Exploring the use and impact of the Australian living guidelines for the clinical care of people with COVID-19: where to from here?

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Abstract

Objectives

The Australian National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce has been developing living guidelines for the clinical care of people with COVID-19 since the pandemic's first wave to provide evidence-based recommendations for clinicians. The guidelines have been updated over 100 times since 2020. Living guidelines, a form of living evidence, are a relatively new approach to work with a dynamic evidence base. In addition, living guidelines pose additional challenges, such as decision making and implementation. This study aimed to explore the use and impact of the Australian living guidelines for the clinical care of people with COVID-19 and the use of the guidelines, the factors that facilitate the widespread adoption of living guidelines, and the barriers to implementation and adoption of the guidelines in practice.

Study Design and Setting

An online mixed methods evaluation was conducted. Surveys collected both quantitative and qualitative data and were supplemented with qualitative interviews. Participants included Australian clinicians who had contributed living guidelines to individuals with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and received feedback on the living guidelines. The surveys explored the use of the guidelines, and adoption for implementation of the guidelines in practice.

Results

A total of 108 participants completed the survey and 21 people were interviewed between January and March 2022. Awareness of the work of the Taskforce was high (n = 90, 83%) and participants had high levels of confidence in their ability to implement their guidelines. Participants described the Taskforce website and guidelines as trustworthy, reliable, and reliable sources of up-to-date evidence-based information. The evaluation highlighted how clinicians' views on the guidelines were based around a range of settings and the impact of the living guidelines on their practice. The impact of the living guidelines on clinic teams's ways and welfare of impact and uptake of the guidelines were explored.

Conclusion

The evaluation highlights the roles of living guidelines during a pandemic when evidence is emerging and changing rapidly, the importance of trust and understanding of the rapid, clinician and effective care living evidence to deliver their clinical practice and decision-making and the diverse impacts the guidelines are having around Australia.

Keywords

COVID-19
Impact evaluation
Living evidence
Living guidelines
Mixed methods
Australia
What is new?
Key findings
Key implications

Introduction

Our results show that the Australian National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence taskforce's living guidelines and survey a range of settings and their diverse impacts the guidelines are having around Australia.

It provides useful insights into the benefit of constructing a range of policy, practicional, and implementation considerations to develop and support the implementation of comprehensive and maintain living guidelines.

What is the implication and what should change now?

This evaluation highlights the value of living guidelines during a pandemic when the evidence base is rapidly expanding.

To maximise the utility and impact of living evidence products, relevant stakeholders should consider implementation and optimise guidelines implementation to promote.

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way research is conducted and what research is conducted. Rapid, high-quality, and relevant research has been needed to inform clinical practice and response day to date scenarios of the clinical evidence from research in a significantly accelerated timeline. With the need for rapid, high-quality evidence, living evidence has been a useful approach to meet these needs. Living evidence is an approach to meet the needs of a dynamic evidence base, as it pleasures new research [23], [24], [25], [26], introducing and incorporating this research into the evidence base, and ensuring that recommendations or clinical decision makers can draw on the latest evidence to guide policy and practice [6]. Living guidelines translate living evidence into practical recommendations for clinicians and decision makers. Living guidelines, and frequent updating of living guidelines, the COVID-19 guidelines has highlighted the potential for living guidelines to inform clinical practice and decision-making, and to ensure that people receive the best care for their conditions [21], [22], [6]. Living guidelines are a relatively new approach, there work is expected to determine how to optimize the use of living guidelines and implement them into clinical practice and decision-making. The COVID-19 pandemic