase access and awareness of the established guidelines. These include:

- ▶ Leveraging a central repository or platform for COVID-19 information that clinicians at the organization can access

- ▶ Reorganizing information by target audience (i.e., providers and patients) so visitors can scan the information and find relevant information more easily
- ▶ Implementing an active outreach campaign to disseminate the information quickly and efficiently
- ▶ Developing simple infographics highlighting high-level information from the guidelines

Much of the COVID-19 information on social media focuses on patient and beneficiary needs, but little information is focused on provider needs. A focused social media campaign that targets providers directly, and includes key messaging and simple diagrams and charts, may be an ideal approach to directly reach providers.

Information Overload and Delayed Decisions. While a wealth of information is being shared, the sheer density of the guidance available may lead to delays in effective and timely utilization of information and suboptimal care decisions. Providing clinical guidance within a rapidly evolving environment demands clear, easy to understand clinical information that can be used to prioritize and deliver optimal care. This guidance should be integrated within established systems, regulations, and processes specific to the organization to greatly assist with speed and efficiency of response.

In support of improved efficiency, clarity, and clinical application of key components of COVID-19 guidelines, Cognosante can develop easy-to-use artifacts such as talking points, FAQ's, infographics, and quick-reference guides that are rapidly developed, then distributed to improve response efforts. Embedded links to reputable sources and CDC updates in an established practice management guide or on an identified host site can also establish and highlight relevant and approved guidance. Specifically, it is proposed that developed knowledge products focus on key areas of the COVID-19 care by role of care delivery to enhance guideline accessibility and navigability.

Quickly Adapt as Guidance Evolves. A comprehensive lifecycle management process, as illustrated in **Exhibit 1**, sustains current guidelines that are credible and reliable over time to ensure proper application by providers of the guidance therein. Due to rapidly evolving crisis circumstances, there is a need to establish coordination processes to maintain appropriate guidance updates to ensure its effectiveness. Without sustaining current and up-to-date guidance, there is risk of losing credibility and the dissemination of ineffective practice. A lack of confidence in the reliability of the guidance within the guidelines could result in decreased adoption by providers and increased COVID-19 related harm.

In order to mitigate these potential risks, a COVID-19 guide lifecycle management process ensures timely updated guidance and inspires credibility to increase adoption amongst providers. In the past, successful practice management guides (PMG) have been maintained by:

- ▶ Establishing proper roles and responsibilities amongst key personnel to maintain up-to-date and relevant guidance implementation
- ▶ Incorporating de-implementation strategies into the feedback system to ensure outdated practices are discontinued and replaced with current guidance
- ▶ Establishing a flexible and efficient system and procedure for gathering and incorporating feedback in a timely way to increase awareness and adoption amongst providers and decrease misuse-related harm

OUTCOMES

With a reliable PMG lifecycle management process in place, organizations can have confidence in their ability to:

- ▶ Maintain trust and credibility of the PMG amongst target providers

- ▶ Sustain effective and relevant guidance
- ▶ Provide efficient and streamlined processes for incorporating feedback and updating guidance
- ▶ Decrease the variance in PMG application and adoption amongst end providers
- ▶ Decrease COVID-19 related harm across the organization

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