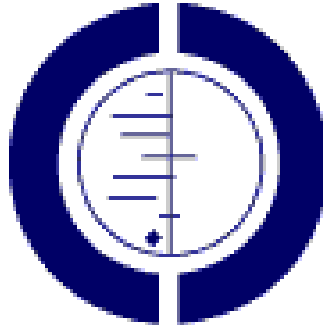


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THE COCHRANE COLLABORATION



# Acute Respiratory Infections Group

## Newsletter 41 December 2009

Faculty of Health Sciences and Medicine  
Bond University  
Gold Coast, 4229  
Queensland  
Australia

Tel: +61 7 5595 4492

Fax: +61 7 5595 4122

Email: [ldooley@bond.edu.au](mailto:ldooley@bond.edu.au)

Web Address: [ari.cochrane.org/](http://ari.cochrane.org/)

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## A word from the Co-ordinating Editor

### **The ARI Group hits the world stage**

Cochrane became political in December when a re-updated review was published. This sounds so unlikely it is worth telling the story.



The H1N1 influenza pandemic in May was seen as an opportunity for, and responsibility of, the Cochrane Collaboration to respond to the information challenge. A small steering group was set up with me as Coordinating Editor of the relevant (ie Acute Respiratory Infections) Cochrane Group, with encouragement of the Steering Committee and Chief Editor. We listed a number of reviews that addressed influenza or acute respiratory infections more generally, that could be important for making health policy decisions globally. We then wrote to their authors asking them what their plans were for an update.

To assist with this extra time pressure, we approached research funding bodies in the UK (the HHR) and in Australia (the NHMRC) for support. This was provided. Deadlines were set for the end of this year.

One of the updates was *Neuraminidases for influenza in healthy adults*. This was also a good time to respond to a criticism posted on the feedback area of the review by a Japanese paediatrician, who was concerned about the possibility of bias in one of the studies, which was industry funded. The update – which also focussed on looking for adverse events from neuraminidases – proceeded in orderly fashion with a slightly altered crew of authors (not everyone could join the update with this new time constraint). The study within the review that had been criticised (and which was the only study of the complications of influenza) was found to indeed be very subject to bias. The problem was that it was itself a summary of 10 RCTs, some of which were published, but seven were not – these representing the majority of patients who have been trialled for the complications of influenza. The study summarised data that did not allow an independent meta-analysis of the trials within it (which had a mixture of eligible and ineligible patients and different levels of influenza-cased illness, and so on). We wrote to the author of the study. He wrote back with apologies, but he no longer had access to the data, please could we go to the pharmaceutical company that funded the study. But the company, after some negotiation, was unable to help us.

We offered this review to a couple of journals, in turn. The BMJ was interested. When the story began to unfold, the editors decided to make an issue of the lack of access to the data that we were encountering, and not only published our review (as a previously published Cochrane review update – itself a little unusual), but arranged four accompanying editorials and commentaries, *and* cooperated with a TV program to air a documentary at the same time the review was published.

All this caused considerable media exposure. They picked up on the fact that the evidence was found wanting in the recommendations of neuraminidase inhibitors for the complications of influenza, something governments had noted when stockpiling oseltamivir (Tamiflu) in readiness for the pandemic.

The story has not ended. We are still trying to get the data from the pharmaceutical company. When we do, we will update the review. Watch this space.

*Chris Del Mar*

## Welcome

### Incoming staff - Editorial team members

We would like to welcome the following Contact Editors to the ARI editorial team:

**Mieke van Driel** joined our editorial team in February 2009. She has extensive experience as an author across multiple Cochrane entities. Mieke is Professor of General Practice at the Faculty of Health Sciences and Medicine, Bond University, Queensland, Australia. Also joining the team in February 2009 are **Susan Smith**, Senior Lecturer in Primary Care, Department of Public Health and Primary Care, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland and **Matthew Thompson**, Clinical Lecturer & Principal in General Practice, Department of Primary Health Care, University of Oxford, UK.

In July 2009 we were joined by **John Holden**, an experienced General Practitioner from Garswood Surgery, Merseyside, UK; and **Zulfiqar Bhutta**, Husein Lalji Dewraj Professor & Head at the Division of Maternal and Child Health, The Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan.

We are delighted to welcome **Mark Griffin**, a new Statistical Editor. Mark is a Statistician, at the School of Population Health, Queensland University, Australia.

