### AOA’s 14 Steps to Evidence-Based Clinical Practice Guideline Development

1. **Guideline Development Group:** Evidence-Based Optometry (EBO) Committee selects a multidisciplinary panel of experts, including patient and public representatives, for the Guideline Development Group (GDG).

2. **Transparency and COI:** GDG manages all conflict of interest (COI), which is documented by AOA staff.

3. **Clinical Questions:** GDG explores and defines all clinical questions through a Question Formulation Meeting and defines search criteria.

4. **Search for Evidence:** AOA Staff sends clinical questions for query (outside researchers) and provides all papers to the Guideline Development Reading Group (GDRG). There should be no inclusion of Systematic Review (SR) writers in the GDRG.

5. **Grade Evidence and Clinical Recommendations:** Two clinicians from the GDRG to read and grade papers, randomly selected according to the pre-designed evidence search criteria. They state clinical recommendation(s) from each paper and grade the strength of each.

6. **Articulate Clinical Recommendations:** GDRG reviews all clinical recommendations and articulates each for inclusion in the guideline during an “Articulation of Recommendations” meeting and document identified gaps in medical research are documented.

7. **Write Draft:** AOA Staff sends the Articulation results to the writer for development of draft 1.

8. **Draft Review and Edits:** GDG reads draft 1, discusses and edits.

9. **Rewrite/Final Drafts:** AOA Staff sends the draft results to the writer for writing/revisions for draft 2, then sends to medical editor for copy editing, then a final review is completed as necessary.

10. **Approval for Peer Review:** AOA Staff sends the final draft to AOA Board of Trustees for approval to post for peer and public review. The draft is posted on the AOA website, the review period is announced, and comments are solicited.

11. **Final Document Produced:** GDG reviews all peer comments and revises the final document (includes peer review comments, documents why a comment was not included, or identifies further gaps to review when preparing the next edition).

12. **Final Draft Approval and Legal Review:** AOA Staff sends to AOA Board of Trustees and AOA Legal Counsel for approval that the GDG followed the evidence-based process as outlined by the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) formerly known as the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and AOA EBO Committee (same management of COI).

13. **Post Guideline:** AOA Staff posts the evidence-based guideline to AOA website and submit it to the National Guideline Clearinghouse for public use, accompanied by AOA’s written process and documents.

14. **Schedule Reviews:** GDG reviews all previously identified gaps in medical research and any new evidence, and revises the evidence-based guideline every 2 to 5 years.

**Denotes face-to-face meeting**