

# Cochrane Canada Symposium: Bringing Living Systematic Reviews to Life

## Taking LSRs into practice: Living Recommendations

Elie Akl

American University of Beirut, Lebanon

# Disclosures

- No financial COI
- Intellectual COI related to work on American Society of Hematology guidelines
- Funding: American Society of Hematology

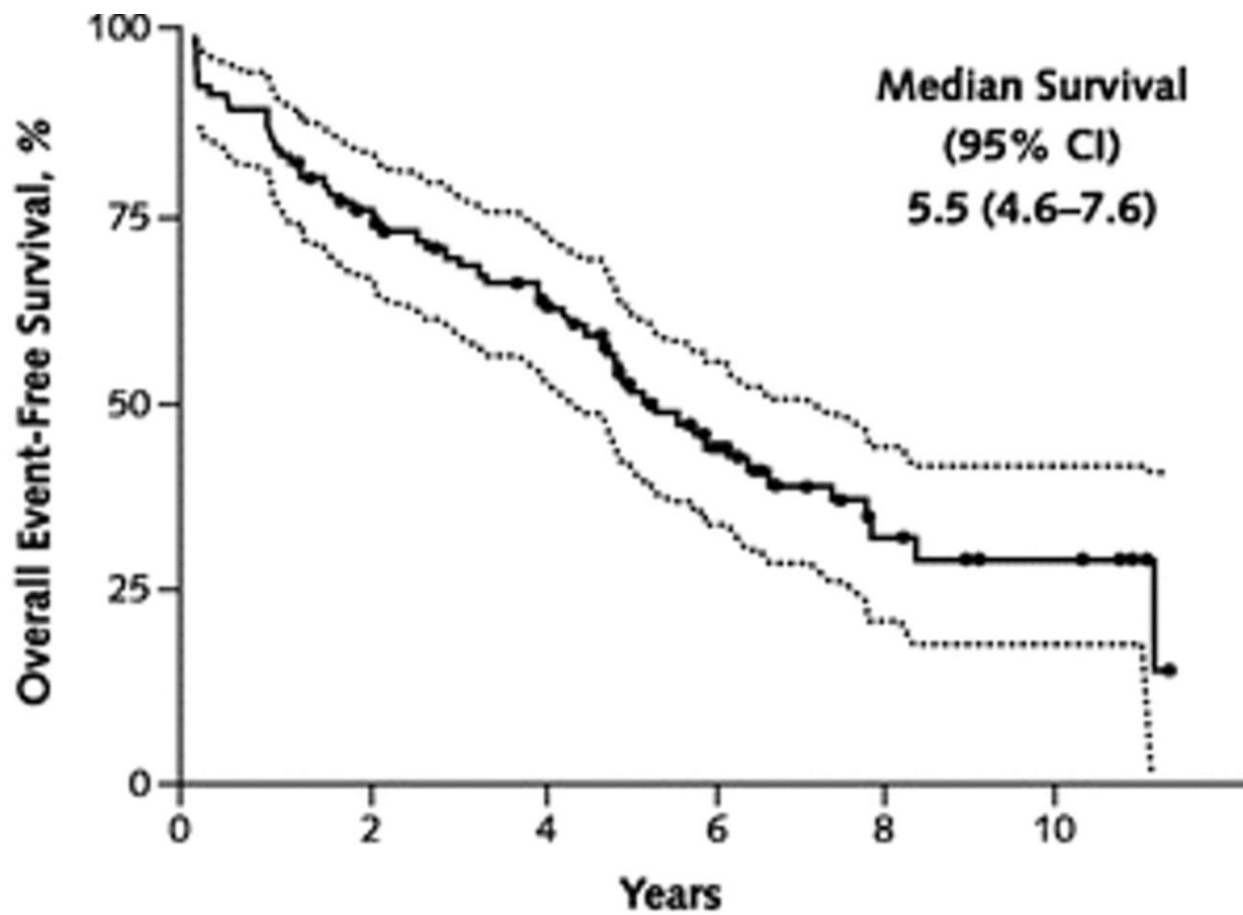
# Clinical practice guidelines

“Clinical practice guidelines are statements that include recommendations intended to optimize patient care that are informed by a ***systematic review*** of evidence and an assessment of the benefits and harms of alternative care options”

