

Remit of the CENTRAL Vision Group (CVG)

The CCSG Executive approved this remit on 10 January 2006.

Background and Purpose

In October of 2005, the Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group (CCSG) decided to disband the Cochrane CENTRAL Advisory Group (CCAG) and create a new group to develop a strategic plan for CENTRAL. The working group is called CENTRAL Vision Group (CVG) in this document. The decision by the United States Cochrane Center (USCC) to withdraw from its role in the production of CENTRAL, and the subsequent need to address production issues, provides an opportunity to thoroughly review CENTRAL and its role within the Collaboration as well as within the broader community of researchers, educators, policy makers and consumers. The CVG will provide recommendations about the development of CENTRAL, including its relationship with the entity-based Cochrane specialised registers, and its future relationship with non-Cochrane prospective registers.

Membership

The CCSG appointed four members to serve on the CVG: Gerd Antes, Adrian Grant, Gail Higgins and Karen Robinson

Accountability

The CENTRAL Vision group reports to the CCSG.

Administration

- The work of the CVG will be conducted primarily via email and teleconferences.
- The CCSG has approved £800 for teleconferences. A budget is to be developed for other activities, such as necessary travel or materials for conducting surveys.
- Other people will be invited to participate in meetings, as deemed appropriate.
- Meeting minutes will be drafted as soon as possible after the meeting for review and final versions of the minutes will be approved during the subsequent meeting.

Tasks

The CVG will complete the following:

- identify issues that need immediate decisions or actions. These urgent matters may include determining whether there is a need for interim measures after the last version of CENTRAL is compiled using current production procedures (Issue 2, 2006). If the production process was similar to that for the current version of CENTRAL, we would need to make a decision regarding interim production prior to what would be the next submission date (ie, somewhere on or around March 20, 2006).
- develop outline and work plan to develop strategic plan for CENTRAL. Preliminary details of the work plan are included below (page 2);
- develop strategic plan for CENTRAL. Preliminary outline is included below (page 3).

Preliminary details of Work Plan

Plans to research and obtain input

The CVG will develop a Strategic Plan for CENTRAL (proposed preliminary outline below) by seeking input from a variety of users and potential users of CENTRAL. The group will liaise with the Information Management System Group (IMSG), including appointing a representative from the CVG to participate in IMSG meetings as appropriate. We will seek information and suggestions, likely through surveys, from all Cochrane groups and entities. Finally, we will endeavour to identify and seek input from users outside of the Collaboration, such as the Health Technology Assessment (HTA) agencies and the Evidence-based Practice Centers (EPCs).

For some of the questions, the CVG may recommend that studies be undertaken. Examples where research may be sought or recommended include an assessment of the quality of MEDLINE tagging, the need for handsearching efforts, and the identification of non-Cochrane systematic reviews that use CENTRAL (or The Cochrane Library).

Deliverables and timeline

Deliverables to be submitted to the CCSG may include:

- detailed workplan
- summary reports of survey results
- summary reports of focus groups or other discussions
- status reports
- strategic plan

Proposed Outline of Strategic Plan

1. Background and Purpose

We will outline the background and purpose of the strategic plan and include a mission statement. The current draft version of this section is included here.

The decision by the USCC to withdraw from its role in the production of CENTRAL, the development of non-Cochrane prospective trials registers, and the development of IMS, provides an opportunity to thoroughly review CENTRAL and its role within the Collaboration as well as within the broader community of researchers, educators, policy makers and consumers. The strategic plan will provide recommendations about the development of CENTRAL, including its relationship with the entity-based Cochrane specialised registers, and its future relationship with non-Cochrane prospective registers.

2. Where are we now?

What is CENTRAL?

- what is the current structure and content of CENTRAL?

Who uses CENTRAL?

- internal to Collaboration
- external to Collaboration
- how does each group currently use CENTRAL? What are the current benefits and limitations of using CENTRAL?

How is CENTRAL produced?

- what did CCAG do?
- what did USCC do?
- what did Update Software do?
- what does Wiley do?
- what have been the resources used for the production of CENTRAL and where have these resources come from?
- what is the role of specialised registers?
- what is the role of electronic and handsearching?

2. Where we would like to be?

- what should CENTRAL be? What are the models for development of CENTRAL or other register(s) in terms of content and format?
- what is the ongoing role of specialised registers? How do they fit with CENTRAL and with IMS?
- what do current users see as the future of CENTRAL?
- are there other potential users of CENTRAL?
- how should CENTRAL be produced? By whom and what process?
- how does CENTRAL fit within the changing landscape of trials registers?

3. How do we get there?

During the requests for input, the CVG will also seek suggestions for the way forward. Based on the discussions, the CVG will develop specific recommendations including short, medium and long-term goals.