1. Verbal presentation

⇊	**Recommendation** **"The verbal presentation of risks, benefits and harm must not be applied exclusively."** Agreed: 14, Disagreed: 0, Abstentions: 1 **Quality of the evidence:** moderate quality

Comment on the recommendation:

The recommendation refers to the comparison of exclusively verbal with numerical presentation.

The studies show that the verbal presentation of risks, benefits and harm is inferior to the numerical presentation. In five out of six studies the numerical presentation enables a more realistic risk estimation / better understanding and in three out of four studies better knowledge. Regarding the outcome *understanding* there is no difference. All six studies show a higher *intention of performing the measure* concerned.

The efficacy of the affective outcomes (11 studies) is inconsistent.

Summary of the findings

Characteristics of the included studies

For this comparison, 15 studies with a total of 3,531 participants were included. The samples sizes were between 116 and 480, the ages ranged between 16 and 82 years. The studies were carried out in the USA (17-21), Great Britain (18, 22-28), Canada (29), Australia (30) and Singapore (31). The participants included pregnant women and mothers (27, 28), students of both sexes (21, 24), patients of both sexes (20, 25, 29-31), citizens of both sexes (17, 18, 22, 23, 26) and carers of both sexes (19).

The interventions consisted of scenarios concerning the side effects of antibiotics (23, 24), pain killers (18, 22, 31), statins (25), Tamoxifen (26) and cancer therapies (17, 18, 20, 30), of scenarios relating to medical test results (27), the probabilities of

certain incidents concerning babies (28), stroke risk (29) and to a fictitious discussion between a physician and relatives (19).

Results for the relevant outcomes

With regard to the outcomes *understanding*, *risk perception* and *knowledge*, positive effects were shown for the numerical presentation (18, 22-27, 29). No difference was found for the outcome *comprehensibility* (30). The results for the outcomes *acceptance*, *attractiveness* and *credibility* were not clear, but a positive tendency towards numerical presentation could be seen (17, 18, 20-25, 28, 30, 31). The *intention to perform a certain measure* is higher in numerical presentation (18, 22-26).