*IOM: Clinical Practice Guidelines We Can Trust*

## From: How Quickly Do Systematic Reviews Go Out of Date? A Survival Analysis

Ann Intern Med. 2007;147(4):224-233. doi:10.7326/0003-4819-147-4-200708210-00179



Systematic reviews  
at risk, *n*

100

73

59

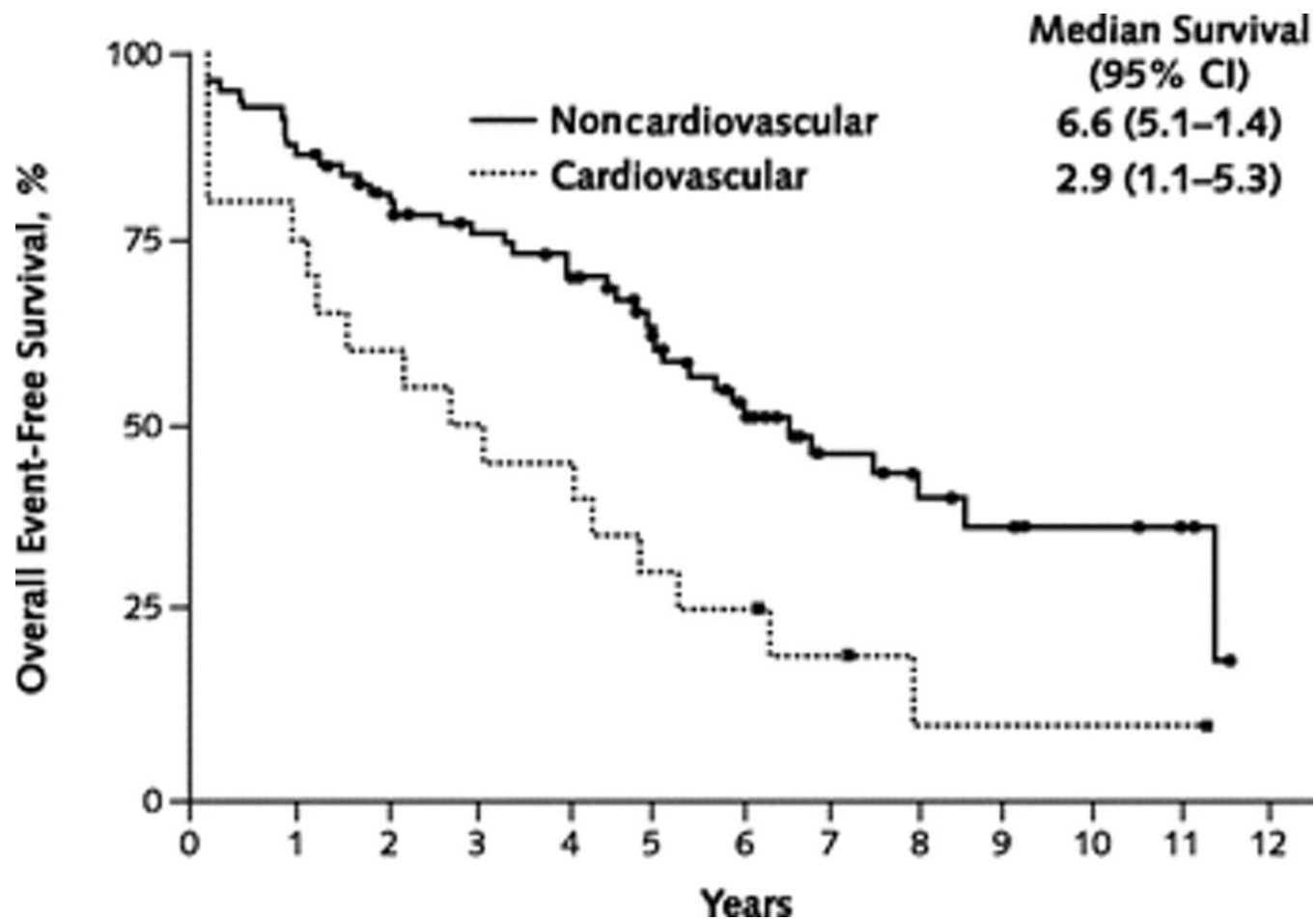
34

14

6

## From: How Quickly Do Systematic Reviews Go Out of Date? A Survival Analysis

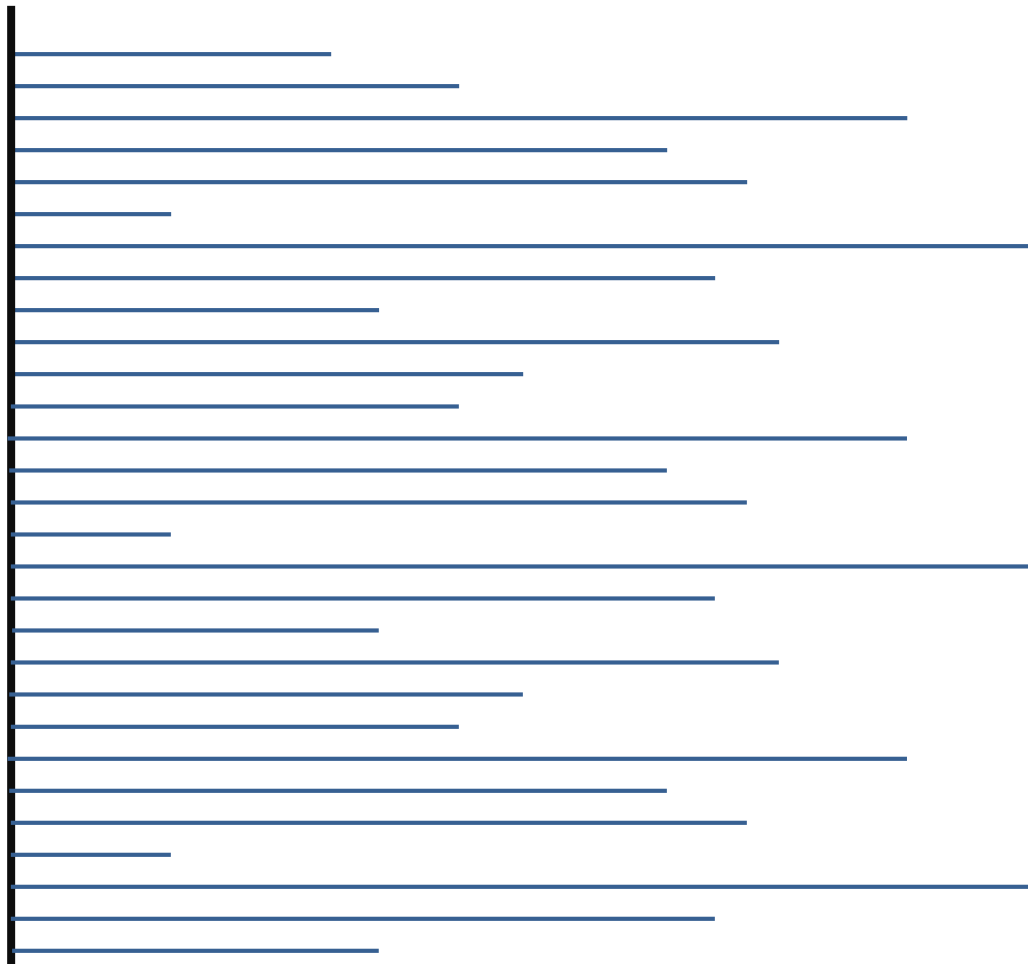
Ann Intern Med. 2007;147(4):224-233. doi:10.7326/0003-4819-147-4-200708210-00179



