

# Surgery clinical guidelines and protocols

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There is a clear distinction between clinical guidelines and protocols. A clinical guideline is a systematically formulated statement aimed at helping practitioners or patients to make appropriate decisions about particular clinical or health care circumstances (NHMRC 1998, p. 11). On the other hand, a clinical protocol is a precise outline meant for the study of a procedure of therapy or a biomedical problem. Clinical guidelines are usually composed of elements that describe various aspects of the condition of a patient and the care that was given to that patient. Clinical protocols, on the other hand, give specific details about the treatment and procedure that should be employed by the surgical team (PCEL 2007, p. 23).

To clearly distinguish between clinical guidelines and protocols, it is important to point out that as much as clinical guidelines are detailed and extensive documents, the lack detailed recommendations about how to carry out a procedure, drug duration, or dose. Such information is usually specified in a clinical protocol, and it is usually built from the information contained in the clinical guideline. The information in the clinical protocol is usually used to direct the surgical team on specific elements of recommended procedures (Suarez 2005, p. 1).

In surgery, clinical guidelines are important because they lead to improved results because they are mostly developed by experts involved in the management of a certain health condition that requires the surgery. Clinical guidelines are important in surgery because they provide best practice

information. They act as operational tools that assist in making decisions. On the other hand, clinical protocols are important in surgery because they give specific details about operational procedures that offer direction and guidance to the surgical teams (Field & Lohr 1990, p. 20).

## References

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