**Appendix I**

**DEFINITION OF TERMS**

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# 1. RAND/UCLA Appropriateness Method (RAM):

**Process:** Combines extensive literature review with expert panel ratings. The process typically involves two rounds of ratings, with the first round done independently and the second round following a group discussion.

**Interaction:** Direct interaction among panelists is limited to the discussion phase between the two rating rounds.

**Consensus Definition:** Consensus is statistically defined based on the median and interquartile range of panelists' ratings for specific clinical scenarios.

**Focus:** Specifically designed to assess the appropriateness of medical procedures or interventions.

# 2. Delphi Method:

**Process:** Involves multiple rounds of questionnaires sent to experts. After each round, a summary of the responses is provided to the participants, who are then asked to reconsider their answers in the next round, aiming for a convergence of opinions.

**Interaction:** There is no direct interaction among panelists; the process is anonymous, and feedback is provided through the facilitator.

**Consensus Definition:** Consensus is reached when there is a convergence of opinions, often measured by the stability of responses across rounds or by achieving a pre-defined level of agreement.

**Focus:** Can be used for a wide range of purposes, including forecasting, decision-making, and policy development.

# 3. Nominal Group Technique (NGT):

**Process:** A structured face-to-face meeting where participants first generate ideas silently and independently, then share and discuss them as a group, and finally vote privately to prioritize or make decisions.

**Interaction:** High level of direct interaction, with structured discussion and sharing of ideas, followed by independent voting.

**Consensus Definition:** Consensus is often determined by the voting results, with the most highly rated ideas considered the group consensus.

**Focus:** Effective for idea generation, problem-solving, and decision-making in a group setting.

# 4. Consensus Conference:

**Process:** Involves a public conference where a panel of laypeople (sometimes mixed with experts) discusses a specific issue, often after hearing evidence from a range of experts. The panel then drafts a statement or set of recommendations.

**Interaction:** High level of interaction, both among panel members and with presenting experts. The process is also public, allowing for broader engagement.

**Consensus Definition:** Consensus is typically reached through discussion and negotiation among panel members, culminating in a formal statement or set of recommendations.

**Focus:** Often used for addressing complex, controversial, or public policy issues, where it's important to incorporate diverse perspectives, including those of the general public.

# 5. Modified Approaches:

A "modified" approach to consensus methods often involves adapting traditional consensus methodologies like the RAND/UCLA Appropriateness Method (RAM), Delphi method, Nominal Group Technique (NGT), or Consensus Conferences to better fit specific research needs, constraints, or contexts. These modifications can address limitations of the original methods or incorporate elements from multiple methods to leverage their strengths. Many organizations and specialties adopt their own guidelines for modified approaches.

## Modified RAND/UCLA Appropriateness Method (RAM):

**Adaptations:** Could include more interactive elements, such as real-time discussions or workshops, to complement the independent rating rounds. Alternatively, the literature review phase might be expanded to include grey literature or more iterative feedback loops between evidence gathering and expert ratings.

**Purpose:** To enhance the depth of discussion, incorporate broader evidence, or streamline the process for more rapid consensus.

## Modified Delphi Method:

**Adaptations:** Might involve introducing face-to-face meetings or workshops after initial rounds to clarify points of contention and foster deeper understanding. Another modification could be the use of real-time electronic voting systems to provide immediate feedback and potentially reduce the number of rounds needed.

**Purpose:** To increase the efficiency of the process, enhance the quality of feedback, or incorporate a more diverse range of opinions.

## Modified Nominal Group Technique (NGT):

**Adaptations:** Could include pre-meeting surveys to collect initial ideas and concerns, which are then discussed in the meeting, or the integration of electronic voting systems to facilitate anonymous voting. Another modification might be to follow up the NGT session with Delphi-like rounds to refine and further prioritize ideas.

**Purpose:** To broaden the initial input, streamline the in-person session, or ensure more thorough consideration and refinement of ideas.

## Modified Consensus Conference:

**Adaptations:** Might involve using online platforms for broader public engagement before and after the conference or incorporating structured expert input through Delphi rounds as part of the preparatory phase. Another modification could be the inclusion of smaller, NGT-style breakout sessions during the conference to facilitate more detailed discussions.

**Purpose:** To enhance public engagement, ensure a more robust evidence base, or facilitate more detailed exploration of specific issues.

## General Considerations for Modified Approaches:

**Hybrid Models:** Combining elements from different consensus methods to leverage the strengths of each, such as the evidence-based focus of RAM with the interactive discussion of NGT.

**Technology Integration:** Using online platforms, real-time polling, and other digital tools to enhance interaction, streamline processes, and enable broader participation.

**Flexibility and Contextual Adaptation:** Tailoring the approach to fit the specific context, constraints, and goals of the consensus process, such as cultural considerations, availability of experts, or time constraints.