# Clinical practice guidelines

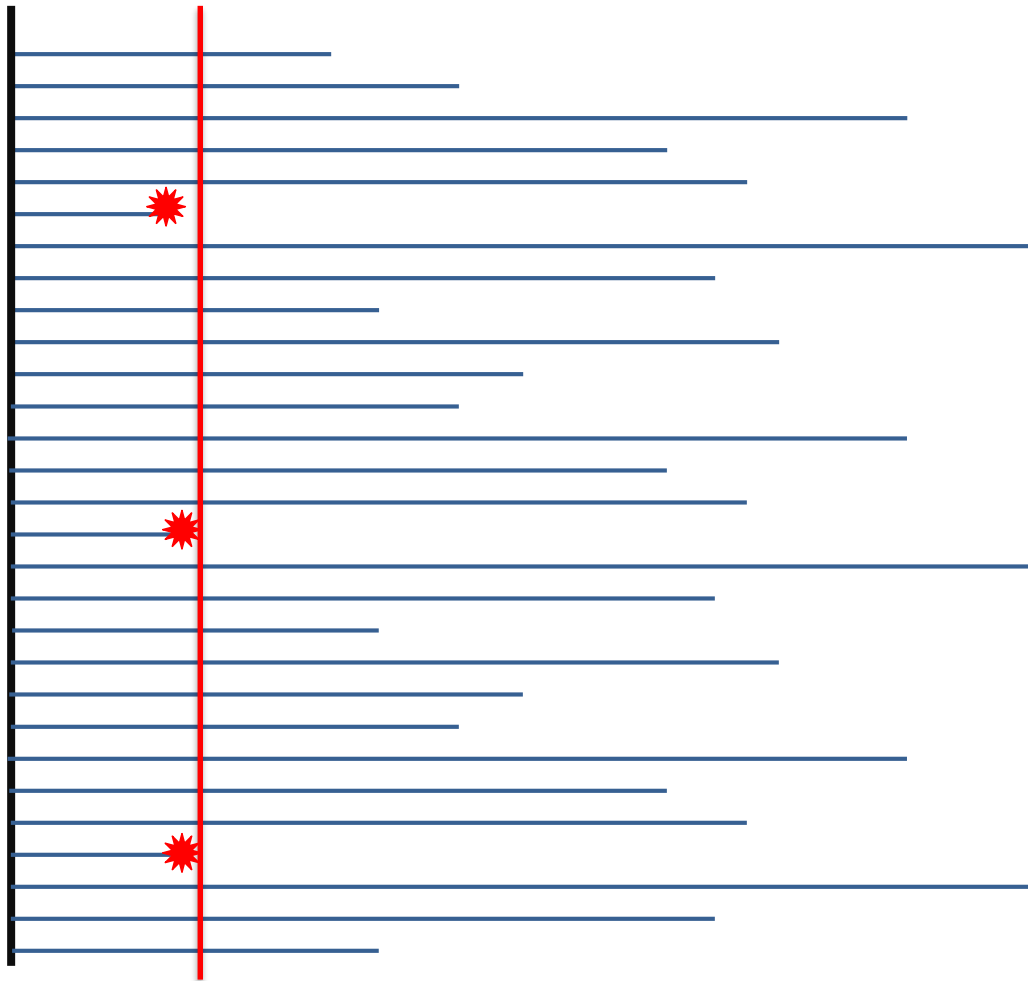
- Recommendations get outdated at variables rates
- Some are already outdated by the time of publication

