

# Experts address loss of the national guideline clearinghouse

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(HealthDay)—The demise of the National Guideline Clearinghouse

(NGC) in July 2018 is likely to impact evidence-based health care around the world, according to an Ideas and Opinions piece published online Aug. 28 in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Zachary Munn, Ph.D., from the University of Adelaide in Australia, and Amir Qaseem, M.D., Ph.D., from the American College of Physicians in Philadelphia, address the disappearance of the NGC, which was created in 1998 and served as the repository of practice guidelines meeting minimum quality criteria. By June 2018, more than 2,000 guideline summaries were available and could be searched by different criteria.

The authors state that the demise of the NGC is a tremendous setback for achieving evidence-based health care that may be felt around the world. Although critics argue that guidelines are often driven by vested interests and may fail to reflect [patients'](#) interests, they should not override a clinician's judgement about what is best for a specific patient, but rather help provide the best care for most patients. The loss of the NGC leaves a gap in the ability to access trustworthy clinical guidelines; it is hoped that the ethos and work of the NGC will be continued by another group.

"Perhaps the biggest challenge facing [health care professionals](#) today is providing evidence-based, cost-effective, high-quality care that will optimize patient outcomes. Easy access to trustworthy guidelines can help them meet this challenge," the authors write. "In addition to providing this access, the NGC played a major role in motivating guideline developers to adhere to accepted standards for developing good-quality guidelines. The decision to discontinue the NGC's funding is a step backward in evidence-based medicine that eventually will affect the quality of care provided to our patients."

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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