



Mark Starr

**Read all about the Ottawa Colloquium!**  
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## Mark Starr's outstanding contribution to The Cochrane Collaboration

by Gerd Antes, Xavier Bonfill, Andrew Herxheimer, Andy Oxman, David Henderson-Smart

In January 2005, the Update Software Internet version of *The Cochrane Library* will be 'retired' and replaced by the Wiley InterScience version. Update Software will continue to have a major role in producing *The Cochrane Library* and also continue to publish the CD-ROM version until further notice. It is therefore the right time to thank Mark Starr, who has played a pivotal role in the life of *The Library* and The Cochrane Collaboration from the start.

Like many good midwives, Mark Starr began to contribute to the Collaboration before it was born. He and Iain Chalmers became friends, and he developed the software for the Oxford Database of Perinatal Trials. This was the forerunner, and in many ways the template, for the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR). Mark was its principal software architect. He and Iain have described elsewhere how it evolved into *The Cochrane Library* ([www.update-software.com/history/clibhist.htm](http://www.update-software.com/history/clibhist.htm)).

The first Cochrane Centre lacked the funds to employ Mark as a member of staff, and he had the courage and energy to work independently in a separate company, Update Software. Thus, few people saw him as the inside member of the Cochrane family that he was. The arrangement was congenial and fruitful, and continued for over ten years. It must be one of the most successful such public-private partnerships ever, despite the anomalous and quirky contractual relationships between the UK Cochrane Centre, the international organisation, and Mark in Update Software. Mark has consistently worked as a kind and generous friend as well as a very special participant, and continues to do so within the new arrangements for publishing *The Cochrane Library*.

Mark has helped in significant ways to overcome the linguistic barriers to the worldwide dissemination of *The Cochrane Library*. His commitment and flexibility made it possible to publish many reviews and abstracts in different languages, and even a full periodically updated version of *The Cochrane Library* in Spanish (*La Cochrane Library Plus en español*). Another major achievement is the Reproductive Health Library, produced with the World Health Organization (WHO) and disseminated without charge to people in developing countries.

Mark's contribution was fundamental to the development of the Cochrane Pregnancy and Childbirth Database, and then the CDSR in *The Cochrane Library*. He has been passionately and imaginatively committed to the Collaboration, and has contributed greatly to its success all over the world.

In 2000 Chris Silagy, Chair of the Steering Group from 1996 to 1998, wrote to Mike Clarke about the Collaboration's relationship with Update Software: "As someone who was intimately involved in negotiating the initial formal agreement with them, I thought it was worth putting a few thoughts on record."<sup>5)</sup>

**COCHRANE NEWS****From the Co-Chairs**

*Cochrane News* is published by the Canadian Cochrane Centre (CCC).

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As one of the organizers of this year's Colloquium, it is difficult for Kathie to comment on it, but I am happy to pronounce it a resounding success. The venue and programme were excellent and the opening session speech by James Orbinski, past international President (1998-2001) of Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), will stay long in our memories. The hard work of all the organizing team in Ottawa is much appreciated. - *written by Jim Neilson.*

As reported at the Colloquium, The Cochrane Collaboration has reached another milestone in the transition of *The Cochrane Library* to publication by John Wiley and Sons. At its meeting on 1st October, the Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group (CCSG) approved the Wiley InterScience (WIS) Cochrane Library (CLIB) Internet version and gave Wiley permission to provide three months' notice to Update Software to 'retire' their site. The CCSG paid tribute to Update Software for their work in creating the original CLIB, and acknowledged the enormous amount of development and testing work that Wiley has put into developing the new product.

A few programming issues remain to be addressed before the Update Software version of CLIB is taken down from the Internet and removed from use on January 2nd 2005.

The CCSG also expressed appreciation to the groups who have worked diligently to test the new product (Search Testing Group, Statistical Testing Group, Publishing Policy Group, and many other individuals who provided input), and is reassured to know that Wiley will continue to work closely with them in the future.

The Update Software CD-ROM version of CLIB will remain available for at least a further issue after their Internet version of CLIB is 'retired' from use, providing an alternate and back-up resource to the WIS version.

The Wiley CD-ROM version of CLIB will ultimately replace the Update Software CD-ROM version when it has been adequately tested by members of Cochrane entities, the Cochrane Library Users' Group and others, and is judged to be ready for sign-off. No date can be given for this at this time, as it is dependent on developments with the CD-ROM product and subsequent testing and verification.

The Wiley developers and the testing groups will continue to work together closely to ensure high quality testing of the Internet and CD-ROM versions of CLIB products in the future. Update Software will continue to compile CLIB on behalf of the Collaboration, under subcontract to Wiley, until further notice.

The new CLIB is the first stage in a continuous development process, with the future seeing the creation of more accessible versions that will become ever more useful for health professionals, consumers, policy makers, review authors, and other potential customers and users. Suggestions for enhancements should be sent to Deborah Pentesco-Gilbert at Wiley ([dpentesc@wiley.co.uk](mailto:dpentesc@wiley.co.uk)). To see more of the new WIS CLIB Internet version, and the transition arrangements, see [www.thecochranelibrary.com](http://www.thecochranelibrary.com) and click on Transition Information under (Continued on page 14)

**Please send your announcements and other news items to [cochrane@mcmaster.ca](mailto:cochrane@mcmaster.ca)**

## Letter from the Editor

I think I can sum up my first two months working at the Canadian Cochrane Centre in one word – “whirlwind”. I joined the Centre on August 13<sup>th</sup> 2004 as the replacement for Daren Spithoff, my predecessor as Editor of Cochrane News. Although I was warned about the hive of activity in the lead-up to the Ottawa Colloquium, it was a far cry from actually taking part. I have never had to deal with so many emails in my life. Time seems to accelerate, as you get closer to the event, dealing with scheduling and room changes on a continuous basis. On the other hand, I felt a tremendous sense of pride in being part of a team that was organizing a prestigious event. At the conclusion of the Colloquium, there was a sense of anti-climax, as the long build-up to the event was finally over and I didn't know what I was going to do next. This feeling was compounded for me, as I had very little experience within The Cochrane Collaboration other than organizing a Colloquium.

