

TREATMENT GUIDELINE CHECKLIST

Title of Guideline Reviewed: _____

Reviewer: _____

The following Treatment Guideline Checklist is a companion to the *Criteria for Evaluating Treatment Guidelines*, which was approved by the APA Council of Representatives as APA policy in August, 2000. The checklist elaborates the elements that the APA expects to find in a well-researched and well-written set of treatment guidelines. Ratings are to inform APA of the extent to which elements of the guideline under review conform to APA policy. APA recognizes that the relevance of various criteria in the checklist will vary across treatment guidelines. The absence or nonconformance of individual elements in any given guideline document does not necessarily imply that the document is insufficient or unqualified for APA endorsement.

Several checklist items include bulleted points that present non-exhaustive options an evaluator may consider when thinking about a rating on the item. Evaluators are free to make a global rating on the entire item or independent ratings on individual bullets.

This checklist is not intended to provide comprehensive feedback to guideline developers. Depending on the stage of guideline development, APA may ask evaluators to submit additional written substantive comments on the guideline document.

Where applicable, criterion numbers are referenced in parentheses.

	Yes	Some- what	No	Unable to Assess or N/A	Comments
TREATMENT EFFICACY					
1. Is there a broad, careful, and critical selection of the empirical literature? (1.0 and 20.0) Some considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search strategy • Inclusion/exclusion criteria • Other sources of information 					

	Yes	Some- what	No	Unable to Assess or N/A	Comments
2. Is the methodological rigor of the selected studies identified and appropriately weighted? (2.0-3.3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical opinion • Expert consensus • Systematic clinical observation • Quasi-experimental studies/uncontrolled trials • Randomized clinical/ comparative outcomes trials 					
3. Does the document indicate whether factors affecting sample characteristics (e.g., participant selection and attrition) were addressed in the underlying studies? (5.0)					
4. Are the guideline recommendations adequately supported by the data? For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative hypotheses are considered (1.0) • Patient/treatment matching is considered (4.0) 					
5. Do guidelines specify and consider a range of outcomes , such as: (5.0) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of life • Life functioning • Long-term consequences • Indirect consequences • Patient satisfaction • Iatrogenic/side effects • Clinical significance 					
6. Are other threats to reliability and internal validity adequately addressed? (1.0-5.0)					

	Yes	Some- what	No	Unable to Assess or N/A	Comments
UTILITY					
<p>7. Do the guidelines address patient variables that may influence the clinical utility of the intervention? These might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complexity and idiosyncrasy of patients' clinical presentations including severity, comorbidity, and external stressors (6.1) • Culturally relevant research and expertise (6.2) • Gender (social characteristic) and sex (biological characteristic) (6.3) • Age and developmental level (6.4) • Other relevant patient characteristics (6.5) 					
<p>8. Do the guidelines address provider characteristics affecting the utility of the treatment or procedure? These might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training, skill, and experience (7.1) • Interactions between the health care professional's and the patient's characteristics (e.g., language, ethnicity, background, sexual orientation, and sex/gender) (7.2) 					
<p>9. Do the guidelines address how differences in implementation across healthcare settings may affect the utility of the treatment or procedure? (8.0)</p>					
<p>10. Do the guidelines address the degree to which variability in treatment protocol implementation affects outcomes? (9.0)</p>					
<p>11. Do the guidelines address how acceptable the intervention is to the patient?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information and maximize patient choice among comparable interventions (10.1) • Consider the patient's willingness and ability to participate in recommended procedures (10.2) 					

	Yes	Some- what	No	Unable to Assess or N/A	Comments
12. Do the guidelines address how feasible it is for health care professionals to deliver the intervention (e.g., training, theoretical orientation, values and beliefs, resources, costs, administrative support)? (12.0)					
13. If costs are considered in making recommendations, are cost and efficacy issues addressed independently ? (13.0)					
14. Are direct, indirect, short-term, long-term, and non-monetary costs to the patient, professional, and healthcare system addressed? (14.0)					
15. Are costs of withholding treatment addressed? (14.0)					
16. Are threats to external validity and generalizability considered? (6.0)					
GUIDELINE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS					
17. Does the document adequately identify the guideline development panel members ?					
18. Is a wide range of relevant expertise or experience represented on the panel? This might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service delivery • Scientific methodology • Diverse communities • Patient/consumer advocacy • A broad range of relevant disciplines (15)					
17. Are potential, actual, and apparent conflicts of interest disclosed? (16.0)					

	Yes	Some- what	No	Unable to Assess or N/A	Comments
18. Is the panel process adequately described? (17.0, 21.0-21.3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection criteria for panelists • Panel procedures and deliberations • Dissenting opinions considered and noted • Independent review process • Drafts widely distributed for review 					
19. Is the purpose and rationale for the guidelines clear? (18) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need • Intended audience • Goals other than improving patient care, such as rationing services, limiting legal liability, and containing costs 					
20. Does the document specify a time frame for review or revision of the guidelines? (21.4)					
ATTRIBUTES					
21. Is the guideline document consistent with APA's definition of guidelines ? For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspirational language • Educational value • Importance of professional judgment 					
22. Is the distinction between standards and guidelines clarified in a statement consistent with APA's definition?					
23. Are terms defined as needed and appropriate?					
24. Is an adequate diagnostic or classification system identified? (Page 2, para 2)					
25. Are the guidelines consistent with the current APA Ethics Code ?					

	Yes	Some- what	No	Unable to Assess or N/A	Comments
26. Are the guidelines consistent with other APA policy ?					
27. Is there a statement that federal and state laws supercede treatment guidelines?					
28. Is the scope of the guidelines adequately delineated? (19.0-19.4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target condition or problems • Patient population(s) • Clinical interventions • Applicable professional and practice setting(s) 					
29. Does each guideline statement provide a specific recommendation regarding clinical assessment or treatment?					
30. Do the guidelines demonstrate respect for human rights and dignity ?					
31. Are the guidelines internally consistent ?					
32. Is the language clear , succinct, and unambiguous?					
33. Are line numbers included in review drafts?					