

Adaptation: Practical experience from Nordic Hand fracture guideline

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Background

Despite of being nearly a decade since the introduction of the ADAPTE framework, practical, concrete examples of guideline adaptation efforts remain elusive. In 2014 Denmark published national guidelines on the treatment of hand fractures. The following year, Norway published its updated guideline, which was to a large extent a translation of the Danish one. In 2015 Finland started updating its guideline, to be published in 2016.

Objective

We sought to map the Finnish guideline working group's (GWG) agreement with the Norwegian recommendations and to analyze any reasons for modifications.

Methods

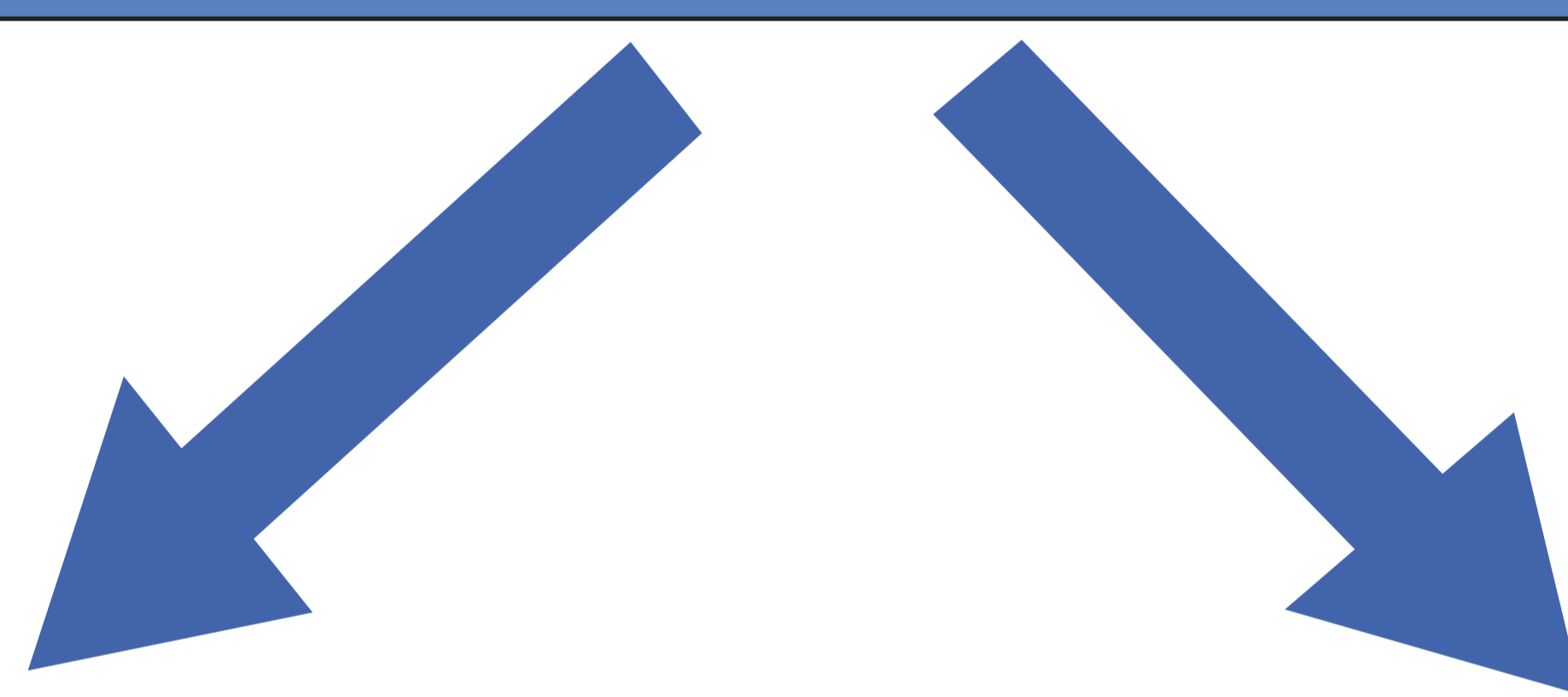
The Finnish GWG evaluated the 10 recommendations and underlying data in the Norwegian guideline.

Results

One major disagreement, concerning treatment of distal radial fractures of patients 65 years and older, was encountered. The evidence and recommendation by the Finnish and Norwegian working group are presented below.

TABLE 1. The results.

Study	Arora et al. J Bone Joint Surg Am 2011	Azzopardi T, et al. J Bone Joint Surg Br 2005
Population	Austria. 65 years or older (N=73). Dorsally dislocated, instable, intra- and extra-articular distal radial fractures.	Scotland. 60–88 years (mean 71). Instable extra-articular distal radial fractures.
Operative treatment group	n=36. Volar locking plate fixation	n=30. Percutaneous pinning
Conservative treatment group	n=37. Cast for five weeks.	n=27. Cast for five weeks.
Follow-up time	One year	One year
Outcome measures	PRWE (Patient-Related Wrist Evaluation) and DASH (Disabilities of the Arm, Shoulder and Hand) scores	Functional measures: pain, range of movement, grip strength, activities of daily living and the SF-36 score Radiological finding
Results	No difference between groups.	No difference in functional outcome, except for an improved range of movement in ulnar deviation in the percutaneous pinning group Radiological result was marginally more anatomical in those treated operatively



Recommendation Norway

Weak Recommendation: We suggest operative treatment of patients with unstable distal radius fractures in adult patients 65 years and older.

Recommendation Finland

Strong quality of evidence (A) (strength of recommendation not graded): There is no difference on functional outcome between operative and conservative treatment in patients 65 years and older. Therefore, conservative treatment is recommended in order to avoid costs and complications of operative treatment.

Discussion

The example shows how two different working groups, both from Nordic welfare countries, have come to opposite recommendations based on the same data. However, in nine out of ten recommendations, the Finnish working group agreed with the Norwegian one.

Implications for guideline developers/users

National GWG should carefully evaluate underlying data to recommendations, and might derive different conclusions to fit the national environment.

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