# When to update the guidelines?



Publication of  
the guidelines

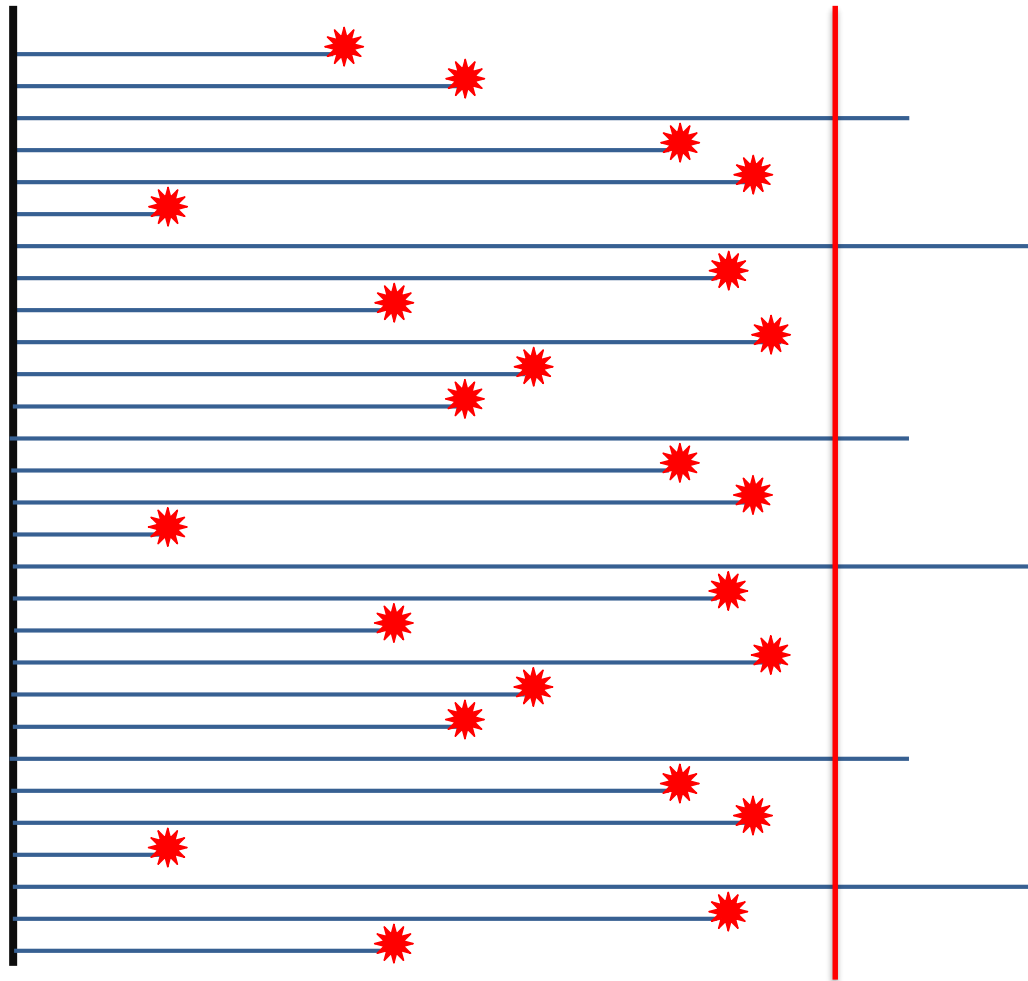
# When to update the guidelines?



