

**Dear colleague,**

With days shortening in the northern hemisphere, and lengthening in the southern hemisphere, the year 2022 is slowly coming to an end. It's been an incredibly busy year for all the working groups, doing all the donkey work to deliver an updated guideline in May 2023. With this newsletter, we would like to inform you about the work the IWGDF has been undertaking this year.

## **IWGDF Guidelines – 2023 update**

### **Working groups**

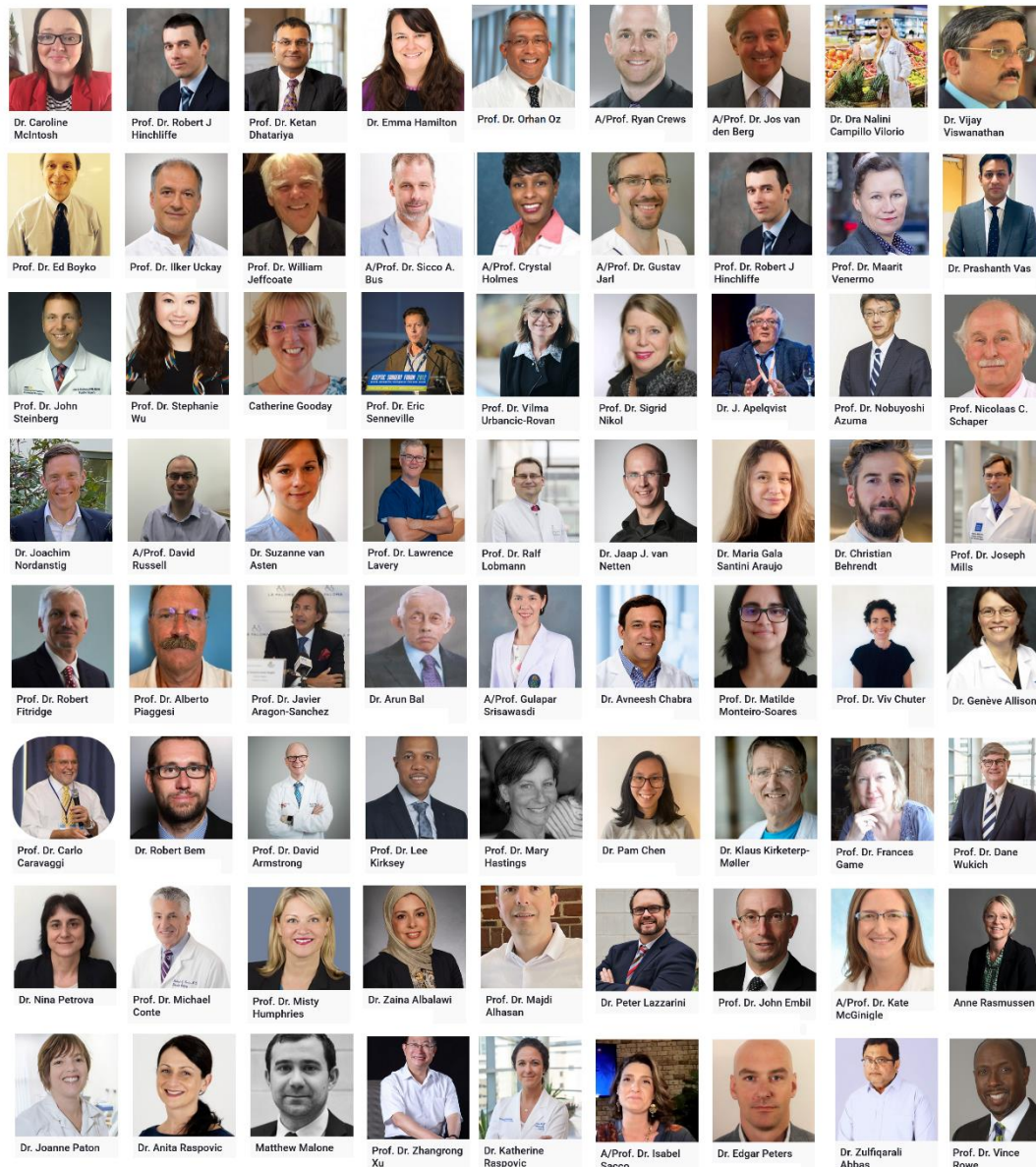
As we informed you all earlier, the IWGDF Editorial Board has installed seven working groups to produce the seven chapters for the 2023 update of the Guidelines. These concern the six topics of the 2019 update ([prevention](#), [classification](#), [offloading](#), [peripheral artery disease](#), [infection](#), and [wound healing interventions](#)). In addition, a new chapter will be included with guidelines on the diagnosis and management of [Charcot's neuro-osteo-arthropathy](#), chaired by prof. Dane Wukich.

