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**Uptake of clinical practice guidelines by South African physiotherapists: insights and expectations**

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**Objectives/aims**

This study explored the insights, needs and expectations of South African (SA) physiotherapists (PTs) about routine use of clinical practice guidelines (CPG) in clinical practice. Implementing CPG is a new area for many SA PTs. There is increasing pressure from patients, professional associations and health insurers for uptake of credible CPG as a vehicle for evidence-based practice (EBP). Given the lack of history of CPG engagement by SA PTs, understanding local needs, expectations, insights and contexts is essential to provide effective training in EBP, particularly for CPG implementation.

**Methods**

A nationwide descriptive study was undertaken, using semi-structured telephone interviews with 31 PTs identified by maximum variation cluster sampling from private, public & education sectors. Recordings were independently transcribed and member-checked. Themes were assigned via an iterative process: data immersion & familiarization; identifying themes; creating a codebook; indexing; categorizing; data mapping & interpretation; & back checking. Data triangulation was used to increase results’ credibility and validity, by sub-group data comparison. Exemplar quotations were extracted per theme.

**Main findings**

This study produced new knowledge regarding what SA PTs consider as EBP & what they perceive local barriers and facilitators to be when implementing evidence into practice. Also, what they see as critical points in patient journeys where evidence application might significantly improve health and cost outcomes. There were complex, cross-cutting themes, including variable understanding of EBP; positive & negative experiences of CPGs; poor understanding of implementation, perceived organizational and professional pressures to use CPGs; threats to autonomy; and lack of trust in research.