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## Welcome to Khon Khaen

### The Thai Cochrane Network hosts the Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group mid-year meetings

From 20-26 April 2006, the Thai Cochrane Network (TCN), based at Khon Kaen University in north east Thailand, was honoured to host the mid-year meetings of the Cochrane Centre Directors and the Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group. This was the first opportunity for us to welcome so many Cochrane representatives from all over the world.

The Centre Directors' meeting was attended by representatives of 13 Centres and Branches. The newly-formed Executive of the Co-ordinating Editors also met in Khon Kaen and members were able to join with Steering Group members for a brainstorming session before the Steering Group meeting got under way.

To coincide with these meetings, the TCN promoted research synthesis activities by organizing a Symposium on 22 April 2006, in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health and the Faculty of Medicine, Khon Kaen University.

The plenary sessions of the Symposium addressed the topics of 'The importance of systematic reviews and meta-analysis to healthcare practice' and 'Current developments in The Cochrane Collaboration to promote reliable health information'. Several workshops were offered, including 'Utility of evidence from systematic reviews in policy decision making and healthcare practice', 'Systematic reviews of diagnostic test accuracy studies', 'Train the trainers: techniques for training authors of systematic reviewers', and 'How to conduct a Cochrane systematic review'.

Around 90 people from various parts of Thailand had the great opportunity to hear more about the Collaboration from experienced speakers, and to learn about systematic reviews and the application of evidence. We are extremely grateful to all the speakers for their help in supporting our efforts to establish evidence-based healthcare practice in Thailand.



Participants in the brainstorming session in Khon Khaen



The sights of Vientiane, Laos

After several days of intensive meetings, we organised a day tour to Vientiane, Laos, for all Centre Directors and Steering Group members. Even though the weather in April was very hot, everyone enjoyed sightseeing in Vientiane, a city renowned for its

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

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The Steering Group had its mid-year meeting in Khon Kaen, Thailand in April. It was an extremely successful meeting and we would like to thank again Pisake Lumbiganon (Director of the Thai Cochrane Network) and all his staff for hosting us in Thailand.

Alongside the Steering Group meeting we set aside a half day for a face-to-face brainstorming/strategic planning session on priority setting. The session was very fruitful, involving the Steering Group, the Co-ordinating Editors Executive, some Centre Directors and other invited guests. A cavalcade of ideas was produced and a detailed set of proposals and action items is forthcoming. Once again many thanks to Liz Waters, Peter Tugwell, Lisa Bero and Jini Hetherington for their hard work on this. The Steering Group is currently exploring whether this type of meeting will take place regularly alongside Steering Group meetings.

At the Steering Group meeting we approved the establishment of a 'Cochrane opportunities fund'. This fund would provide a pot of money to which Cochrane entities could bid for funds. It is envisaged that applications from entities should fit with the goals of the Strategic Plan. We anticipated that £100,000 per year will be set aside for this initiative. The details of how this money can be applied for and what criteria will be used to assess the applications will be developed over the next few months.

The Collaboration is undertaking a review of CENTRAL. This review is being done by a small group led by Karen Robinson (with Gerd Antes, Adrian Grant and Gail Higgins) known as the CENTRAL Vision Group. They are consulting widely throughout the Collaboration. The bulk of their work should be ready by the time of the Colloquium in Dublin so that some concrete decisions about the future of CENTRAL can be made.

The Publishing Policy Group is exploring the concept of short versions of Cochrane reviews, and a Collaboration-wide consultation on the format of short versions has been launched. There seems to be a general consensus that a short version is needed, but the challenge will be to produce a meaningful, concise product that avoids creating extra work for authors and review groups. We invite you all to provide feedback on this initiative to Jini Hetherington at the Secretariat ([jhetherington@cochrane.org](mailto:jhetherington@cochrane.org)) by 4 September 2006.

*Mark Davies and Steff Lewis, Co-Chairs  
Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group*

**Letter from the Editor**

Thanks for joining us for another issue of *Cochrane News*. I'd like to welcome two new members to the *Cochrane News* Advisory Committee: MaryEllen Schaafsma joins us *ex officio* as the new Executive Director of the Canadian Cochrane Centre, where *Cochrane News* is published, and Megan Prictor of the Consumers and Communication Group comes on board for a two-year term as the new Review Group Co-ordinator representative. We send our thanks to Kathie Clark and Gill Rizzello, who held these positions previously.

