



**EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS**  
IRELAND



**Cochrane**  
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Ireland  
**GRADE**  
Network

# GRADE Workshop (In-Person)

## Background

GRADE (Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development and Evaluation) is a standardised and transparent approach for assessing the certainty of evidence in systematic reviews and health technology assessments. The system addresses multiple aspects of evidence quality, including methodological limitations, inconsistency, indirectness, imprecision, and publication bias. Developed by an international working group, GRADE has become the standard methodology for assessing the certainty of evidence in systematic reviews and supporting the development of clinical practice guidelines and healthcare recommendations worldwide.

## Aim

This two-day workshop guides participants through the comprehensive GRADE methodology, from defining PICO questions and outcomes to creating Summary of Findings tables using GRADEpro GDT software. Through a combination of lectures and hands-on exercises, participants will learn how to assess evidence certainty by evaluating key domains, including methodological limitations, inconsistency, indirectness, imprecision, and publication bias. The workshop also covers evidence upgrading criteria and provides practical experience in creating Summary of Findings tables for systematic reviews of healthcare interventions.

**Date/Time:**

**9th and 10th March 2026**  
**10:00 – 16:00**

**Location:**

**Riddell Hall, Queens**  
**University Belfast**

**Skill level:**

**Introductory**

**Prerequisites:**

**Attendees should have knowledge in conducting and/or using systematic reviews as well as the basic principles of evidence-based healthcare, and the critical appraisal of research studies, especially RCTs**

**Places:**

**25**

**Fee:**

**€250 (General)**  
**€140 (Student)**

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**HRB** An Bord  
Taighde Sláinte  
Health Research  
Board

**HSC** Public Health  
Agency  
Research and Development



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## Learning outcomes

In this course participants will be enabled to:

- Understand the basic principles of the GRADE approach and understand the individual steps in the assessment of the evidence and their impact on the strength of the recommendation
- Be able to create an evidence profile for a therapeutic intervention based on a systematic review
- Have a basic understanding of the GRADEpro GDT Software

## Target Audience

Systematic review authors, guideline developers, health and social care professionals, academics, researchers, postgraduate students, decision makers, Evidence Synthesis Ireland Fellows and other professionals.

## Teaching strategies

The workshop combines interactive lectures with hands-on small group exercises using GRADEpro GDT software. Each evidence assessment domain is taught through presentation followed by practical application.

## Facilitators:

### **Prof. Declan Devane**

Professor of Health Research Methodology,  
University of Galway  
Director, Evidence Synthesis  
Ireland  
Director, Cochrane Ireland  
University of Galway

### **Dr Nuala Livingstone**

Senior Quality Assurance Editor,  
Cochrane Editorial and Methods  
Department

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## Course content/timetable

| Day 1 |  |
|-------|--|
| 10:00 | Welcome, introduction of presenters  |
| 10:15 | Presentation: Evidence-based Healthcare - An overview  |
| 10:30 | Presentation: What is GRADE - An overview  |
| 10:45 | Practical exercise 1 in small groups: Set PICO and outcomes  |
| 11:15 | Presentation and discussion of small group exercise 1  |
| 11:30 | Break  |
| 11:45 | Presentation: Certainty of evidence – Downgrading  |
| 13:00 | Lunch  |
| 14:00 | Interactive presentation: Introduction to GRADEpro GDT (GRADE software)                                    |
| 14:30 | Practical exercise 2 in small groups: Assessing the certainty of the evidence (Methodological limitations) |
| 15:15 | Break  |
| 15:30 | Presentation and discussion of small group exercise 2  |
| 15:45 | Wrap up and summary of Day 1   |
| 16:00 | Close  |

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## Course content/timetable

| Day 2 |  |
|-------|--|
| 10:00 | Welcome and recap and questions on previous presentations and exercise   |
| 10:30 | Practical exercise 3 in small groups: Assessing the certainty of the evidence (Inconsistency)                      |
| 11:15 | Presentation and discussion of small group exercise 3  |
| 11:30 | Break  |
| 11:45 | Practical exercise 4 in small groups: Assessing the certainty of evidence (Indirectness)                           |
| 12:30 | Presentation and discussion of small group exercise 4  |
| 12:45 | Lunch  |
| 13:45 | Practical exercise 5 and 6 in small groups: Assessing the certainty of evidence (Imprecision and publication bias) |
| 14:30 | Presentation and discussion of small group exercise 5 and 6  |
| 14:45 | Presentation: Certainty of evidence – upgrading  |
| 15:00 | Break  |
| 15:15 | Presentation: Creating the final Summary of Findings tables  |
| 15:30 | Wrap up and summary of Day 2   |
| 16:00 | Close  |

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