Nevertheless, I then threw myself into more uncharted territory, by starting the editorial process for the next issue of Cochrane News. I hope that you will enjoy reading this issue and that you will be informed, enlightened and entertained. On behalf of the Cochrane News Advisory Committee, I would like to wish you and yours a safe, peaceful and happy holiday season, and an exceptional 2005.

Angus Muir  
 Editor, Cochrane News  
 muira@mcmaster.ca

## Comings and goings

### Cochrane Neuromuscular Disease Group:

We are pleased to welcome Valeria Marinho as a new assistant TSC starting work at the Cochrane Neuromuscular Disease Group. Valeria will be working one day a week. She is already involved with the Collaboration as a reviewer and editor.

Her email address is:  
 Valeria.Marinho@kcl.ac.uk

*Submitted by Kate Jewitt, Review Group  
 Co-ordinator, Cochrane Neuromuscular Disease  
 Group*

### Prehospital and Emergency Care Field: It's official!

I am pleased to announce that the Prehospital and Emergency Care Field was officially registered with the Collaboration on 24 August 2004. The Field Convenor is Frank Archer, whose contact details are as follows:

Associate Professor Frank Archer  
 Convenor, Cochrane Prehospital and  
 Emergency Care Field  
 Director  
 Centre for Ambulance and Paramedic  
 Studies  
 School of Primary Health Care  
 Faculty of Medicine  
 Nursing and Health Sciences  
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 E-mail frank.archer@med.monash.edu.au  
 Website www.cochranephef.org

*Submitted by Jini Hetherington, Administrator of*

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### Submission Deadline

The deadline for submission of articles for *Cochrane News*, Issue 33 is **28 February 2005**. Please email articles (600 words max) to:

**cochrane@mcmaster.ca**

## RSS news feeds: Staying informed with a news reader

by Dave Booker and Greg Saunders

Tired of surfing a dozen different websites to get all the healthcare news that interests you? An increasingly popular technology may help you. It's called RSS, or Really Simple Syndication. With any RSS news reader installed on your computer, you can get the news you want, when you want it. It's simple.

RSS is now found on an increasingly large range of news sites, from community weblogs to international news syndicates. With your reader, you can see articles of interest to you, from any news source - in one screen. The Cochrane Collaboration, for example, already has several RSS news channels, such as our own Collaboration news feed, workshop lists, and NeLH's Hitting the Headlines. Just look for the orange "XML" or "RSS" icon and copy its link into your reader.

Have an idea for a news channel? Let us know! Other sites on which you read news may also offer RSS feeds. Look closely! Want to install a news reader? Here are some: FeedDemon, SharpReader, Aggreg8, Bloglines (free, hosted).

*Dave Booker and Greg Saunders are members of the Cochrane.org Web Team, at the German Cochrane Centre*

## Working as a TSC for two groups

by Sylvia Bickley and Karen Blackhall

The role of the Trials Search Co-ordinator (TSC) has evolved rapidly over the past few years, and the TSC is now regarded as an essential part of the review team and the editorial base. Initially the main focus for TSCs was to set up and develop the review group's trials register. This continues to be a core responsibility, but increasingly the TSC is involved in working with reviewers to develop search strategies for review topics, providing guidance and training in electronic searching, and facilitating training courses. For some groups, funding a full-time TSC post can overstretch already limited resources. In order to alleviate such funding pressures, groups appoint a part-time TSC who also works part-time for another group.

In this article, two TSCs who each share their working week between two groups give their views on how this works for them and their respective review groups.

### Part I:

**Sylvia Bickley, TSC for the Oral Health Group and the Pain, Palliative Care & Supportive Care Group (PaPaS)**

I have worked as part-time (three days per week) TSC for the **Oral Health Group** since 1997, based in Manchester, UK. We have a strong editorial team with a range of expertise and skills, and the convenience of having colleagues on the spot enables us all to avail ourselves of each other's expertise when the need arises.

I have worked for the **PaPaS Group** (two days per week) since 2000. My involvement with this Group began as a three month "help out" to get the group's trials register established, and this has grown into a successful arrangement. For this Group I work from home, away from the editorial base, where I have a fully equipped office. Contact with the editorial base is easily maintained and communications between TSC and reviewers and others are copied to the editorial base for record purposes. I have travelled to the editorial base in Oxford on a very few occasions, but we find communication via email or telephone is largely all that we need. In general I have weekly telephone contact with the RGC to discuss work priorities and to bring the personal voice contact that strengthens the link with the editorial base.

For both groups I am responsible for developing, managing and preparing the trials registers for submission to CENTRAL. Both are large registers, currently 19,500 records for Oral Health, and 23,500 records for PaPaS, which amounts to a considerable workload for me both for submissions and running each Group's quarterly topic search and subsequent download, record screening and coding. Beyond this, an increasing part of my job for both groups is working with reviewers to develop and run their search strategies, and comment on search strategy sections of protocols and reviews. In addition to this, of course, are other core group functions such as responding to requests for update reports on handsearching for the Master List; and contributing information for monitoring and funders' reports. For part-timers this is a particular challenge for time management and prioritising tasks.