In this edition, as always, we have updates from all over the Collaboration: a glimpse into the activities of committees and working groups that will affect the way Cochrane reviews are written and read across the world. It's always exciting to see so many interesting projects under way. Enjoy, and I hope to see you in Dublin!

*Miranda Cumpston, Editor  
Cochrane News*

## Welcome to Khon Khaen (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

Buddhist temples and French influences.

Evening dinners were held to welcome all representatives with Thai cuisine and karaoke singing. The entertainment was well received and we discovered many talented singers, dancers and even Elvis impersonators!

We would also like to give a special thanks to the Australasian Cochrane Centre, Sally Green and Steve McDonald for their invaluable advice, and all the wonderful TCN staff for their hard work. Finally, on behalf of the TCN team, we hope to welcome and greet the Cochrane group with the warmest hospitality again.

*Pisake Lumbiganon, Convenor, and Natthaleeya Narash, Administrator  
Thai Cochrane Network*



TCN Convenor Pisake Lumbiganon joins in the karaoke

## The Steering Group: a newcomer's perspective

At the Melbourne Colloquium in October 2005, the Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group (CCSG) agreed that a position for a Trials Search Co-ordinator (TSC) representative on the CCSG should be created as soon as possible. Elections were held and on 1 February I became the first TSC representative. Preparations for the CCSG mid-year meeting in Khon Kaen were already in full swing and there was little time to reflect on what being a TSC rep was going to be like. Busy: that much became clear very quickly. To some extent I had made it my business to find out what the CCSG actually does before I decided to stand for election. Still, there was a lot of catching up to do: past minutes to read, the Strategic Plan to peruse, administrative procedures to learn about, forms to fill in, trips to book, vaccinations to take care of.... I was invited to join the Cochrane Library Users' Group (CLUG) and the Publishing Policy Group (PPG) and was happy to do so.



Dymphna Hermans tries her hand at making silk

By the time I arrived in Thailand for the first meeting, I felt reasonably well prepared. Khon Kaen was very hot (40°C+) and the hotel bar was by far the best place to be. I met most other members of the CCSG there on the first evening. They were welcoming and friendly. The meetings were led by the two very able Chairs, Mark Davies and Steff Lewis, and thus a pleasure to attend. I found the dynamics of the meeting very interesting (I am after all an anthropologist by training): who talks to whom, who rocks the boat, who gets his/her way and who doesn't, and why the people in the meeting behave the way they do. There is a lot to be learned.

What struck me was the heart and dedication of the people involved, whatever their strategies. Also, the CCSG does a lot of very good business that I had not been aware of. For example, I had always thought of the Monitoring and Registration Group as a bit of an imposition, a nuisance: as RGC/TSC I do not like the work of filling in the monitoring forms and at times I cannot see the point of it. I came to realize that they also manage the registration of new entities and get involved when entities are in (financial) trouble, which is important work that takes a lot of time, patience and dedication.

There was not a lot of time for leisure but some of us were lucky enough to go on a day trip to Chonnabot, a nearby village where silk is still produced by hand. We were shown the whole process from silk worm to cocoon, to spinning the threads and to weaving the silk, and even had a go ourselves. Nat from the Thai Cochrane Centre organized, accompanied and translated for us and her presence made it into a great outing.

I knew relatively little about the CCSG before I became a member. I think one of the things I would like to achieve, apart from representing the interests of TSCs, is to give my constituency a clear idea of what the CCSG does, who is involved, and above all their achievements.

*Dymphna Hermans, Trials Search Co-ordinator Representative  
Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group*

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

## Revising the QUOROM Statement

### Recommendations for improving the reporting of systematic reviews

The QUOROM (*Q*uality *O*f *R*eporting *O*f *M*eta-analyses) Statement is an evidence-based guidance to help improve the reporting of meta-analysis of randomized trials. It comprises 21 checklist items that parallel the process involved in completing a meta-analysis, and a flow diagram detailing the flow of randomized trials through the meta-analysis process. The Statement was developed in 1996 and published in 1999. Since its initial development, the evidence base underlying the conduct of systematic reviews has become more mature, although this has not always translated into improved reporting. The QUOROM Group was aware of this expanded knowledge base; however, funding proved difficult to obtain and was not secured until late 2004. Other reasons to update QUOROM included a more comprehensive understanding of some conceptual issues, methodological advances, and practical innovations in the conduct and reporting of systematic reviews.