Publication of  
the guidelines

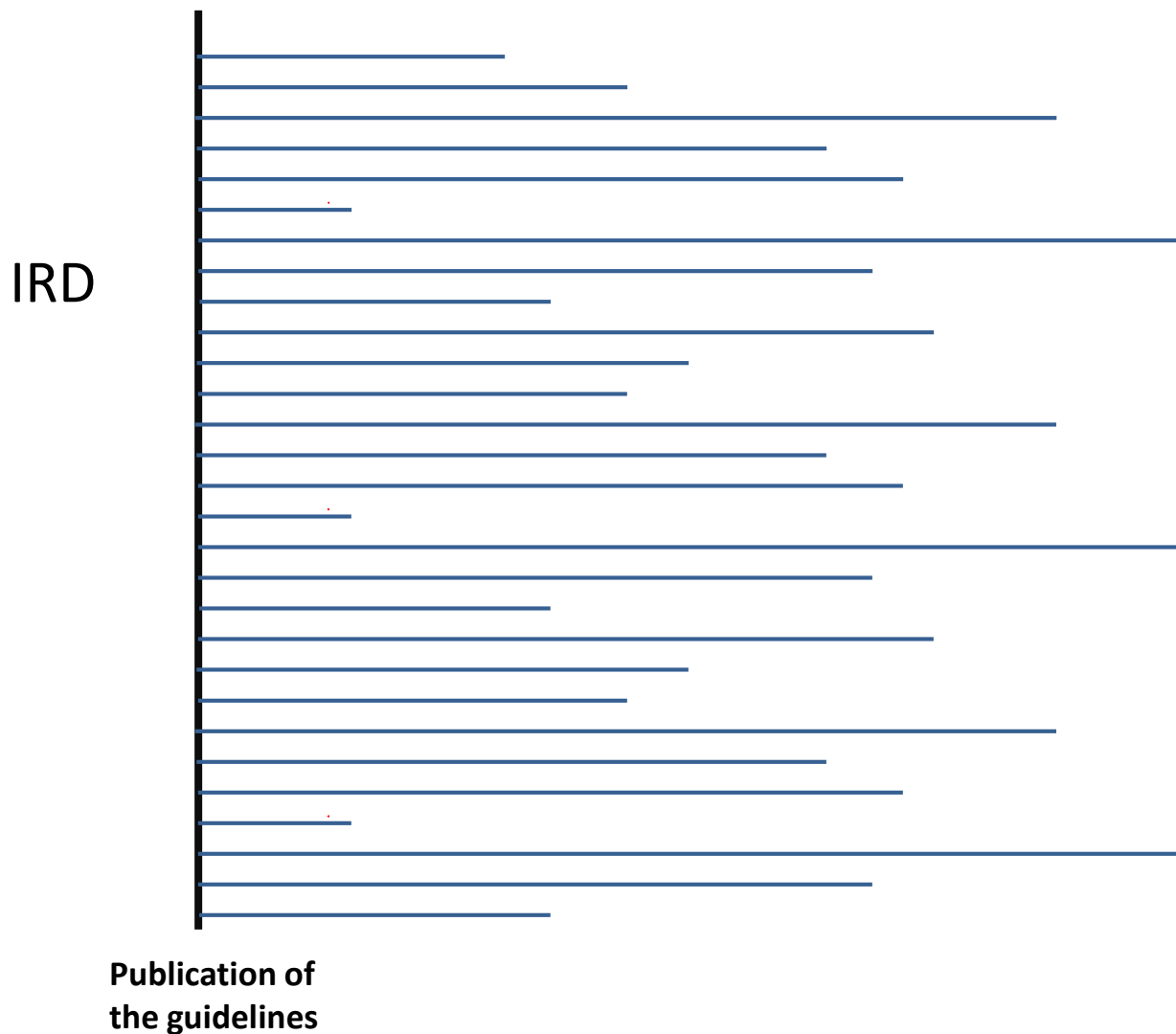


# When to update the guidelines?



Publication of  
the guidelines

# When to update the guidelines?



# When to update the guidelines?

- The appropriate question is: when to update the recommendation?
- The tentative answer: as soon as new impactful evidence becomes available for that recommendation

# Living guidelines

- Develop the “base” guidelines (i.e., all recommendations)
- As soon as “base” guidelines are produced
  - Switch to the living mode
  - The unit of update is the recommendation

# Living guidelines

- ASH-McMaster Clinical Practice Guidelines on Venous Thromboembolism
- >200 recommendations
  1. Prevention of VTE in Surgical Hospitalized Patients
  2. Prevention of VTE in Medical Hospitalized Patients
  3. Treatment of Acute VTE
  4. Optimal Management of Anticoagulation Therapy
  5. Prevention and Treatment of VTE in Patients with Cancer
  6. Heparin-Induced Thrombocytopenia
  7. Thrombophilia
  8. Pediatric VTE
  9. VTE in the Context of Pregnancy
  10. Diagnosis of VTE

# Living guidelines

- ASH-McMaster Clinical Practice Guidelines on Venous Thromboembolism
- >200 recommendations
  1. Prevention of VTE in Surgical Hospitalized Patients
  2. Prevention of VTE in Medical Hospitalized Patients
  3. Treatment of Acute VTE
  4. Optimal Management of Anticoagulation Therapy
  5. Prevention and Treatment of VTE in Patients with Cancer
  6. Heparin-Induced Thrombocytopenia
  7. Thrombophilia
  8. Pediatric VTE
  9. VTE in the Context of Pregnancy
  10. Diagnosis of VTE

# Living guidelines

- ASH-McMaster Clinical Practice Guidelines on Venous Thromboembolism
  - Cancer guidelines: about 20 recommendations
  - “Base” recommendations to be completed within few months
  - At that time, the living mode would be switched ON

# Requirements of Living guidelines

- Living guidelines require:
  - Living systematic reviews

AND

- Living Evidence Profile
- Living Evidence to Decision (EtD) Table
- Living panel
- Living peer review process
- Living publication process
- Living coordination process
- Living budget



# Challenges of Living guidelines

- Living guidelines require:
  - Living systematic reviews

AND

- Living Evidence Profile
- Living Evidence to Decision (EtD) Table
- Living panel
- Living peer review process
- Living publication process
- Living coordination process
- Living budget

# Additional challenges

- Selecting recommendations to ‘bring to life’
- Selecting live recommendations to ‘turn off’
- Risk of frequently revisiting recommendations
- Factors other than evidence that could trigger an update of the recommendation

# Conclusion

- Living guidelines is not a new methodology but process
- Given the expected burden, such undertaking has to be well calculated and planned
- Need to experiment and develop the research agenda

# Thank you!

- Questions?