In one year more than 1800 physicians used the platform. 80% of them gave a positive feedback in an online evaluation questionnaire (figure 1).

Figure 1: user response (n=1824)

Evaluation and Feedback

Existing clinical practice guidelines allowed a swift development of questions concerning each medical indication. All questions were evaluated by an editorial group of physicians consisting of General Practitioners (GPs) and internists and consecutive usability-tests with ten faculty affiliated GPs. Suggestions offered by the users were implemented in an updated version.

An online platform for CME can support active learning and may serve an additional stimulus to absorb knowledge relevant for medical practice. Initial evaluations of a web-based CME-platform as an additional incentive for guideline implementation are encouraging. Whether a relevant and sustainable knowledge transfer and subsequent quality improvements in daily practice will follow, is subject to an ongoing study.

In 2005 the knowledge network of Witten/Herdecke University will concentrate on problem-based learning. In cooperation with the Agency for Quality in Medicine (AQUMED) and the German Medical Association (GMA) virtual interactive cases are offered as a “second learning path” for guideline-based training. The focus of this cooperation is to strengthen the transfer of web-based National Disease Management Guidelines (NDMGs) (figure 2).

Three research themes are set for the year 2005:
- Do online platforms for further education facilitate and accelerate knowledge transfer to physicians?
- Would modified versions of such learning platforms be suitable for other medical professions, e.g. nurses, or patients as well?
- Can a CME platform support existing disease management programs (DMPs)?