

31 January 2025

Clinical Guidelines Team
National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)

By email to: clinicalguidelines@nhmrc.gov.au

Dear Clinical Guidelines Team,

Re: Draft Guidelines for Guidelines: Updating and Evidence to decision

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the National Health and Medical Research Council's recently drafted modules for the [Guidelines for Guidelines Handbook](#).

The RANZCP is the principal organisation representing the medical specialty of psychiatry in Australia and New Zealand and is responsible for training, educating and representing psychiatrists on policy issues. The RANZCP has more than 8500 members, including around 5900 qualified psychiatrists. As a leader in mental health care, the RANZCP has extensive experience developing clinical practice guidelines. This includes guidelines on the treatment of mood, anxiety and eating disorders, deliberate self-harm, and schizophrenia.

The RANZCP recognises guideline development projects as inherently challenging, requiring critical evidence review, transparent methods, and appropriate engagement with affected communities, clinicians, and health systems. These issues underscore the need for practical resources that support guideline developers and the [2016 NHMRC Guideline Standards](#).

The RANZCP welcomes the recently drafted modules on [updating guidelines](#) and the [evidence-to-decision](#) process. In the RANZCP's view, these issues remain essential topics for the relevance and reliability of guideline recommendations. The module on updating guidelines is noted as particularly relevant given the uptake in 'living' guideline approaches and the value of rapid evidence integration. As emphasised in the module's overview, the RANZCP recognises it essential that guideline update work remains focused on currency at a recommendation-by-recommendation level.

The RANZCP supports the NHMRC's ongoing development of the Handbook and appreciates future opportunities for module feedback. To discuss any of the issues raised in this submission, please contact Nicola Wright, Executive Manager, Policy, Practice, and Research via policy@ranzcp.org or on (03) 9236 9103.

Yours sincerely



Dr Elizabeth Moore
President

Ref: 4739