

EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINE



The full-time clinical staff that produces the *Milliman Care Guidelines*[®] uses the industry's most rigorous evidence-based methodology. All content is reviewed annually, and updated as necessary, by doctors and nurses who cite more than 15,000 unique references in the current seven-product *Care Guidelines* series. Milliman Care Guidelines epidemiologists then examine databases that cover a significant portion of the United States population to validate that these published research results are achievable in real-life situations.

Delivered at the Point of Care

“Evidence-based medicine is the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients.”* To that end, the independently developed *Care Guidelines* are incorporated into software that is easily used by healthcare professionals. From web-based applications, to interactive tools producing actionable management reports, to handheld versions, *Care Guidelines* software makes the current best evidence readily available for use where it matters: *at the point of care*.

Integrated Clinical Evidence

Not only must guidelines be readily available through a variety of software options, but the evidence itself must be easily accessible as well. Rather than simply producing stand-alone clinical evidence summaries, the current best evidence is integrated into the *Care Guidelines*' workflow with easily accessed annotated bibliographies, references and footnotes. Healthcare professionals can use this evidence to identify opportunities for integrating best practices, and to facilitate positive communication between payors and providers.

*David L Sackett, William M C Rosenberg, J A Muir Gray, R Brian Haynes, W Scott Richardson. Evidence based medicine: what it is and what it isn't. *British Medical Journal* 1996; 312:71-72. Reproduced with permission from BMJ Publishing Group.

Sources of Evidence

Information for the *Care Guidelines* is drawn from analyses of abstracts, articles, databases, textbooks, nationally recognized guidelines and practice observations. Evidence is weighed and graded using a generally accepted hierarchy ranging from randomized controlled trials and other published sources to unpublished data. Examples of evidence used include:

- Meta-analyses with original patient data
- Randomized controlled trials with meta-analysis
- Simple randomized controlled trials
- Systematic reviews
- Series with historical controls
- Case control series
- Case series with literature controls
- Published guidelines from literature analysis (non meta-analysis)
- Published guidelines from consensus processes of national organizations
- Published guidelines from consensus processes
- Uncontrolled case series
- Statements in published articles or textbooks
- Case reports
- Written protocols or outcomes reports from large practices
- Large database analysis
- Expert practitioner reports

Employing Evidence-based Medicine

Using evidence-based medicine, and guidelines based upon it, is critical to the success of the healthcare industry's most important quality and patient safety initiatives.

Quality Programs

Variation in care causes major healthcare quality and cost problems, and many government- and industry-backed quality measurement programs attempt to address this issue.

To help healthcare professionals integrate best-practice recommendations into their own programs, the *Care Guidelines* equip clients with a range of tools and resources that can drive quality care:

- Nationally recognized Quality Measures from the Hospital Quality Alliance, NCQA HEDIS® and the Joint Commission are integrated and flagged within the *Care Guidelines*' workflow
- Crosswalk documents outline exactly how the *Care Guidelines* support the accreditation requirements and quality improvement activities of national agencies, including NCQA, URAC, CMS, IHI and NQF

- Interactive software documents variances from best-practice attributes, including integrated Quality Measures
- Patient education information for clinicians is provided in several *Care Guidelines* products
- Printable patient education handouts are available in the *Inpatient and Surgical Care* and the *Chronic Care Guidelines* products
- Care pathways incorporate evidence-based care elements, recovery milestones and Quality Measures, promoting proactive care and discharge planning

Patient Safety

Unexplained variations in healthcare services, inconsistent treatment patterns, and unnecessary delays often create patient-safety issues – a concern for both providers and payors. Clear communication and evidence-based decision-making tools are essential to deliver the right care, at the right place, at the right time.

The *Care Guidelines* are comprehensive care management tools, and include many components that can help users to enhance patient safety, such as:

- Care Elements that identify potentially harmful omissions and delays in care
- Recovery Milestones to compare a patient's actual clinical status against optimal recovery, and anticipate next steps in the care-delivery process
- Care Management Tools that provide information for safe and effective discharge to next levels of care
- Extensive care planning material to coordinate care across the continuum, and to evaluate patient psychosocial, nutritional, and education needs

Care Guidelines by the Numbers

- The Care Guidelines are used by more than 1,000 clients to support the care management of nearly two-thirds of US health plan members.
- The Care Guidelines integrate and flag quality measures from three national quality programs: the Hospital Quality Alliance, HEDIS and the Joint Commission.
- A full-time staff of 10 clinicians, with more than 60 years of cumulative guideline development experience, leads the Milliman Care Guidelines editorial team.
- Each edition of the Care Guidelines is reviewed by approximately one hundred independent expert reviewers prior to release.
- More than 15,000 unique references are cited in the current seven-product Care Guidelines series.

For more information on the *Care Guidelines*,
licensing or training, please call us at 888 464.4746
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