CURRENT CARE GUIDELINES IN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES: A PEAK INTO ORGANIZATIONS AND PROCESSES

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Evidence based medicine (EBM) and systematic reviews, like Cochrane reviews, have changed the ethos of the medical decision-making both among individuals and at the organisational level. When previous guidelines were a colloquial compromise of recognised authorities, the current ones represent a systematic and transparent approach with constant updating. Nordic countries have been active in developing and implementing EBM and guidelines within their health care systems. There are obvious similarities in the social and health care structures in Scandinavian welfare states and perhaps identical mission in building EBM-based health care. However, there seems to be different approaches in enforcement of EBM. Here we describe the main features of guideline work in Finland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden to highlight the different working processes under the EBM umbrella.

Introduction
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Material and methods
Material was collected in May 2009. An internet-based webropol questionnaire was developed using NICE guideline protocol as a benchmarking document. Items included protocols of guideline work, practices of evidence searching, methods for evaluating and presenting evidence, core details (funding, working groups, member selection, participating organizations) and implementation methods. National guideline organizations in the Finland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden were contacted in order to obtain a leading person to fill in the questionnaire. Results were compacted into tables and sent to the guideline organizations for check up and received in June 2009.

Guideline organizations

Running guideline work

Who are we targeting at?

Question: How do you see the target groups of guidelines in your country with 10-scale, where 10= very important and 0= not important

Take home messages

1. Different guideline working protocols are used in Nordic countries
2. Working protocols rely on EBM but assessment of implementation and applicability varies
3. Target groups of guidelines should be defined more carefully to ensure their applicability

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