Working full-time in total keeps me constantly focussed on the role and I am always conscious of things cropping up in one Group that may be of interest or relevant to the other Group. I can identify many ways in which both groups benefit by maximising resources:

- ◆ Identification of records from searches that are relevant to both Groups
- ◆ Sharing sections of developed search strategies
- ◆ Revising documents developed for one Group for use by the other
- ◆ Sharing information lists, for example, searching resources
- ◆ Reporting from meetings – one report to both Groups
- ◆ Cost-sharing for attendance at meetings/Colloquia
- ◆ Attendance on training courses
- ◆ Testing new software
- ◆ Saved search strategies on websites (e.g. Wiley, OVID) accessible for both Groups

Though I generally keep to a strict pattern of working days for each Group, there is flexibility which is in the interest of

*(Continued on page 8)*

## Mark Starr's outstanding contribution

*(Continued from page 1)*

In the early stages of the Collaboration, all of us were essentially a bunch of enthusiastic non-business people who knew something about the science but almost nothing about publishing. We continually changed what we wanted from our publisher as we 'learned by doing'. I doubt any large publishing house would have had the patience to put up with us! However, Update Software (which was essentially Mark Starr at that stage) did, and thank God for him. I know that it is easy, and seems to be almost popular at the moment, to criticise the arrangements we put in place with Mark and his company. I am sure that if we hadn't the Collaboration would not be here today. Mark's personal commitment, skill, and at times, extreme patience in his dealings with the rest of us is something I will never forget (and I would hope that the Collaboration doesn't). I think the Collaboration owes him and his company a huge debt. The financial risks taken right from the start in this project were almost all borne by Update Software (which meant Mark personally)."

Chris said it all.

*Gerd Antes, Xavier Bonfill, Andrew Herxheimer, Andy Oxman, and David Henderson-Smart have all worked closely with Mark Starr*

## Consumers online with evidence!

by Janet Wale

In early October 2004, the Cochrane Consumer Network (CCNet) web pages went online ([www.cochrane.org/consumers](http://www.cochrane.org/consumers)). The pages are now an integral part of the main Cochrane web site; the receivers of healthcare interventions, patients, consumers and their caregivers are integrated within The Cochrane Collaboration. In taking this step, CCNet makes a commitment to 'evidence-based' consumers. To be well informed is not always an easy step, especially for patients. Synthesized evidence from systematic reviews, discussions within Collaborative Review Groups, and the overall principles of the many who make up the Collaboration provide opportunities for contributing to well informed consumers. The new web pages have an important role in that process and in providing peer support.

Nowhere was the value of a systematic, evidence-based approach to health care, guidelines and policy more evident for consumers than at the recent Cochrane Colloquium in Ottawa. One of the representatives from the Canadian Patient Arthritis Community, Mary Brachaniec, wrote: "I was honoured to represent CPAC. Hundreds of researchers, healthcare providers and consumers gathered to discuss how to 'Bridge the Gaps' in synthesizing research results and bringing this information to the healthcare providers and patients who need it. I was pleased to find that CCNet consists of over 300 consumer contributors around the world who are interested in the full range of health areas. CCNet has many resources available to assist consumers such as myself... I have contributed to three reviews so far as a consumer peer reviewer and this has been an educational and empowering experience. I feel that my input has made a difference in the final version of the systematic reviews with regards to readability, relevance to patients and identifying priorities for future research."

Mingming Zhang of the Chinese Cochrane Centre describes her experiences at the recent Colloquium. "I met my established consumer friends and got to know many new consumers. Sitting at the same table, being invited to one of the local consumers' homes to get together, or having consumer meetings, I experienced CCNet as a big friendly family! We are people from different parts of the world and it is CCNet that has brought us together as Cochrane consumers. My Chinese friend kept saying "CCNet is a very kind and united family. Wherever you go at the Colloquium consumers are always together caring about each other." Thanks to the support of CCNet I gave an oral presentation in Ottawa, strengthened by what I have gained from working together. As I understand, there is still a long way to go for Chinese consumers to get involved in the Collaboration compared with developments in western countries. There exists a great gap between developing and developed countries in consumer involvement. Still, as a Chinese consumer representative, I will try to contribute as best I can." In Mary's words, "I came to appreciate that although we face challenges in health care and research in Canada, countries in the Third World face far more serious difficulties and barriers to basic services."

*Janet Wale is the Treasurer for the Cochrane Consumer Network Governing Council*

## IMS training and support



### Phase I of the new IMS: The new Contact Database

by Jacob Riis

The first milestone in the introduction of a new Information Management System (IMS) for The Cochrane Collaboration has now been reached with the launch of the new Contact Database (Phase I of the new IMS). The new Contact Database handles basically the same information as the old Contact Database: contact details for people and entities, as well as the module text for non-CRG entities (e.g. Centres). But everything has been moved to a new underlying system, which in Phase II will be expanded to include reviews, CRG modules, and much more.



#### What's new

A lot has changed 'beneath the hood', and the user interface has been redesigned to be easily accessible to the many newcomers we can expect as the Collaboration grows. But we are confident that the new system is also easy to use for those already experienced with the old Contact Database.