A total of 74 multidisciplinary experts from all over the world, with expertise in clinical science and experience in clinical practice, participate voluntarily in these seven working groups. You can read about all working groups and their members via the links above.

Because we continuously strive to improve the quality of our guidelines, all working group members were first trained before we embarked on the journey to update our guideline. In the summer of 2021, we ensured training from one of the world's most respected institutes in guideline writing, McMaster's University. Together with Guidelines International Network, they organize the [International Guideline Development Credentialing & Certification Program](#) (INGUIDE). All IWGDF working group members are now level 1 certified guideline panel members, while all chairs and secretaries have completed the more extensive level 2 training in order to become a GRADE "methodologist".

Over the past year, we realized the importance of this training. It helped us in sticking to the process of first formulating the questions relevant for clinicians in the field, followed by systematically searching and assessing the literature, and finally translating this into evidence-based recommendations. With each update, this becomes more and more challenging, as the number of RCTs has exploded in some fields, but unfortunately the number of high-quality RCTs with very low risk of bias has not. Sorting the wheat from the chaff, but doing so while setting our inherent biases aside and using objective criteria, is challenging and time-consuming. We're still counting, but collectively we'll assess over 100,000 records, investing over 5,000 hours in this process.

We cannot thank all our working group members enough for their efforts in this process. On the next page, you can see all their names and faces.



## News from the IWGDF Editorial Board

While we're busy working on the update, the IWGDF Editorial Board has also been looking forward. Professor Schaper has indicated his wish to step down after this update. We will save the appropriate thanks for his tremendous work for IWGDF for later, as he is too focused on the 2023 update now to hear them.



Prof. Dr. Frances Game

What we can proudly say, though, is that we are very happy that professor Fran Game has accepted the role of Chair of the IWGDF Editorial Board from June 2023 onwards. With her vast experience in working groups and the editorial board, no one on earth is better placed to lead the IWGDF to continue the journey to produce evidence-based guidelines to inform health care providers all over the world on strategies for the prevention and management of diabetic foot disease.