Since 1996 'systematic review' has become an established term as it is nearly always possible to conduct and report a systematic review. This is not necessarily so for meta-analysis and this perspective is now reflected in the revision. Similarly, the revised Statement addresses the iterative nature of completing a systematic review, which is quite different from other types of research endeavour. A systematic review depends on the scope and quality of primary studies and thus systematic review authors may need to modify their original protocol while the review is being conducted. Any systematic review reporting guide should recognize that such changes can be transparently reported and explained without suggesting inappropriate conduct and/or reporting.

A three-day meeting was held in Ottawa, Canada, in June 2005 with 29 participants, including several members of The Cochrane Collaboration. At the time of this news item, the revised Statement consists of a 27-item checklist and four-phase flow diagram. A possible name change is also under discussion.

While the content of the old and new checklists is similar, cosmetic and structural changes have been made. The revised checklist includes several new items, for example, Item 5 (*Indicate if a review protocol exists, if and where it can be accessed (e.g., web address) and, if available, provide registration information including registration number*). While systematic review registration is not yet widely available, the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors now requires all clinical trials to be registered. The hope is that trial registration will reduce or stop inappropriate behaviours by some clinical trialists, such as hiding data. Increasing transparency and accountability is also likely to be a positive step for the systematic review community.

In addition to the new items other remaining items now request additional information from authors. For example, the Introduction section is now separated into Item 3 (*Describe the rationale for the review in the context of what is already known*) and Item 4 (*Provide an explicit statement of questions being addressed with reference to participants, interventions, comparisons, outcomes and study design (PICOS)*).

The original QUOROM Statement requested that authors "*provide a flow diagram providing information about the number of RCTs identified, included and excluded, and the reasons for excluding them*". The revised Statement includes a more precise request to report on capturing information about citation records, included and excluded articles and number of randomized controlled trials (RCTs).

The aim of the revised Statement is to help improve the reporting of systematic reviews of RCTs. However, its underlying philosophy and much of the content can be used as a basis for reporting systematic reviews of other types of research. Beyond helping authors, the revision may be useful for peer reviewers and those wishing to critique published systematic reviews.

The meeting participants agreed to develop a detailed supporting 'explanation and elaboration' document, modeled after those developed for CONSORT and STARD. This document is currently being developed. The group also formed a committee to help disseminate and implement the revised Statement.

*David Moher; Jennifer Tetzlaff; Alessandro Liberati; and Doug Altman  
for the QUOROM Group*

**Funded by:** Canadian Institutes of Health Research; Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia, Italy; Cancer Research UK; Clinical Evidence BMJ Knowledge; The Cochrane Collaboration; and GlaxoSmithKline, Canada.

### Cochrane News Submission Deadline

The deadline for submission of articles for *Cochrane News* Issue 38 is **30 October 2006**. Please email articles (600 words max.) and short announcements to:

[cochrane@uottawa.ca](mailto:cochrane@uottawa.ca)

### Joining, moving, leaving?

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

## Involving consumers in implementing Cochrane reviews

### How a systematic review can inform and encourage practice



A question that many people ask is, "How can consumers use reviews?" The Cochrane Consumer Network (CCNet) decided to tackle this question by asking selected consumers to discuss the relevance to them of a particular review.

#### How we did this

The Cochrane Consumer Network asked consumer representatives from Uganda, Rwanda and the US to comment on the Cochrane review, 'Lay health workers in primary and community health care', by Lewin et al.<sup>1</sup> We prepared a summary of the review to make the task easier, and asked the representatives a structured set of questions. Godwin Aja, one of the review authors, helped with this process.

Kellen Namusisi of the Uganda National Health Consumers Organization and Alex Hakuzimana of the Rwanda Quality of Life Centre, Kigali, were wonderfully responsive to this project. As well as responding to our questions, they looked keenly at how they could utilize the information they had gained.

*"Lay health workers are very relevant to Africa where we rely on low-cost strategies for service delivery."  
(Kellen Namusisi)*

#### The value of broad input

We asked Zobeida Bonilla to comment about her experiences within Latino community health programs in the US, as most of the studies included in the review were from North America.

*"The connections of lay health workers to communities has made the programs in some respects successful in the US."  
(Zobeida Bonilla)*

It was also good to be able to highlight how lay health workers are important in Costa Rica and Australia through the work of Yuri Baidal of the Centro Cochrane de Centroamérica, Costa Rica, and Dot Henry of Western Australia.