A few of the improvements are:

- **Simpler interface** – we modelled it on an interface familiar to most people: Windows Explorer.
- **Messages** – e.g., if one entity edits a person with roles in other entities, the other entities can be notified automatically.
- **Version control** – if an entity edits its module but regrets the changes, all the previous versions are available and can be reverted to.

If you would like to learn more about the new IMS, please visit the IMS website at [www.cc-ims.net](http://www.cc-ims.net).

#### Did you know?

The IMS is also linked to other systems within the Collaboration. For example, the entity addresses listed on the main website, [www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org), are automatically retrieved from the IMS. This means that if an entity changes its address within the new IMS, it will be reflected on the Collaboration's main website within an hour.

*Jacob Riis (jr@cochrane.dk) is part of the IMS developer team at the Nordic Cochrane Centre*

## Working with Collaborative Review Groups

by Sonja Henderson, on behalf of IMS Support

Since Becky, Gail, Liz and I joined the IMS team in July 2004 as the IMS Support team for Collaborative Review Groups (CRGs), we have been becoming familiar with the new IMS ourselves in order to be able to provide an effective support system for CRGs: assisting with the organisation and running of workshops for editorial base staff; assisting with the preparation of documentation for the new IMS; and communicating with the Review Group Co-ordinators (RGCs) of CRGs. We have individually spoken to the RGCs of the CRGs we are supporting, to

*(Continued on page 7)*



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1. The Campbell Collaboration is a sister organization to The Cochrane Collaboration

## IMS Training and Support: Working with Collaborative Review Groups

(Continued from page 6)

introduce ourselves and to discuss the new IMS in relation to their Group's needs.

### What does the new IMS mean to us?

We have described how we think the new IMS will benefit individual groups within the Collaboration (Co-ordinating Editors, Review authors, Trials Search Co-ordinators). You can access these documents at: [www.cc-ims.net/Projects/newIMS/](http://www.cc-ims.net/Projects/newIMS/).

### IMS Bulletin for CRGs

As a result of our contacts with RGCs, we started sending weekly 'Questions of the week' messages to the RGCs' Adminors email list. We understand from our own experiences as members of CRG editorial bases how difficult it can be to keep on top of the important information we need, and hoped that the 'Questions of the week' would help RGCs with this, as well as reduce the time they spend looking for the information they want when they need it. RGCs have responded very positively. We are therefore now producing regular IMS Bulletins, incorporating the 'Questions of the week', so that RGCs are regularly updated on the work of the IMS team and the progress being made with the development of the new system.

### Workshops for CRG editorial bases

The IMS team held three closed workshops for members of CRG editorial bases during the 12<sup>th</sup> Cochrane Colloquium in Ottawa. A total of 54 editorial base staff attended one of these workshops, representing the majority of the 50 CRGs worldwide. We organised the IMS workshops around exercises drawn from real-life examples of the work carried out in editorial bases.

We will continue to provide hands-on workshops at all Cochrane meetings during 2005 and other regional meetings for CRG editorial base staff. If you are organising such a meeting, please let us know. You can find the details of past and future workshops at [www.cc-ims.net/Projects/newIMS/Training/](http://www.cc-ims.net/Projects/newIMS/Training/), where you can also access the materials and presentation slides from previous workshops.

### What next?

The new version of the Cochrane Contact Database was launched in November 2004 for use by all entities, including editorial teams. This will be followed by the IMS pilot, which will start towards the end of this year and run until the module submission deadline on 23 February 2005. Our CRGs will be part of this pilot, along with a couple of other CRGs who have volunteered to be involved. Between us we represent a cross section of editorial bases in size, organisational style and geographical locations.

The rollout of the second phase is scheduled to start in March 2005 and run over four module submissions so that all CRGs should be using the new IMS for submitting their modules for publication in *The Cochrane Library* by February 2006. However, we will be contacting CRGs to find out when they would like to move over to ensure that it fits in with other plans they may have. When the CRG moves over to the new IMS, we will be on hand to provide individual training and support they need, by phone or in person.

Sonja Henderson ([sonja@support.cc-ims.net](mailto:sonja@support.cc-ims.net)) is a member of the IMS Support Team, along with Liz Dooley ([liz@support.cc-ims.net](mailto:liz@support.cc-ims.net)), Becky Gray ([becky@support.cc-ims.net](mailto:becky@support.cc-ims.net)) and Gail Higgins ([gail@support.cc-ims.net](mailto:gail@support.cc-ims.net))



**Are there presentations you could not attend in Ottawa?**  
Some presentations have been made available at  
<http://www.cochrane.mcmaster.ca/ottcolloquium.asp>

*Mark Davies and Nick Royle compete for Cochrane Idol*  
*Read more page 11*

## Working as a TSC for two groups

(Continued from page 4)

both Groups. Working part-time for two groups brings a range of mutual benefits and allows me to be contactable full-time by both Groups; though I should say that both Groups respect my dedicated time for their particular Group, and working as I do from two independent work bases keeps work time for each Group quite distinct.

### Part II:

#### **Karen Blackhall, TSC for the Cochrane Injuries Group (CIG) and the Cochrane Eyes & Vision Group (CEVG)**

I began working four days a week for the Injuries Group, which is based at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), in September 2003. When the new funding was allocated in March 2004, it soon became clear that there was a problem equating the allocated funding with outgoing costs. There had been no additional funding secured from external sources and it seemed certain that cuts of some sort would need to be made.

Because the CEVG is also based at LSHTM, the two Groups have quite close links and make an effort to meet on a regular basis. It emerged that the CEVG was looking to recruit someone to fill the TSC role. The solution seemed obvious and on 1<sup>st</sup> April this year I began to split my four days between the two Groups.

