

# Outcomes Management in Nutritional Care in Irritable Bowel Syndrome



Société Suisse de Nutrition Clinique  
Gesellschaft für Klinische Ernährung der Schweiz  
Società Svizzera della Nutrizione Clinica

Projekt team: Sandra Jent, RD; Klazine Van der Horst, Ph.D., RD (both Bern University of Applied Sciences)  
Ph.D. supervisors: Gerhard Rogler, Ph.d., MD; Daniel Pohl, MD (both Gastroenterology and Hepatology University Hospital Zurich)  
Contact: Sandra Jent, Bern University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland, sandra.jent@bfh.ch, +41 31 848 37 84

## Description of the initiative

Resources in health care systems are limited. Thus, the choice of effective interventions is pivotal [1]. Dietitians aim to implement systematic outcomes management to assess the effectiveness of nutritional care and improve patient outcomes [2]. So far, outcomes data is often analyzed retrospectively using patient records, and heterogeneous and missing data are frequently observed problems [3]. Disease-specific outcome management guidelines that define a core set of indicators, measurement instruments, analysis, and data interpretation would prevent these problems. Such guidelines would also enable dietitians to efficiently introduce outcome management and facilitate inter-institutional comparisons.

This project aims to develop such an outcomes management guideline of nutritional care in irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and to evaluate it in Switzerland. IBS was chosen because of its high prevalence [4] and the availability of a treatment guideline specific to nutritional care [5].

## Planned activities & deliverables

The United Kingdom Medical Research Council's "Methodology for the Development and Evaluation of Complex Interventions" [6] will be applied as a framework for this project. Project steps and main deliverables are shown in figure 1.

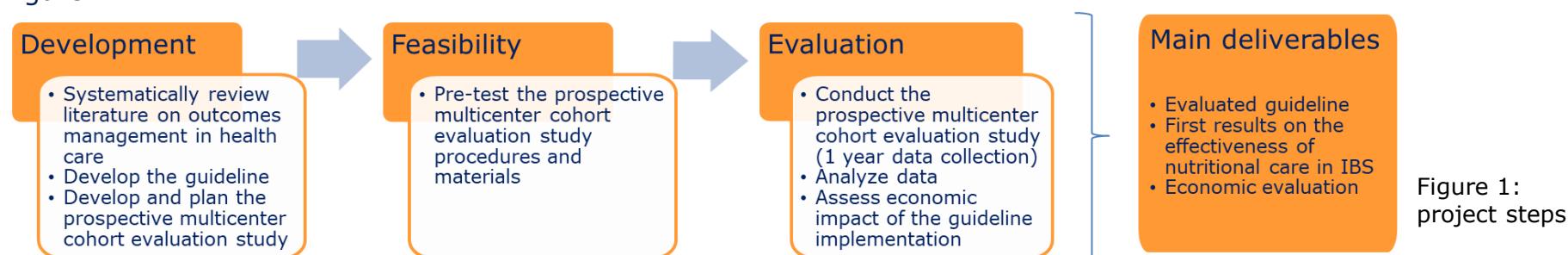


Figure 1: project steps

- Achievements within 12 months: development phase completed
- Achievements within 24 months: feasibility phase completed

## Resources & enablers

Members of the project team are Sandra Jent (Ph.D. student) and Prof. Dr. Klazine van der Horst (project responsible), both faculty of the Division Nutrition and Dietetics at Bern University of Applied Research. Prof. Dr. med. Dr. phil. Gerhard Rogler and Dr. med. Daniel Pohl will be members of the promotion committee. Furthermore, a research assistant, trainees, and members of different stakeholder groups (dietitians, IBS patients, gastroenterologists, health insurance representatives) will be involved in guideline development.

The total project budget amounts to € 332'000, including € 176'000 own contribution. The grant will cover material costs of about € 3500 and the staff costs to develop the guideline.

It will be critical to develop a guideline that is applicable in everyday dietitians' practice, and that provides data that is as complete, valid, and reliable as possible.

## Results/outcomes & expected impact

We will disseminate the final version of the guideline freely to dietitians through our website as well as through professional dietetic and clinical nutrition associations. Furthermore, we have planned several peer-reviewed, open-access publications.

The guideline will allow dietitians to efficiently implement systematic outcomes management, analyze their effectiveness, compare it inter-institutionally, and use the data to improve patient care.

The project provides a simple but feasible solution to one of the central problems of the dietetic profession - lack of effectiveness data. Consequent implementation of the guideline by dietitians may boost effectiveness research in everyday practice.

The project will provide information on the effectiveness of nutritional care in IBS and aims to strengthen the evidence-base about the importance of nutritional care in IBS.

The guideline may be adapted for other settings and countries, with respect to cultural and language issues. The development method can be transferred to further indications.

## References

- [1] Freijer, K., et al. (2015). The view of European experts regarding health economics for medical nutrition in disease-related malnutrition. *Eur J Clin Nutr*, 69(5), 539–545;
- [2] EFAD Professional Practice Committee (2020). The importance of Outcomes Management in Dietetics: Policy paper. Retrieved from: [http://www.efad.org/media/1930/policy-paper-outcomes-management\\_2020\\_02\\_26\\_formatted.pdf](http://www.efad.org/media/1930/policy-paper-outcomes-management_2020_02_26_formatted.pdf);
- [3] Hickman, I.J., et al. (2015). Am I making a difference? Measuring dietetic outcomes in clinical practice. *Eur J Clin Nutr*, 69(11), 1181–1183;
- [4] Lovell, R.M., & Ford, A.C. (2012). Global prevalence of and risk factors for irritable bowel syndrome: A meta-analysis. *Clin Gastroenterol Hepatol*, 10(7), 712–721.e4;
- [5] McKenzie, Y.A., et al. (2016). British Dietetic Association systematic review and evidence-based practice guidelines for the dietary management of irritable bowel syndrome in adults (2016 update). *J Hum Nutr Diet*, 29(5), 549–575;
- [6] Medical Research Council (2006). Developing and evaluating complex interventions: new guidance. Retrieved from <https://mrc.ukri.org/documents/pdf/complex-interventions-guidance/>