

MS Delphi Project : Consensus on Optimal Multiple Sclerosis Injectable Treatment Management to Improve Patient Adherence

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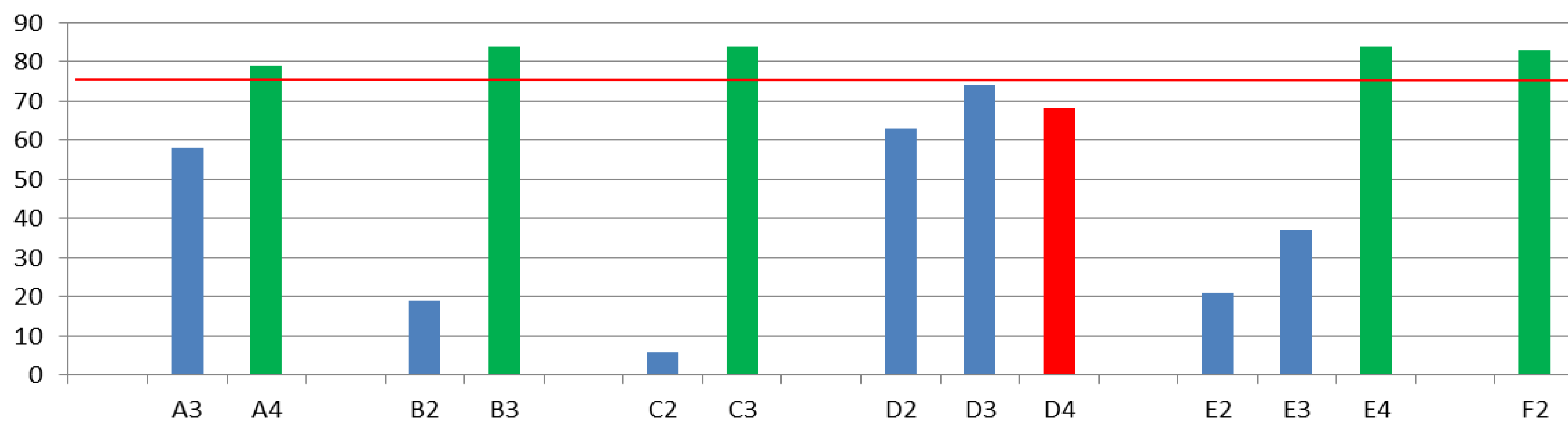
Background:

Treatment adherence among Patients with Multiple Sclerosis (PwMS) is poor and treatment discontinuation could be associated with increased healthcare costs and need for high-risk escalation therapies. Such patient behavior may be influenced by differences in how information on interferon β or glatiramer acetate treatments (injectables) is provided. Currently there is no consensus or guidelines on how information is shared, including guidance how PwMS should act when experiencing disease symptoms or side effects associated with injectable treatments.

Objectives:

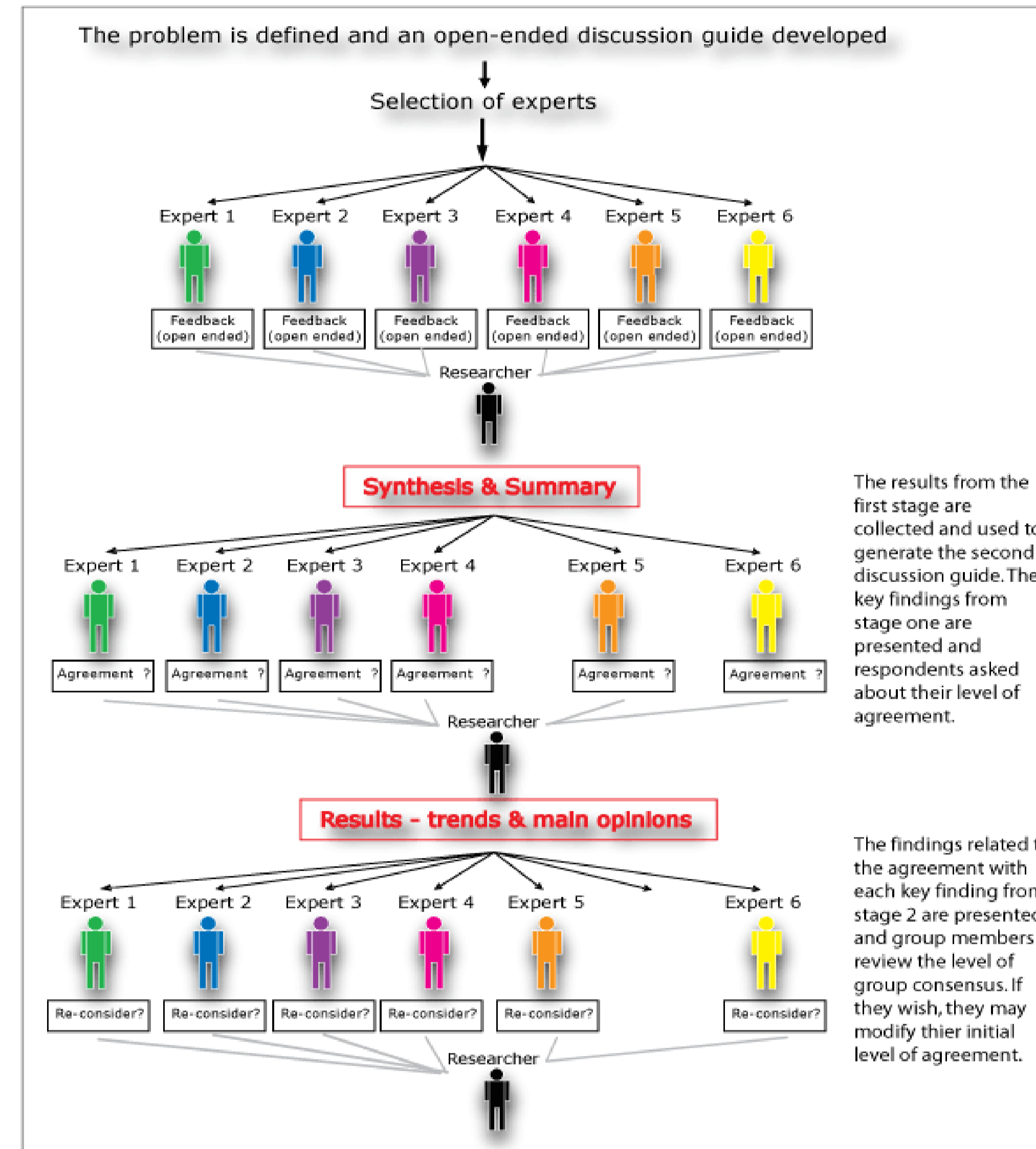
To achieve a consensus on how to inform PwMS about , **adherence, flu-like symptoms (FLS), injection-site reactions (ISRs), fatigue, anxiety, depression and cognitive problems**, how to manage these side effects, with the eventual goal of developing and implementing guidelines for MS nurses in the Netherlands.

Samples of propositions.
Consensus (> 75 % of correct replies)



Example of Propositions:

- A) Theme fatigue:** Patients who are being treated with interferons, in general have more fatigue complaints than patients who are being treated with glatiramer acetate. **(INCORRECT)**
- B) Theme FLS:** Patients who inject IFN- β in the evening and who develop severe flu-like symptoms, should be advised to start injecting in the morning. **(CORRECT)**
- C) Theme anxiety:** Treatment of anxiety disorders in MS patients is complicated by partners of MS patients who may also develop anxiety disorders. **(CORRECT)**
- D) Theme ISRs:** When patients who are being treated with first line injectable therapy experience erythema and swollen skin on the injection sites, the first advice should be to cool the skin at the injection site preceding injection. **(INCORRECT)**
- E) Theme depression:** Depression with PwMS occurs especially in the first year after the diagnoses. **(CORRECT)**
- F) Theme adherence:** 4-6 weeks after start up of the first line injection therapy the PwMS must be seen to evaluate if the patients is still supportive to the treatment. **(CORRECT)**



Methods:

The Delphi methodology was used to reach consensus (>75%). First, total of 25 propositions on **adherence and FLS, ISRs, fatigue, anxiety, depression and cognitive problems** were included in a survey to assess the current opinion of a representative sample of Dutch MS nurses or nurse practitioners (25). The results of the first round were used to determine if there was consensus, and would imply whether a guideline on how to deal with these issues would be valuable. Three more survey rounds with alternative or modified propositions were used to gain more detail on these topics. Comprehensive evidence-based background information was compiled and sent to participants prior to the third and fourth round.

Results:

The responses to the four survey rounds, the background information will be used to determine what could be done to optimize treatment **adherence and FLS, ISRs, fatigue, anxiety, depression and cognitive problems**, to develop a guideline. An optimal approach to treatment adherence, medical education, clinician support, caregiver and family education and their support will ultimately lead to improved outcomes. This guideline will be part of the continuous medical education of specialized MS nurses and nurse practitioners in the Netherlands.

Total no. of propositions= 50

Survey round 1
18 x consensus

Survey round 2
9x consensus

Survey round 3
15x consensus

Survey round 4
5x consensus

Non consensus
3x

Added background information

Added more background information

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Conclusions:

The information and guideline resulting from this Dutch initiative will be shared with the international community, since treatment adherence and information on how to manage, **adherence, FLS, ISRs, fatigue, anxiety, depression and cognitive problems** are global issues. This information might also be beneficial to MS patients globally.