This dual-Group role is one that has been adopted by several TSCs, and considered a successful compromise when funding problems dictate change. However, a successful solution to funding problems does not necessarily mean a successful outcome for the Group. Streamlining of the TSC role is necessary and this impacts on the core activities of the Group. It is without doubt that the *full* role of the TSC cannot be carried out in two days a week, so priorities have to be agreed from the outset.

Problems for the Group aside, the dual role that has evolved for me has proven to be a stimulating and challenging one. It has given me the opportunity to work with two contrasting areas of health care and double the number of inspiring and motivating colleagues.

I am fortunate that I am able to work for two Groups that are both based in the same institution. Although I work between two offices, in different departments of the LSHTM, they are near to each other and the communication network is good. Both Groups have good institutional support, at both departmental level and on an individual level. Had the two Groups been based in different institutions with differing levels of support, difficulties of imbalance might have emerged and problems dividing time and tasks equally between the two might have become a problem.

Although my core TSC roles are similar for both Groups, there are slight differences in the work I do for each. This is largely due to the allocation of work and differences in staffing. Work is mainly manipulated to fit my hours, but there is a constant need to assess priorities. In two days per week, it is inevitable that some TSC tasks may remain unfinished and will need to be revisited when time allows. It is essential to ensure, however, that restrictions on work for one Group is not due to the pressure of work in the other Group. If the Groups become imbalanced in terms of workload, it is my responsibility to maintain equilibrium in the work I carry out. This can add pressure to the TSC role that may not appeal to some.

Other disadvantages of working for two Groups on a part-time basis, which I am sure is also applicable to any TSC working part-time, is the continuity of the work carried out. The onus is on the TSC to be able to work within set time-scales, and the fact that there will be a longer than usual period of time between 'visits' means even more thorough recording of work is needed. Work-plans need to be quite rigid as any deviations could mean that work remains unfinished, which is not a satisfactory outcome. This may lead to work becoming repetitive and may give less scope for the TSC to develop professionally.

Generally, however, this dual role for the TSC seems a successful compromise, although it has evolved through a situation that has been forced by funding restraints. Sylvia highlighted the practical advantages of sharing one post between two Groups and for these reasons it works well.

## More Comings and Goings

### Change of co-directorship of the Dutch Cochrane Centre

Martin Offringa has stepped down as co-director of the Dutch Cochrane Centre as of 1 December 2004. We are pleased to announce that Saskia Middeldorp has taken over his position. Saskia is an internist, working at the Academic Medical Center. She is editor of the Peripheral Vascular Diseases Group and co-authors three Cochrane reviews. Saskia joined the Dutch Cochrane Centre two years ago and she will share the co-directorship with Rob Scholten.

Martin started his activities with the Dutch Cochrane Centre in April 1997. Under his directorship the Centre is established firmly in the Netherlands and it has become well known. Martin steps down to be able to concentrate on the further development of his new department of Paediatric Clinical Epidemiology in the University of Amsterdam Children's Hospital ([www.kek.cc](http://www.kek.cc)). He will stay involved in selected Dutch Cochrane Centre activities for at least the next couple of months.

*Submitted by Rob Scholten, Co-director of the Dutch Cochrane Centre*

### Information Retrieval Methods Group:

I am pleased to announce that the Information Retrieval Methods Group was officially registered with The Cochrane Collaboration on 16 November 2004. The Co-Convenors of this new Methods Group are Steven Pritchard, University Librarian at Cardiff University, and Carol Lefebvre, Information Specialist at the UK Cochrane Centre. The Co-ordinator is Alison Weightman, whose contact details are as follows:  
Dr Alison Weightman  
Co-ordinator, Cochrane Information Retrieval Methods Group  
Head of Library Service Development  
Cardiff University  
PO Box 430  
Cardiff CF24 0DE  
Tel: +44 (0)29 2087 5693  
Fax: +44 (0)29 2037 1921  
Email:  
[WeightmanAL@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:WeightmanAL@cardiff.ac.uk)

*Submitted by Jini Hetherington,  
Administrator of the Cochrane  
Collaboration Secretariat*

### Director of Canadian Cochrane Centre Announces Resignation

Arne Ohlsson, Director of the Canadian Cochrane Centre since 1998, has decided to step down from his position as Director in early January 2005. Dr. Ohlsson will continue his work as a Neonatologist at Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto, as a clinical researcher, and as a Cochrane author with the Cochrane Neonatal Group, Acute Respiratory Infections Group and the Pregnancy and Childbirth Group.

During Dr Ohlsson's time as Director of the Canadian Cochrane Centre, the number of Cochrane review authors who live in Canada has increased from less than 200 to over 530, and the number of complete Cochrane reviews by people living in Canada has increased from 129 to over 750. In addition, the Effective Practice and Organisation of Care Group, the Hypertension Group and the Reporting Bias Methods Group have all moved to Canada since 1998, bringing the total number of Cochrane entities in Canada (including the Canadian Cochrane Centre) to nine. The Network across Canada has been strengthened by increasing the number of Affiliate Organizations from 12 to 22.

Dr Ohlsson has authored 21 Cochrane reviews and five Cochrane protocols, in addition to numerous systematic reviews published in leading general medical and subspecialty paper-based, peer-reviewed journals. The conclusions of a number of the reviews have been either incorporated in practice guidelines or led to multicentre randomized controlled trials. He has served as the lead facilitator for many review author training workshops, developed a Masters of Science course in systematic reviews/Cochrane reviews at the University of Toronto, overseen three successful Canadian Cochrane Symposia and Chaired the Scientific Committee and Co-Chaired the Canadian Coordinating Committee of the 12th Cochrane Colloquium.

