

WE HAVE AGREED II UPDATING THE ASCIA FOOD ALLERGY PREVENTION GUIDELINES

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Abstract

Introduction: The Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) has been providing guidance regarding infant feeding and food allergy prevention since 2005. With new food allergy prevention evidence available, ASCIA, the National Allergy Council (NAC), the National Allergy Centre of Excellence (NACE), the Centre for Food Allergy Research (CFAR) and Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia (A&AA), collaborated to update and improve the ASCIA Guideline for Infant Feeding and Food Allergy Prevention.

Method: An expert writing group comprising representation from ASCIA, NAC, NACE, CFAR and A&AA discussed and established a process underpinned by the Appraisal of Guidelines for Research & Evaluation II (Agree II) framework. NACE and CFAR conducted the evidence review. The NAC coordinated a stakeholder meeting, where evidence was presented, guideline scope agreed to, and draft recommendations developed. Where evidence was lacking, recommendations were based on expert consensus through a formal Delphi panel process, with prespecified consensus criteria.

Results: A systematic approach including two overviews of systematic reviews relating to infant feeding and food allergy prevention was undertaken. The expert writing group developed 16 recommendations, 8 of which were based on published evidence and 8 based on expert consensus, all 8 of which met a level of consensus of at least 83% in round 1 (n=4) or round 2 (n=4) of the Delphi.

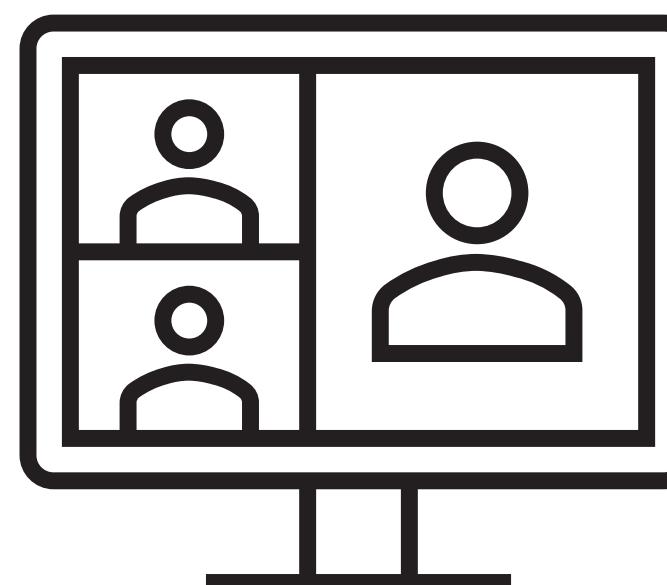
Conclusion: The updated ASCIA Guideline for Infant Feeding and Food Allergy Prevention was updated, underpinned by the AGREE II framework. Collaboration between ASCIA, NAC, NACE, CFAR and A&AA supported a robust guideline update process. The resulting ASCIA guideline will primarily be implemented through the ASCIA website and the NAC's Nip allergies in the Bub program. A separate document addressing other aspects of food allergy prevention will be developed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors gratefully acknowledge the contributions of all who attended stakeholder meetings and participated in the Delphi panel which supported the development of this guideline.

The NACE and CFAR evidence synthesis teams acknowledge Dr Desalegn Shifti and our national and international partners, for their contributions to the evidence summary presented at the in-person meeting in March 2024.

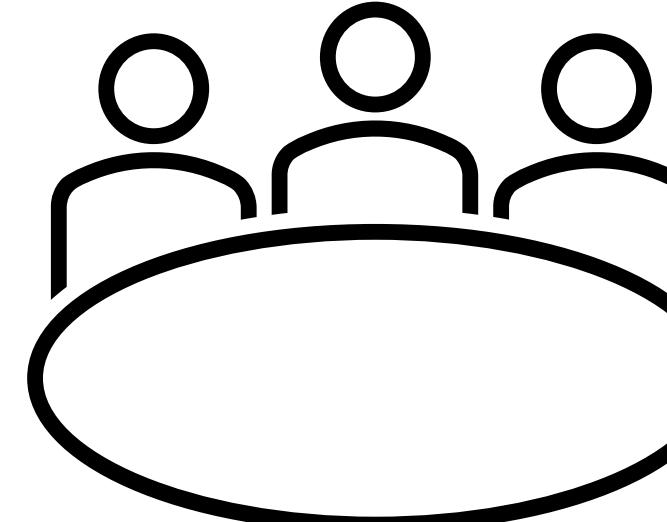
The review and update of the ASCIA Guideline for Infant Feeding and Food Allergy Prevention, has not been funded or influenced by commercial organisations.



