

# CLINICAL PRACTICE GUIDELINES

## Drugs for Cardiac Arrest

### **Objectives:**

To learn how to assess the usefulness of recommendations of clinical practice guidelines for application to the care of individual patients.

This includes:

- Determining whether the recommendations are based on a rigorous identification and syntheses of relevant evidence.
- Determining whether the recommendations are based on a precise statement of perspectives, values and preferences in relationship to the outcomes considered.
- Learning to assess the usefulness of the grading system attached to the recommendations of the guideline.
- Understanding the limitations of conventionally developed practice guidelines when appraised from an evidence-based perspective.

### **Assignment:**

1. Read the attached scenario.
2. Read the attached guidelines for reading practice guidelines.
3. Critically appraise the attached guidelines using the accompanying worksheet.
4. Describe how you would address the question regarding the patient's management taking into account your review of the guidelines.

### **Clinical Scenario:**

You are the medical and education director of a regional emergency medical system with both basic and advanced life support capabilities. A qualitative update and revision is due as a result of the publication of substantially revised American Heart Association guidelines for Advanced Cardiac Life Support. Several of your colleagues have asked you about possible changes to the resuscitation protocols for cardiac arrest, and particularly the use of new line drugs such as vasopressin and amiodarone in preference to epinephrine and lidocaine, drugs that your paramedics are used to using. Your paramedic ambulances do not stock either vasopressin or amiodarone, nor do your training and recertification programs include them. Incorporating these interventions will require considerable effort to implement. You decide to look at the new guidelines in detail before committing yourself making a major revision in your protocols. A quick search of the National Guidelines Clearing House site (<http://www.guideline.gov/>) using the phrase "cardiac life support" leads you to a summary of the AHA 2005 ACLS update and identifies the November 29, 2005 and December 13, 2005 issues of Circulation as the source of the detailed elaboration of the guides.

**Attachments:**

1. Guyatt G, Rennie D, Meade MO, Cook DJ Editors, The Users' Guides to the Medical Literature, A Manual for Evidence-Based Clinical Practice. 3rd Edition. McGraw-Hill 2015, Chapter 26.
2. 2005 International Consensus Conference on Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care Science With Treatment Recommendations, hosted by the American Heart Association. Circulation. Circulation 2005;112 (22 and 24 Suppl). Advanced Life Support. Excerpts, relevant worksheets and methodological summaries.
3. Worksheet for evaluation of a clinical practice guideline.