*Submitted by Angus Muir, Communications Specialist with the Canadian Cochrane Centre*



Arne Ohlsson at The National Gallery of Canada during the Ottawa Colloquium

**Approved minutes of the Steering Group meeting  
held in Ottawa, Canada, on 1 and 4 October 2004  
Now available at <http://www.cochrane.org/ccsg/index.htm>**

# Reflections on the Ottawa Colloquium

By **Kathie Clark and Arne Ohlsson**



Cochrane Colloquia are very important events in the year for members of The Cochrane Collaboration. For many it is the only time when authors, consumers, and members of the over 80 entities see each other in person to discuss their work. Colloquia are also excellent opportunities for people who are interested in evidence-based health care and the contribution of systematic reviews to meet the people involved in the Collaboration, to learn about Cochrane reviews, and to explore whether they want to join the Collaboration.

The Canadian Cochrane Centre staff and the members of the various planning committees have worked very hard for the past four years to provide a Colloquium that addressed everyone's needs and interests - yes, we had been preparing for the 12th Colloquium since December 2000. We want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of them for their dedication, determination and tremendous effort.

We have just reviewed the comments from the 217 people who completed the evaluation form - thank you for your helpful feedback and suggested improvements. We will be sure to include the responses in the report we submit to the Collaboration, and we will pass them on to next year's organizers in Melbourne, Australia.



The Curling Bonspiel  
*Read more on Page 11*



James Orbinski  
Keynote Speaker, from the Opening Session

Overall we think the Colloquium was a success. The scientific program was intellectually stimulating. James Orbinski, an opening session speaker, received a standing ovation after his presentation: a first at a Cochrane Colloquium. There was both beauty and serenity at the National Gallery of Canada and the Museum of Civilization, and high-spirited pandemonium at the Curling Club. There is no doubt that some things still need to be improved. Each Colloquium host strives to make their Colloquium better by applying the lessons learned the year before.

We remember the magic of our first Colloquium. The spirit and enthusiasm was truly inspiring. As we went from session to session in the Ottawa Colloquium we saw the same spirit and enthusiasm. It is part of what makes The Cochrane Collaboration so special. Think what we have achieved over the past ten years, and think what we have yet to accomplish in the next decade. It's exciting.



*Kathie Clark and Arne Ohlsson were Co-Chairs of the Canadian Coordinating Committee of the 12th Cochrane Colloquium*

Sketch by Martin Eccles of the handover to Melbourne during the Closing Ceremony  
*Read more on Page 13*

**Keep up with the latest news from your favourite Cochrane entity!**

Find all the latest Cochrane newsletters at: [www.cochrane.org/newsletters](http://www.cochrane.org/newsletters)

To post your entity's newsletter on the Collaboration website, please email it to **Angus Muir** at [muira@mcmaster.ca](mailto:muira@mcmaster.ca)

# Ottawa Colloquium fun page

## Cochrane Idol



Agustin Ciapponi wowed the audience at the Farewell Party in defending his crown during the Cochrane Idol Contest. His rendition of “We will review” was fabulous. Honourable mention must also be given to the other contestants Nick Royle and Mark Davies (aka Benny & Bjorn), and Sera Tort and Jordi Pardo.

Agustin Ciapponi sings

The contestants were all superb. They got everyone on the dance floor, where many remained until the end of the night. We should also thank the musicians who played that evening—the Stevens & Kennedy Band. Many people loved them and the Band commented that they thoroughly enjoyed playing for our group as well.

### We Will Review

Buddy you’re a boy make a big effort  
 Playin’ in RevMan gonna be a big man some day  
 Heterogeneity’s chance  
 Big disgrace  
 Kickin’ your laptop all over the place

We will we will review  
 We will we will review

Buddy you’re a young man hard man  
 Shoutin’ in the street gonna fix all the world some day  
 You got ink on yo’ face  
 Big disgrace  
 Wavin’ your banner all over the place

We will we will review  
 We will we will review

Buddy you’re an old man poor man  
 Pleadin’ with your eyes gonna make some money some day

You got hope on your face  
 Big disgrace  
 Somebody better put you back in your place

We will we will review  
 We will we will review

## Canadian Cup Tournament

In keeping with the tradition of previous Cochrane Colloquia, the 12th Cochrane Colloquium included fun social events on the free afternoon.

### Fun Run

A six km run/walk took place alongside the Rideau Canal. More than 30 participants took part, some of whom finished the run very quickly, while others took a more leisurely approach.



Some of the running participants

### Curling Bonspiel

Curling is considered one of Canada's national sports, with thousands of curlers picking up brooms every winter. Eighty participants thoroughly enjoyed themselves as they tried to stay on their feet while on the ice.

In the end Canadian pride was maintained as a Canadian team won, with an import from the UK.



Canadian Cup Champions!  
 (from left to right) Kara DeCorby, Sandra Micucci,  
 Emma Irvin, John Gyte

[www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org)

Your one-stop resource for all things Cochrane

## Colloquium Awards 2004

### The Kenneth Warren Prize

The Kenneth Warren Prize is awarded annually to the principal author of whichever systematic review, published electronically in the *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* and authored by a national living in a developing country, is judged to be both of high methodological quality and relevant to health problems in developing countries.