**Paul Glasziou** has resigned his role as Contact editor within the ARI Group, but has taken over as the new Feedback Editor. We hope he enjoys this change and look forward to working with Paul in this new capacity.

**Clare Dooley** joined us in February 2009 as the new Assistant Managing Editor. We are delighted to have Clare working with us as her experiences as Editor of *The European Retail Digest* at Templeton College, Oxford University will be invaluable to the work carried out at the editorial base. Clare has already been involved with the ARI Group. In 2008 she was the conversion officer for our reviews from RevMan 4 format to RevMan 5. We hope she enjoys the new position.

## Farewell

### Outgoing staff - Editorial team members

**Hayley Edmonds**, our previous Assistant Review Group Co-ordinator, left the editorial base at the end of 2008 following a very productive 20 months. We enjoyed her enthusiasm and benefitted greatly from her skills and wish Hayley all the best in her medical studies.

**Tom Fahey**, our Feedback editor for the past five years has recently stepped down from this role. We wish to warmly thank Tom for his excellent contributions and delicate handling of feedback comments that this post occasionally requires

The ARI Group wishes to sincerely thank **Anthony Harnden** and **Ross Andrews**, who gave their time and expertise as Contact Editors from December 2006 until March 2009. Thanks also go to **George Swingler**, Professor of Paediatrics and Child Health at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, for generously contributing as a Contact editor from October 2001 to June 2009.



### Singapore Colloquium

The 17<sup>th</sup> annual Cochrane Colloquium held in Singapore (11-14<sup>th</sup> October 2009) was a great success.

Watch videos and slides of the Colloquium plenaries [here](#), and visit the [Virtual Posters](#) to view pdfs of the poster presentations.



### Upcoming Colloquium in Colorado

The 18<sup>th</sup> annual Cochrane Colloquium will be held in Keystone, Colorado, USA, 18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2010. The theme will be 'Bringing evidence-based decision-making to new heights'. For more information <http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=766689>

## Change in publication frequency

From January 2010 the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, containing all Cochrane protocols and reviews, will be published monthly, instead of quarterly. Increased publication frequency will enable new evidence to be published more rapidly – a good result for readers, authors and editorial teams. The new 2010 schedule, is available on the 'Help' page of *The Cochrane Library*:

[http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/mrwhome/106568753/HELP\\_Cochrane.html](http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/mrwhome/106568753/HELP_Cochrane.html)

## Future Cochrane workshops

**'Evidence for Better Health'** -8th Winter Symposium of the Christian Medical College, Vellore and the 3rd South Asian Regional Symposium on Evidence Based Health Care, 11-14th January, 2010, Christian Medical College, Vellore, Tamil Nadu, INDIA. For details and registrations please visit <http://www.cochrane-sacn.org/Symposium2010/Index.htm>

**'Addressing advanced issues in meta-analytical techniques'** - Cochrane Statistical Methods Group Training Course, 4-5th March 2010, Cardiff, UK. For details and applications please visit <http://smg.cochrane.org/en/newPage5.html>

**'Evidence on Trial: has it made an impact on health?'** - Australian Cochrane Centre Symposium, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010, Auckland, New Zealand. Cochrane staff, authors and those interested in evidence in healthcare are welcome. The Australian Cochrane Centre (ACC) meeting for centre staff/MEs and TSCs will follow on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March. <http://www.cochrane.org.au/training/timetable.php>

**'Acercando la mejor investigación a la práctica clínica'** - First Chilean Conference of Evidence-Based Healthcare and IX Meeting of the Iberoamerican Cochrane Centre, 6-8th May 2010, Santiago, Chile. For details

please visit <http://umbeuc.cl/congreso.html>

**'Protocol and Analysis Workshop'** – 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2010, Bond University, Gold Coast, Australia. New review authors welcome.

<http://www.cochrane.org.au/training/timetable.php>

**'Review Completion Workshop'** – 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> June, 2010, hosted by the Herston Medical Library, Royal Brisbane Hospital. This workshop will target review authors who need protected time to complete their reviews or updated reviews.

<http://www.cochrane.org.au/training/timetable.php>

## Funding

The ARI Group is delighted to have received continued funding from the Department of Health and Ageing for a Managing Editor for another three years.

## Cochrane Style Guide

Cochrane Style Guide (4<sup>th</sup> edition) is now available [www.cochrane.org/style/csg.htm](http://www.cochrane.org/style/csg.htm) This has been updated to reflect users experience with review Manager 5 and other feedback. A full list of changes is available in the Cochrane Style Guide.

