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## When to invest in clinical guidelines for children? A practice oriented tool to facilitate decision-making

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Children are not just small adults; they need to be diagnosed and treated in the context of their rapid growth and development. However, in guideline development, children's needs and interests are still overlooked. This study aims to develop a tool that could stimulate guideline developers to take children into account on a more structural basis and to explore how to facilitate children's participation in the process of guideline development. A three-phase multi-method sequential study design was used. Professionals involved in guideline development participated in interviews (n=12), filled in a questionnaire (n=60) and/or participated in the focus group meeting (n=11). The study results in a comprehensive understanding of the considerations that professionals take into account when deciding whether guidelines need to apply to children specifically. This resulted into a tool that assists guideline developers to make this assessment more accurately. It takes the form of a flowchart that guides users through a series of critical questions. The flowchart reminds guideline developers to consider children as a particular patient population when prioritizing and demarcating new guideline topics. It will help to ensure that clinical guidelines address children's unique health care needs and perspectives. Facilitating children's and parent's participation in the process of guideline development is perceived as challenging; nevertheless, it should be the next step in making pediatric guidelines more child-centered and family-centered.

### Biography

Inge Schalkers has obtained her PhD degree in 2016. Presently she works as a Policy Advisor for De Hart & Vaatgroep, a Dutch patient organization representing the interests of people with cardiovascular diseases. Her area of interest lies in the organization of patient participation in cardiovascular research.

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