The winner of the Kenneth Warren Prize for 2004 was George Swingler, an Associate Professor with the School of Child and Adolescent Health at the Red Cross Children's Hospital in Cape Town, South Africa, for his review on 'Conjugate vaccines for preventing Haemophilus influenzae type B infections'. He was presented this award before the Annual General Meeting, of The Cochrane Collaboration, on October 3, 2004, and received a certificate and a cheque for US \$1,000.

#### Previous winners of the Kenneth Warren Prize:

2003	Mauricio Silva De Lima (Brazil)	- Antidepressants for cocaine dependence
2002	Prathap Tharyan (India)	- Electroconvulsive therapy for schizophrenia
2001	Manit Sisurapanont (Thailand)	- Quetiapine for schizophrenia

### The Chris Silagy Prize



The Chris Silagy Prize is awarded annually, at the Cochrane Colloquium, in memory of Chris Silagy. Chris was the founding director of the Australasian Cochrane Centre, a past Chair of the Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group, and Collaboration Ombudsman. He was instrumental in establishing The Cochrane Collaboration in Australasia. In December 2001, he sadly died, and is much missed by his colleagues and friends. The Chris Silagy Prize is awarded to an individual or organization nominated by their peers in recognition of an extraordinary contribution to the work of The Cochrane Collaboration. The person awarded the Prize is funded to attend the Cochrane Colloquium in order to receive the Prize, and presented there with a certificate and a cheque for AUD \$1,000.

At the Ottawa Colloquium, the 2004 Chris Silagy Prize was awarded to Sonja Henderson, the Review Group Coordinator of the Cochrane Pregnancy and Childbirth Group.

#### Previous winners of the Chris Silagy Prize:

2003	Gill Gyte, Cochrane Pregnancy and Childbirth Group
2002	Jini Hetherington, Cochrane Collaboration Secretariat

### The Thomas C Chalmers Award

The Thomas C Chalmers Award is awarded for the best oral or poster presentation at the Colloquium.

**More information on these prizes can be found at:**

<http://www.cochrane.org/docs/prizes>

The winner of the Thomas C Chalmers Award in 2004 was Luke Marinovitch from the University of Sydney, Australia, for his poster 'Data maturity and systematic reviews of new health technologies'. Luke was awarded a prize of US \$1,000.

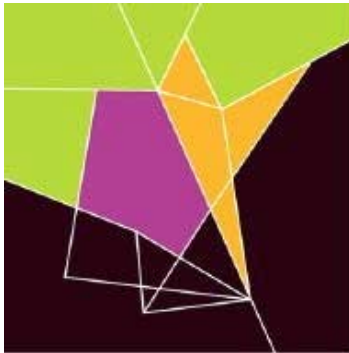
*Submitted by Angus Muir, Communications Specialist at the Canadian Cochrane Centre*

**Joining, moving, leaving?**

Let us know by sending an email to: [cochrane@mcmaster.ca](mailto:cochrane@mcmaster.ca)

## Melbourne Colloquium update

by Steve McDonald



corroboree :: melbourne

### XIII Cochrane Colloquium

22-26 OCTOBER 2005

Fresh from the closing ceremony in Ottawa, all eyes will soon be on Melbourne as the host city for the 2005 Colloquium. Planning of the scientific sessions and social events is well underway, and we invite you to download the preliminary program from the Colloquium website ([www.colloquium.info](http://www.colloquium.info)). The scientific program will focus on several key issues affecting the Collaboration's work and contain a strong methodological component. Full details will be available on the website from February/March next year. Alongside the science there will be lots of opportunities for socialising and experiencing the best of Melbourne's renowned culture - from its fabulous food and wine, to its fashion, sports, arts and gardens. In Aboriginal Australia, corroborees are festive gatherings and we're looking forward to celebrating our own corroboree in Melbourne. If you've been looking for an excuse to visit Australia, then look no further - a great welcome awaits you. (And if you still need convincing, then check out [www.visitmelbourne.com](http://www.visitmelbourne.com).)

*Steve McDonald is a member of the Melbourne Colloquium Organising Committee*

## Key dates for the Melbourne Colloquium

Abstract submission deadline: .....	18 April 2005
Notification of abstract acceptance:.....	16 May 2005
Consumer and developing country stipend deadline: .....	30 May 2005
Notification of stipend acceptance:.....	20 June 2005
Early registration deadline:.....	15 July 2005
Meeting room request deadline:.....	1 August 2005
Hotel registration deadline:.....	16 September 2005
Cancellation refunds deadline:.....	23 September 2005
13th Cochrane Colloquium:.....	22-26 October 2005



Members of the Australian contingent promote the upcoming Melbourne Colloquium.  
(From left to right) Sally Green, Skippy, Simon French, Steve McDonald.

**Cochrane News** is distributed internationally by Cochrane Centres and through various Cochrane mailing lists. If you are having problems receiving **Cochrane News** or you would like to be added to a mailing list, please contact your nearest Cochrane Centre (see page 16 for contact details).

Please visit [www.colloquium.info](http://www.colloquium.info) for more information about the Melbourne Colloquium

## Events and Announcements

### Announcement of new CLUG Convenor

Emma Irvin has been enthusiastically approved by the Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group as the new Cochrane Library Users' Group (CLUG) Convenor.

Emma Irvin is the librarian at the Institute for Work & Health (Toronto, Ontario, Canada), an independent, not-for-profit organization whose mission is to conduct and share research with workers, employers, clinicians and policy-makers to promote, protect and improve the health of working people. The Institute for Work & Health is the host institution for the Cochrane Back Review Group.