## ARI Group Website

Anyone with an interest in authoring a Cochrane review or assisting as a referee should go to the 'Getting involved' link <http://ari.cochrane.org/en/involve.html> on the ARI Group website <http://ari.cochrane.org> and submit the relevant form. The ARI Group's website will be overhauled in the new year – watch this space.

Anyone interested in taking on an orphaned Cochrane protocol or review can find a list on the ARI Group website under the link 'Reviews needed' <http://ari.cochrane.org/en/needreviews.html>.

## Online help for UK-based authors of systematic reviews

Online Learning Resources for Undertaking a Systematic Review have been developed by the UK Cochrane Centre and the University of Portsmouth. In the first instance, these are being made available to authors from any review group with a registered title for a Cochrane review, have an active record in Archie and are located in the UK. The UK Cochrane Centre is exploring means to make the materials available to authors who are based outside the UK. The reasons for this staggered procedure relate to licensing of the underlying software and the provision of support to users outside the UK.

For all UK-based authors, the link to register for access is on the UKCC homepage ([www.cochrane.ac.uk](http://www.cochrane.ac.uk)). Then click on the Online Learning Resources heading in the middle of the page which will then take you to pages with further information about the resources and how to register for a free user ID and password.

## New protocols since our last newsletter

- Short course versus prolonged course antibiotic therapy for hospital-acquired pneumonia in critically ill adults (Pugh R, Grant C, Cooke RPD, Dempsey G)
- Corticosteroids for pneumonia (Yuanjing C, Pu H, Wu T)
- Macrolides for diffuse panbronchiolitis (Yang M, Dong BR, Lin X, Wu HM)
- Pneumococcal vaccines for prevention of Streptococcus pneumoniae disease in patients undergoing chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy (Gómez-Aulí A, Ballesteros M, Gamboa OA, Cuervo S)
- Routine vitamin A supplementation for the prevention of blindness due to measles infection in children

(Bello S, Meremikwu MM, Ejemot RI)

- Antibiotics for undifferentiated acute respiratory tract infections in children under five years of age (Alves Galvão MG, Rocha Crispino Santos MA, Alves da Cunha AJL)
- Decongestants, antihistamines and nasal irrigation for acute sinusitis in children (Shaikh N, Wald ER, Pi M)
- Remediating buildings damaged by dampness and mould for preventing respiratory tract symptoms, infections and asthma (Sauni R, Uitti J, Jauhiainen M, Kreiss K, Sigsgaard T, Verbeek JH)
- Antiviral prophylaxis for varicella zoster in immunocompromised patients (excluding haematological malignancies) (Chang CC, Cheng AC, Maude RJ, Slavin M)
- Corticosteroids for the common cold (Thompson MJ, Hayward G, Heneghan CJ, Perera R, Glasziou PP, Del Mar C)
- Short course versus long course intravenous therapy of the same antibiotic for severe community-acquired pneumonia in children aged two months to 59 months (Zaidi A, Haider BA, Bhutta ZA)
- Systemic corticosteroids for acute sinusitis (Hayward G, Thompson MJ, Heneghan CJ, Perera R, Glasziou PP, Del Mar C)

## New reviews since our last newsletter

- Acetylcysteine and carbocysteine for acute upper and lower respiratory tract infections in paediatric patients without chronic bronchopulmonary disease (Duijvestijn YCM, Mourdi N, Smucny J, Pons G, Chalumeau M)
- Oxygen therapy for lower respiratory tract infections in children between 3 months and 15