### Guideline review from external experts

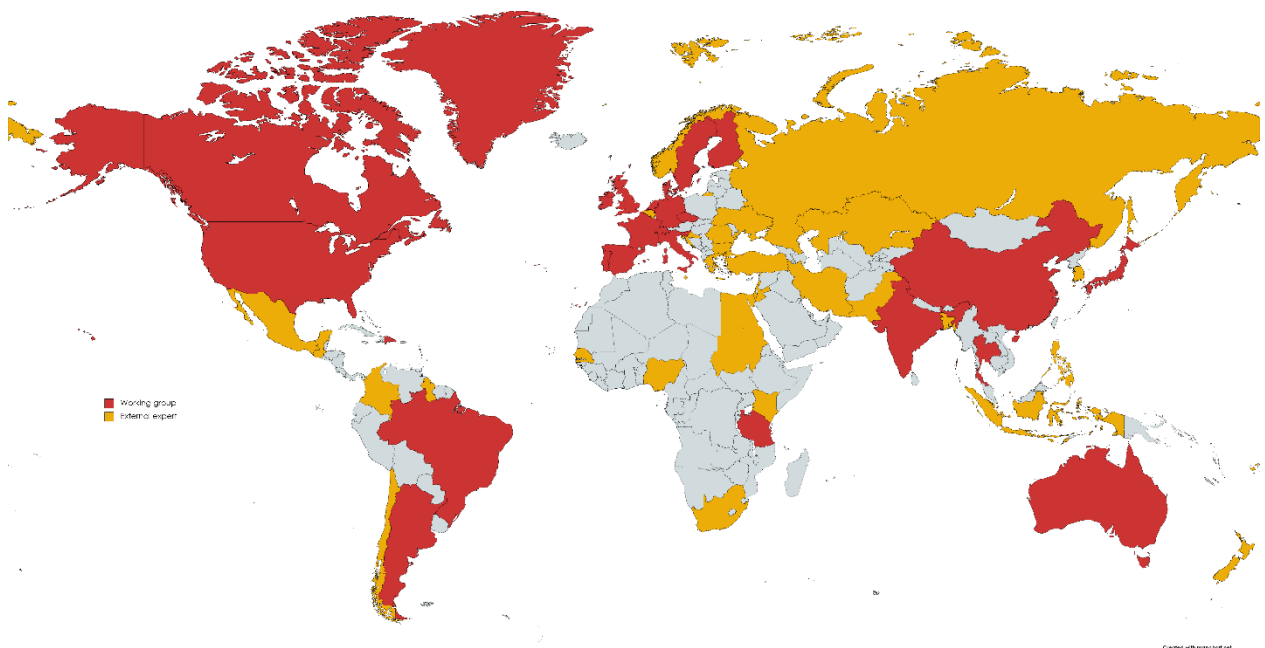
Writing guidelines is not done in isolation by the working groups, but requires input from all over the world. Currently, we are supported by 90 clinical experts from all continents, including patients and their representatives. These experts reviewed the clinical questions that formed the basis for the systematic reviews of the literature, and provided critical input.

It is soon time for the next step in this process: reviewing the draft guideline. After summarizing all the evidence available, the working group members followed the GRADE process to go from evidence to recommendation. This included (sometimes long) online discussions that went beyond the evidence on the effect of an intervention. Because a treatment can be effective, it is also important to assess its impact on resources required, feasibility, acceptability by patients and clinicians, and its impact on equity.

The resultant of this process is a draft guideline, with recommendations and a rationale describing these considerations. It is at this moment that we really want to hear from the end-users of the IWGDF Guidelines, the external experts in the field. **What do you think of this draft guideline?**

In the coming one or two months, we will reach out to all our external experts, and ask for their input. Please share your thoughts with us freely, as it improves the guidelines.

As you can see in the image below, the IWGDF Guidelines are written with input from people in many countries around the world. Despite this great involvement, there are still some 'white spots' on the map. If you are from such a country, or working together with people in these countries, and are interested in reviewing the draft IWGDF Guidelines, please [reach out](#).



### Financial support for our Guidelines

The IWGDF gratefully acknowledges the financial support from AOTI, Mölnlycke, Reaplix and Urgo Medical. These companies have provided unrestricted grants to the IWGDF to produce evidence-based guidelines. Without this support, we would not be able to complete this monumental task. We stress, however, that those providing this financial support have no role in the design of the reviews, data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, the writing or content of the guidelines, and the documents are not available to them prior to them being made public.

Full transparency in sponsorship will be provided upon publication. If other companies are interested to also support IWGDF, they can [reach out](#).

### International Symposium on the Diabetic Foot, May 2023

Once all the hard work is done, we will present the update of our Guidelines at the biggest event in the field of diabetic foot disease: the [International Symposium on the Diabetic Foot](#). This quadrennial symposium, that received the sobriquet “The Olympic Games of the Diabetic Foot”, will be held from May 10-13, 2023, in the Hague. We hope to meet you all there, at the presentation of the IWGDF Guidelines – 2023 update.



**Until then: stay safe and healthy, take care of each other, and continue your efforts to reduce the high patient and societal burden of diabetic foot disease.**

**With warm regards,**

#### **IWGDF Editorial Board**

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