International consensus on quality standards for multiple sclerosis care: results from a modified Delphi process

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Disclosures

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- J Hobart has received consulting fees, honoraria, support to attend meetings or research support from Acorda, Asubio Pharma, Bayer Schering Pharma, Biogen Idec, F. Hoffmann-La Roche, Sanofi Genzyme, Merck Serono, Novartis, Oxford Health Policy Forum and Teva
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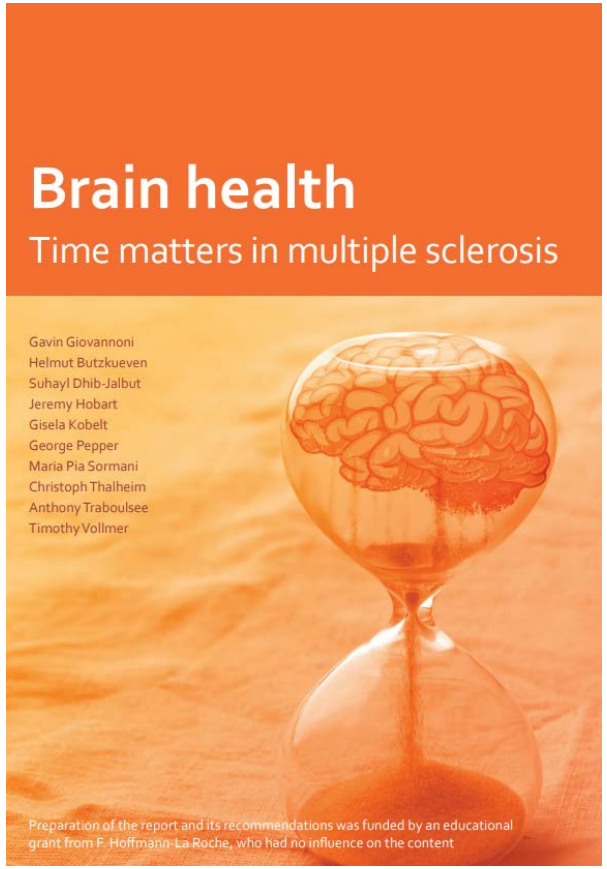
Background and aims

Background:

- *Brain health: time matters in multiple sclerosis* highlights the need for timely diagnosis and management[1]
  - Variability in practice and care quality
  - Absence of globally accepted standards
- Quality standards would provide a benchmark for timely care globally



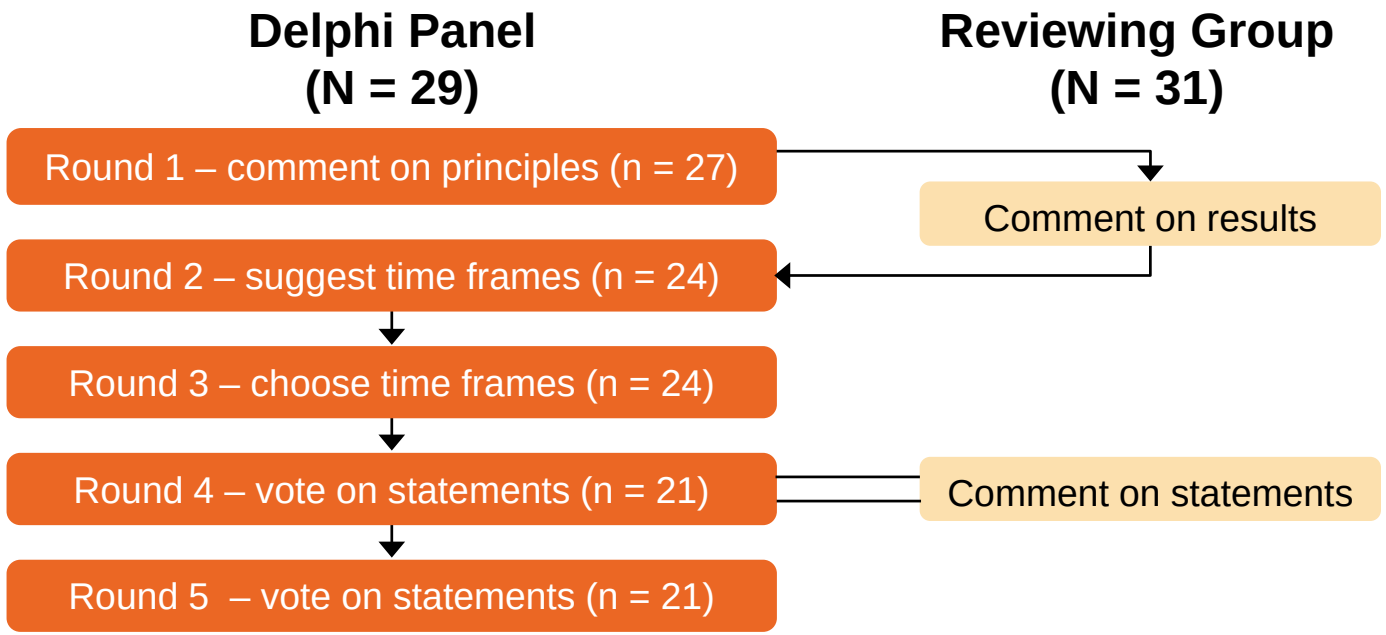
Aim:

