

The Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand (CSANZ) Guidelines and Quality Standards Committee: How to use it.

A guide for fellows and authors



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The Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand (CSANZ) was established to promote the highest standards of education, training, research and practice in cardiovascular medicine and surgery. An important way in which CSANZ achieves this is through the publication of documents that seek to inform members of CSANZ, and the wider community, about policies and practices that are relevant to, and which can be endorsed as reflecting, these aims. These documents can take the form of Practice Guidelines, Position Statements or Facility/Training Statements (see Table 1).

The Guidelines and Quality Standards Committee (GQSC) of CSANZ provides advice and recommendations to the CSANZ Board. It is responsible for reviewing existing guidelines and position statements, and for commissioning the development of new guidelines and quality standards. It is also the custodian of CSANZ's policy on externally developed guidelines and position statements which CSANZ may be asked to endorse.

Given the rapid pace of innovation and change in the practice of cardiovascular medicine and surgery, it is unsurprising that there has been an increase in the activity of this committee in recent years and, in particular, in requests for the endorsement of new documents both from within the membership of CSANZ and externally.

It is important to remember that once documents are endorsed and published, they are deemed to reflect the views of The Society (CSANZ) to the clinical community, policy

makers and to the wider, general public. Consequently, a number of principles need to be met for CSANZ endorsement:

- There must be a widely recognised need for CSANZ to take a position on the subject concerned. Examples include

Table 1 Key Components of CSANZ Policy Documents.

Document Type	Content
Practice Guideline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Core components must include Literature Review.• Recommendations with accompanying level of evidence and strength of recommendation statements.
Position Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Considered statements of good practice, without level of evidence or strength of recommendation statements.• Supporting references are highly desirable.
Facility and Training Statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statements supported by the specific CSANZ Council.

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clinical guidelines concerning common conditions e.g., Guidelines for the Prevention, Detection, and Management of Heart Failure in Australia [1], or position statements concerning new but rapidly evolving technologies e.g., Position Statement for the Operator and Institutional Requirements for a Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation programs [2].

- Documents endorsed and published by CSANZ must adequately reflect the breadth of opinions within the membership. Thus, it is important to consider the make-up of the writing group to ensure adequate stakeholder representation at an early stage of development. Multi-disciplinary involvement and consumer engagement are strongly encouraged.
- CSANZ is not in a position to endorse documents that it has not been actively involved with developing from the outset. For documents primarily developed by other professional bodies, it is important that the GQSC is approached early in the process, so that adequate representation of CSANZ is agreed upon.
- Conflicts of interest must be declared, and managed, in a transparent manner throughout the process, and clearly

stated in final documents. For this reason, it is current CSANZ policy that documents arising from industry sponsored symposia or expert working groups will not be endorsed.

In order to assist members and external bodies to meet these aims, the GQSC has recently developed a number of resources that may be helpful, including an explanation of document governance processes and a template to assist authors in preparing their manuscript. These resources will be made available on the CSANZ website (www.csanz.edu.au).

References

- [1] Atherton JJ, Sindone A, De Pasquale CG, Driscoll A, MacDonald PS, Hopper I, et al. National Heart Foundation of Australia and Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand: guidelines for the prevention, detection, and management of heart failure in Australia 2018. *Heart Lung Circ.* 2018;27(10):1123–208.
- [2] Walters DL, Webster M, Pasupati S, Walton A, Muller D, Stewart J, et al. Position statement for the operator and institutional requirements for a transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI) program. *Heart Lung Circ.* 2015;24(3):219–23.