- years of age (Rojas MX, Granados Rugeles C, Charry-Anzola LP)
- Short versus standard duration antibiotic therapy for acute streptococcal pharyngitis in children (Altamimi S, Khalil A, Khalaiwi KA, Milner R, Pusic MV, Al Othman MA)
- Combined DTP-HBV-HIB vaccine versus separately administered DTP-HBV and HIB vaccines for primary prevention of diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, hepatitis B and Haemophilus influenzae B (HIB) (Bar-On ES, Goldberg E, Fraser A, Vidal L, Hellmann S, Leibovici L)
- Garlic for the common cold (Lissiman E, Bhasale AL, Cohen M)
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for the common cold (Kim Sy, Chang Y-J, Cho HM, Hwang Y-w, Moon YS)
- Rapid viral diagnosis for acute febrile respiratory illness in children in the Emergency Department (Doan Q, Enarson P, Kissoon N, Klassen TP, Johnson DW)
- Antibiotics for acute otitis media in children (Sanders S, Glasziou PP, Del Mar C, Rovers M)
- Antibiotics for preventing meningococcal infections (Fraser A, Gafter-Gvili A, Paul M, Leibovici L)
- Chinese medicinal herbs for the common cold (Zhang X, Wu T, Zhang J, Yan Q, Xie L, Liu GJ)
- Neuraminidase inhibitors for preventing and treating influenza in healthy adults (Jefferson T, Demicheli V, Di Pietrantonj C, Jones M, Rivetti D)
- Pneumococcal conjugate vaccines for preventing otitis media (Jansen AGSC, Hak E, Veenhoven RH, Damoiseaux RAMJ, Schilder AGM, Sanders EAM)
- Steroids for symptom control in infectious mononucleosis (Candy B, Hotopf M)
- Topical analgesia for acute otitis media (Foxlee R, Johansson A-C, Wejfalk J, Dawkins J, Dooley L, Del Mar C)
- Antibiotics for sore throat (Spinks A, Glasziou PP, Del Mar C)

## New updated reviews since our last newsletter

- Acyclovir for treating varicella in otherwise healthy children and adolescents (Klassen TP, Hartling L)
- Amantadine and rimantadine for influenza A in adults (Jefferson T, Demicheli V, Di Pietrantonj C, Rivetti D)
- Antibiotics for acute bronchitis (Smith SM, Fahey T, Smucny J, Becker LA)
- Antibiotics for acute laryngitis in adults (Reveiz L, Cardona AF, Ospina EG)
- Positioning for acute respiratory distress in hospitalised infants and children (Gillies D, Wells D)
- Vitamin A for treating measles in children (Yang HM, Mao M, Wan CM)
- Vitamin C for preventing and treating pneumonia (Hemilä H, Louhiala P)
- Acellular vaccines for preventing whooping cough in children (Zhang L, Prietsch SOM, Axelsson I, Halperin SA)
- Antibiotic prophylaxis to reduce respiratory tract infections and mortality in adults receiving intensive care (Liberati A, D'Amico R, Pifferi S, Torri V, Brazzi L, Parmelli E)

- Antibiotics for community acquired pneumonia in adult outpatients (Bjerre LM, Verheij TJM, Kochen MM)
- Chinese medicinal herbs for measles (Zheng Y, Gu R, Wu T)
- Intranasal steroids for acute sinusitis (Zalmanovici A, Yaphe J)
- Pneumococcal conjugate vaccines for preventing vaccine-type invasive pneumococcal disease and X-ray defined pneumonia in children less than two years of age (Lucero MG, Dulalia VE, Nillos LT, Williams G, Parreño RAN, Nohynek H, Riley ID, Makela H)

## Latest additions to *The Cochrane Library*

Issue 1, 2010 includes a number of new reviews and protocols as well as substantially updated reviews produced by the ARI Group. A big thanks to all those who contributed.

### New protocols appearing in Issue 1, 2010

- Corticosteroids for sore throat (Thompson MJ, Hayward G, Heneghan CJ, Perera R, Glasziou PP, Del Mar C)
- Intranasal ipratropium bromide for the common cold (AlBalawi ZH, Othman SS, AlFaleh K)
- Oral topical decontamination for preventing ventilator-associated pneumonia in adult patients (Yue

J, Dong BR, Yang M, Wu T, Liu GJ)

### New reviews appearing in Issue 1, 2010

- Honey for acute cough in children (Oduwole O, Meremikwu MM, Oyo-Ita A, Udoh EE)

### New updated reviews appearing in Issue 1, 2010

- Delayed antibiotics for respiratory infections (Spurling GKP, Del Mar C, Dooley L, Foxlee R)
- Over-the-counter (OTC) medications to reduce cough as an adjunct to antibiotics for acute pneumonia (Chang CC, Cheng AC, Chang AB)
- Physical interventions to interrupt or reduce the spread of respiratory viruses (Jefferson T, Del Mar C, Dooley L, Ferroni E, Al-Ansary LA, Bawazeer GA, van Driel ML, Nair S, Foxlee R, Rivetti A)
- Symptomatic treatment of the cough in whooping cough (Bettiol S, Thompson MJ, Roberts NW, Perera R, Heneghan CJ, Harnden A)

To keep our information up-to-date, please email any changes of contact details to [cldooley@bond.edu.au](mailto:cldooley@bond.edu.au)

***A big thank you to all the members of the ARI Group, who continue to contribute to our success.***