Emma started her career as a business librarian, but after three years she moved into the healthcare field, where she has been a health librarian for 13 years. She manages both the systems department and the library at the Institute and is helping to create the Institute's Systematic Review Unit. Emma has conducted and co-authored a number of systematic reviews and is currently teaching courses on search techniques.

We welcome Emma to her new role and membership on the Publishing Policy Group. We also want to take this opportunity to thank Julie Glanville for her valued contribution to the Collaboration when she was CLUG Convenor.

*Submitted by Kathie Clark, Convenor of the Publishing Policy Group*

### First-year review of the 'new' cochrane.org

You are invited to participate in the first-year review of the 'new' cochrane.org website.

The 'new' www.cochrane.org has now been online for one year. If you use the site, then this is the best time for you to send us your comments, suggestions, or complaints. If you don't use it, please tell us why not! We will soon be starting a revision, based on the feedback we receive.

Send your comments on any topics you find important, from content to design to functionality, to: [web@cochrane.org](mailto:web@cochrane.org), by the end of 2004. Happy surfing!

*Submitted by Dave Booker, on behalf of the Cochrane.org web team*

## From the Co-Chairs

*(Continued from page 2)*

'Special features'.

On behalf of the Steering Group, we want to express our sincere appreciation to Mark Starr and the staff of Update Software. His outstanding contribution to the Collaboration will not be forgotten. The front-page article by Gerd Antes and others in the Collaboration is a well-deserved tribute to Mark as a person and a publisher.

We want to take this opportunity to express our profound appreciation to Mike Clarke who stepped down at the Ottawa Colloquium as the Co-Chair of the Steering Group. Mike was Deputy Chair with Peter Langhorne (2000-2002), and Co-Chair with Jim Neilson (2002-2004). His extensive contributions to the Collaboration include serving as Treasurer and Publishing Policy Group Convenor. In particular, we are grateful for his leadership in guiding the Collaboration through the new publishing arrangement with John Wiley & Sons Ltd. We are delighted that Mike has agreed to Chair the Board of Directors of The Cochrane Collaboration Trading Company Limited, replacing Jos Kleijnen who has recently completed his term. We also extend our thanks to Jos for his leadership and contribution to the Trading Company.

*Kathie Clark and Jim Neilson, Co-Chairs, Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group*

**Looking for the full abstracts from the 12th Colloquium?  
They are available online at [www.cochrane.org/colloquia/abstracts/index.htm](http://www.cochrane.org/colloquia/abstracts/index.htm)**

## New interface for *The Cochrane Library*

*The Cochrane Library* contains high quality healthcare information, including systematic reviews from The Cochrane Collaboration. These reviews bring together research on the effects of health care and are considered the gold standard for determining the relative effectiveness of different interventions. The Cochrane Collaboration ([www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org)) is a UK registered international charity and the world's leading producer of systematic reviews. It has been demonstrated that Cochrane systematic reviews are of comparable or better quality and are updated more often than reviews published in print journals<sup>1</sup>.

*The Cochrane Library* has just been launched in a brand new interface through Wiley InterScience and can be accessed at <http://www.thecochranelibrary.com>. Guest users may access abstracts of all reviews in the database, and members of the media may request full access to the contents of *The Library*. For further information, see contact details below.

A number of countries have national provisions by which some or all of their residents are able to access *The Cochrane Library* for free. These include: Australia, Denmark, England, Finland, Ireland, Norway, South Africa and Wales.

There are also several programmes, such as the Health InterNetwork Access to Research Initiative (HINARI) that are designed to provide access to *The Cochrane Library* in developing countries. To find out whether your country is included in any of these programmes/provisions, or to learn how to obtain access if you don't already have it, please visit <http://www.thecochranelibrary.com>.

If you would like to see a full list of reviews published in the latest issue of *The Cochrane Library*, or would like to request full access to the contents of *The Library*, please feel free to contact me.

Contact: Julia Lampam  
Tel: +44 (0)1243 770668  
Email: [jlampam@wiley.co.uk](mailto:jlampam@wiley.co.uk)

- Jadad AR, Cook DJ, Jones A, Klassen TP, Tugwell P, Moher M, et al. Methodology and reports of systematic reviews and meta-analyses: a comparison of Cochrane reviews with articles published in paper-based journals. *JAMA* 1998;280:278-80.

Submitted by Julia Lampam, John Wiley and Sons Ltd.

### Cochrane Manual Update

The latest update of The Cochrane Manual (a 213-page document containing the policies and procedures of The Cochrane Collaboration) is now available on the Collaboration website (<http://www.cochrane.org/admin/manual.htm>).

Submitted by Jini Hetherington,  
Administrator of the Cochrane Collaboration  
Secretariat

## Deadlines and dates for *The Cochrane Library*

<i>The Cochrane Library</i>	Specialized Register Deadlines (US Cochrane Center)	Copy Edit Support Deadlines (John Wiley and Sons, Ltd.)	Module Submission Deadlines (Update Software)	Publication Dates (John Wiley and Sons, Ltd.)
Issue 1, 2005	NA	NA	NA	24 January 2005
Issue 2, 2005	23 December 2004	2 February 2005	23 February 2005	20 April 2005
Issue 3, 2005	25 March 2005	4 May 2005	25 May 2005	20 July 2005
Issue 4, 2005	24 June 2005	3 August 2005	24 August 2005	19 October 2005

Note: These deadlines are for Collaborative Review Groups and other Cochrane entities. Individual reviewers should contact their respective Review Groups for editorial deadlines.

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