Define ‘core’, ‘achievable’ and ‘aspirational’ standards for the timing of **key steps in the MS care pathway** (to reflect minimum, good and high standards, respectively)

[1]Giovannoni G *et al.* Brain health: time matters in multiple sclerosis. *Mult Scler Relat Disord* 2016;9 Suppl 1:S5–S48

The Delphi process – modified

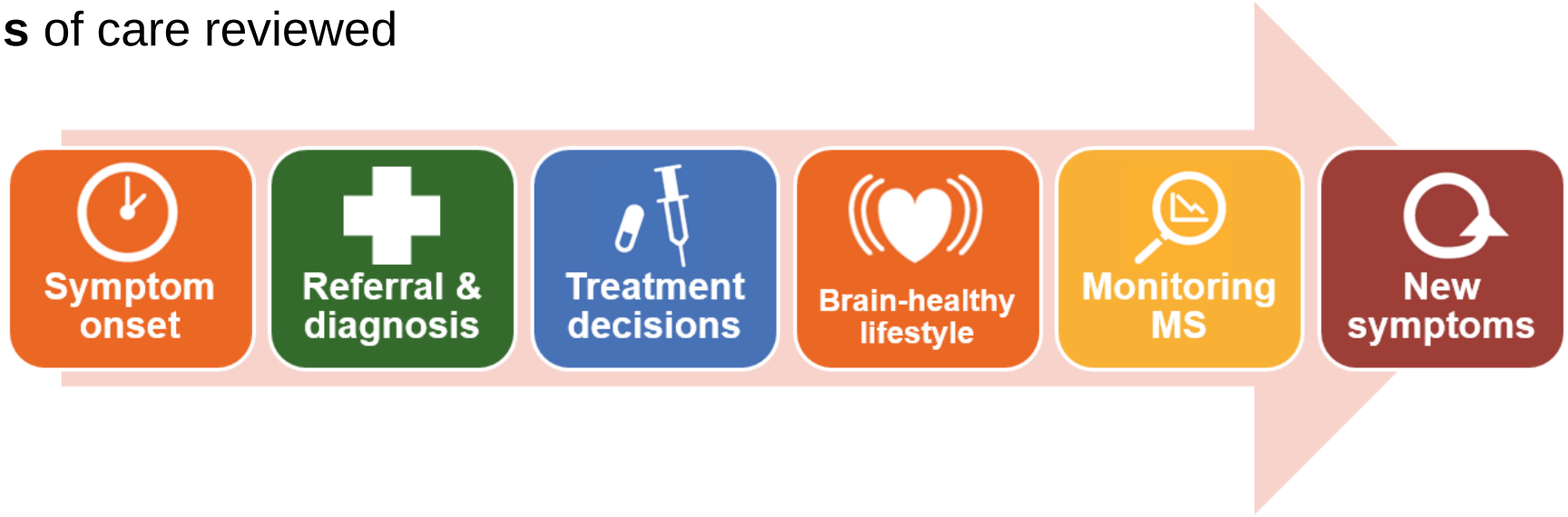
- A structured way to reach consensus among experts, using surveys
- Opinions remain anonymous



- **Four Chairs** led the process
- **Delphi Panel** of MS neurologists voted
- **Reviewing Group** commented (comprised MS nurses, people with MS and allied health professionals)

Key stages in the MS care pathway assessed

- **6 domains** of care reviewed



- **27 statements** considered, at three levels
- **21 steps** in the pathway achieved consensus* for core, achievable and aspirational standards of MS care
  - Thresholds for consensus were at least 75% agreement and at least 66% participation compared with round 1

*Consensus was reached on the majority of core (25/27), achievable (25/27) and aspirational (22/27) time frames for events spanning the MS care pathway. The Panel also reached agreement on four statements that were not time-limited.

Example timings agreed from two domains

- **Example 1:** time from referral to completion of diagnostic workup

- **Example 2:** time from diagnosis to a discussion on the aims of treatment with patient

*Consensus was reached on the majority of core (25/27), achievable (25/27) and aspirational (22/27) time frames for events spanning the MS care pathway. The Panel also reached agreement on four statements that were not time-limited.

Implications and next steps

- First study to establish **consensus on timing** of key steps in the MS care pathway, agreed internationally by MS experts
- A benchmark that will help individual MS services globally strive for the **highest level of care**
  - Not a means to criticize MS teams
- **Tools are being developed** for clinics and people with MS, based on these standards
- Clinics will **gather data** that will help with:
  - local problem-solving
  - national policymaking
  - international alignment on MS care