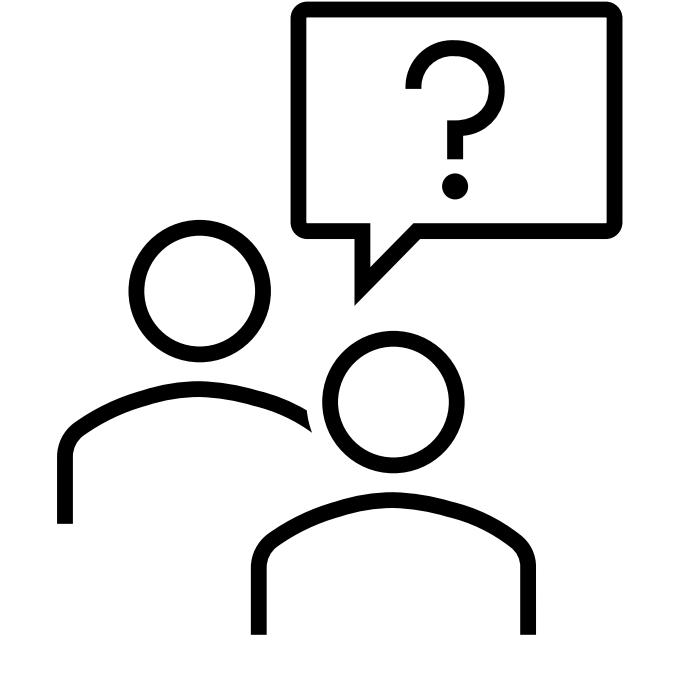
- An expert working group comprising representation from ASCIA, the NAC, the NACE, CFAR and A&AA was established.
- Meetings were held to define the scope of the ASCIA Guideline for Infant Feeding and Food Allergy Prevention update and the role of each organisation.
- There was consensus to use the AGREE II tool to underpin the review and update of the ASCIA Guideline for Infant Feeding and Food Allergy Prevention.



- The NACE and CFAR used a systematic approach to rapidly identify evidence to underpin the guideline review process, including two overviews of systematic reviews conducted in collaboration with national and international research partners.
- 11 systematic reviews published since 2010 were examined.
- An evidence summary was developed relating to existing ASCIA food allergy prevention recommendations.
- A summary document highlighting updated evidence relating to existing ASCIA food allergy prevention recommendations was provided as pre-reading for a meeting of key interest holders.



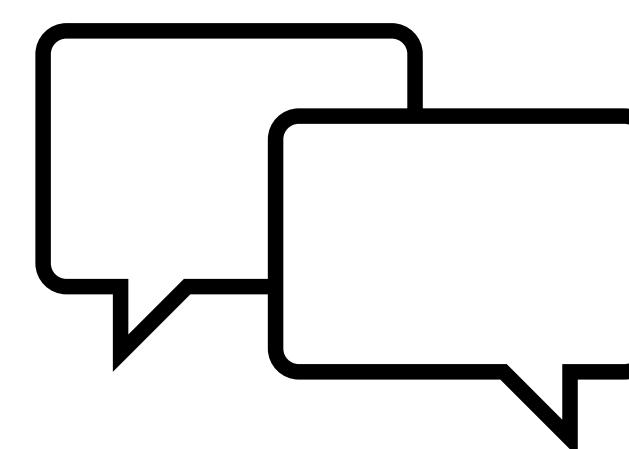
- A meeting of key interest holders was held in person.
- The meeting was attended by 38 healthcare professionals.
- The purpose of the meeting was to use the evidence review to update or develop guideline recommendations.
- Where evidence was lacking, consensus statements would be developed on agreed topics.



- A formal Delphi panel process was undertaken, led by the NAC.
- A total of 8 recommendations were put to the Delphi panel with 75% consensus set as the minimum requirement.
- 4 recommendations achieved consensus in round 1 of the Delphi process.
- The remaining 4 statements achieved consensus in round 2 of the Delphi process.



- The ASCIA Guideline for Infant Feeding and Food Allergy Prevention was drafted with a total of 16 recommendations – 8 of which are based on published evidence and the remaining 8 were based on expert consensus.
- Several iterations were reviewed by the writing group.
- The ASCIA guideline was submitted for publication.



- To support implementation of the ASCIA Guideline for Infant Feeding and Food Allergy Prevention, the NAC conducted 10 focus groups.
- 2 focus groups were held with healthcare professionals.
- 8 focus groups were held with parents with 1 specifically for fathers and two specifically for parents of Asian ethnicity.



- The ASCIA website and the Nip allergies in Bub website and resources will be updated for consistency with the new ASCIA guideline once released.
- New videos and resources will be developed specifically to encourage and support parental adherence with the ASCIA guideline.
- The NACE Living Evidence Collection on Food Allergy Prevention synthesises new global research to help underpin future updates.