

ATTENTION HEALTH EDITORS AND REPORTERS

First national guidelines published for endoscopy services in Canada

Recommendations promote patient safety and quality care

OAKVILLE, ONTARIO – The Canadian Association of Gastroenterology (CAG) has published *Consensus Guidelines on Safety and Quality Indicators in Endoscopy**, developed to support and promote continuing quality improvement for the medical endoscopic services – including screening for colon cancer – for the more than 1.6 million procedures conducted every year.

Ranging from ethics to facility standards and policies, to quality assurance, the new *Consensus Guidelines* provide endoscopists and facilities across Canada with 23 solid recommendations toward ongoing improvements.

“Our top priorities are patient safety and quality service wherever endoscopic service is delivered in Canada,” said Dr. David Armstrong, Lead CAG Endoscopy Committee. “Having national guidelines in place will be an invaluable tool for endoscopists and facilities across the country to achieve continuous improvements and best use of resources toward patient safety and care.”

Led by the CAG, along with our funding partners the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the *Consensus Guidelines* were developed by a group of 35 Canadian, European and U.S.-based participants, including CAG members, with expertise in endoscopy, gastroenterology, surgery, nursing, legal and ethical issues, patient perspectives and quality improvement in health care. Participants reviewed research published since 1990 to develop recommendations on best practices in the delivery of patient-centered endoscopy services in Canada. Following three rounds of revisions and voting, independent reviewers rated the quality of supporting evidence and strength of each recommendation. Recommendations were endorsed if more than 80 per cent of experts agreed with the statement (consensus).

In recent years, the volume of endoscopic procedures in Canada, such as colonoscopies, has been increasing and demand is exceeding supply. In response, over the past decade the CAG has developed and implemented a number of programs to promote greater safety and quality in endoscopic services. For example, Canada has adopted the Global Rating Scale (GRS), a web-based endoscopy evaluation tool that evaluates multiple components of endoscopy service from a patient-focused perspective. The *Consensus Guidelines* – in the making for three years – is a natural extension of the GRS and related programs that support the CAG’s commitment to safe, high-quality patient-centered care.

“Now that the guidelines are in place, we will work with our members, our partners, provincial gastroenterology associations and other stakeholders to promote their broad implementation across Canada,” said Dr. David Morgan, President of the CAG. “The CAG is committed to provide those who deliver endoscopic services with tools they need to ensure patient-centered, quality service in their day-to-day practice”.

Download an executive summary of [The Canadian Association of Gastroenterology Consensus Guidelines on Safety and Quality Indicators in Endoscopy](#). Copies of the full report are available upon request.

*Endoscopy involves examining the inside of a person's body using an endoscope – a long, thin tube with a light and camera attached to it. In the field of gastroenterology, endoscopy is a medical procedure that supports examination and diagnosis of the organs of the digestive tract. It is used to screen for a variety of diseases, including colon cancer.

About the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology

The Canadian Association of Gastroenterology (CAG) was founded in 1962. Its mandate is to support and engage in the study of the organs of the digestive tract in health and disease; promote the advancement of the science and art of gastroenterology by providing leadership in patient care, research, teaching and continuing professional development; and promote and maintain the highest ethical standards. The CAG has more than 1,100 members including gastroenterologists, surgeons, pediatricians, basic scientists and nurses. Visit the [Canadian Association of Gastroenterology](#) website for general information and for a full list of the association's [quality](#) and [education](#) programs.

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