#### The outcome

As a result of these joint efforts, we have produced the first of a series of special edition CCNet newsletters. The newsletter can be found at [www.cochrane.org/newslett/CCNetNewsSpecial2006.pdf](http://www.cochrane.org/newslett/CCNetNewsSpecial2006.pdf).

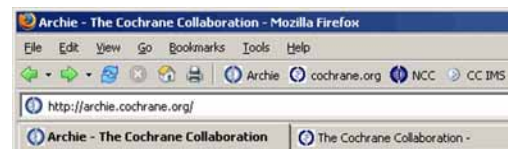
Janet Wale, Cochrane Consumer Network

1. Lewin SA, Dick J, Pond P, Zwarenstein M, Aja G, van Wyk B, Bosch-Capblanch X, Patrick M. Lay health workers in primary and community health care. *The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2005, Issue 1.

## Information Management System news

### Archie and Firefox

Have you ever wished that you could use Archie without having to use Internet Explorer in Windows? Now you can. It is now possible to use Archie with the Mozilla Firefox browser. Firefox is an 'open source' browser that also runs on Mac OS and Linux, so access to Archie is no longer restricted to Windows users. Because of the differences between the two browsers, there are a few places where everything does not look *exactly* the same, but for all practical purposes you can use either browser as you please.



Bright Amenuvor

### New System Administrator

The IMS team is happy to present our latest member, Bright Amenuvor, who has joined us in the position of System Administrator. Among Bright's responsibilities will be providing general support to Super Users of entities other than Cochrane Review Groups (CRGs), and to the IMS Support Team (which supports the CRGs).

Bright will be working part-time, but will check his email every day. You can reach Bright at [general@support.cc-ims.net](mailto:general@support.cc-ims.net).

Jacob Riis, IMS Support  
Nordic Cochrane Centre

## A year in the life of the Qualitative Research Methods Group

For the Qualitative Research Methods Group the last year has been characterized by the familiar tensions between the enormous agenda facing the group and the limited time available to deliver it. However, looking back it's been a watershed year in many ways.

It began with our first sponsored training workshop organized by Janet Harris in June 2005 in Oxford, UK. The workshop aimed to give people in the field an opportunity to learn by sharing experiences of qualitative systematic reviewing. Participants included people currently completing reviews as well as those interested in doing a review in the future. It was well-received and raised many issues for the group to pick up in future training activities.

In October 2005 we organized another hands-on workshop at the Melbourne Cochrane Colloquium, which was also well received. Without question, the most important output of the Melbourne meeting for us was the recruitment of two new Co-Convenors: Alan Pearson, from the Joanna Briggs Institute in Adelaide, Australia, and Karin Hannes, based at the Belgian Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine, which also hosts the Belgian Branch of the Dutch Cochrane Centre and the Belgian Campbell Group.

Since Alan and Karin joined Jane Noyes and Jennie Popay as Co-Convenors the pace of activity within the group has picked up (well, a little!). We have a new website ([www.joannabriggs.edu.au/cqrmg/index.html](http://www.joannabriggs.edu.au/cqrmg/index.html)) and our sub-groups focusing on training strategies, methodological guidance, the development of registers of methodological literature, and review protocols relevant to the group are being revitalized. We are currently undertaking a survey of registered members, asking people to decide whether they want to be active in our sub-groups and other elements of our work, or re-register themselves as less active associate members.

We are involved in a rapid expansion of training provision in 2006-07. In Belgium, a one-day programme on narrative synthesis took place on 6 July 2006, with Nicky Britten from the University of Exeter, UK, as course leader. A second two-day workshop on meta-analysis of qualitative research will be given in Belgium on 20-21 November 2006 by an international team of experts on synthesizing qualitative research including Alan Pearson and Tiffany Conroy from the Joanna Briggs Institute, Australia, and Etienne Vermeire from the University of Antwerp, Belgium. Both courses are open to participants from other countries and the programme will be given in English. For more information, email [karin.hannes@med.kuleuven.be](mailto:karin.hannes@med.kuleuven.be).

Jane Noyes and Jennie Popay joined Alan Pearson for a two-day regional symposium on qualitative research synthesis at the University of Adelaide, Australia, on 10-11 July 2006. Janet Harris is organising a residential workshop on systematic reviews of qualitative research in Oxford, UK, jointly with the Continuing Professional Development Centre, University of Oxford; the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI-Centre), University of London; and the Joanna Briggs Institute.

We also plan to make progress with the development of methodological guidance for the Collaboration and are starting this work with a chapter for the next edition of the *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions*. This will highlight some of the ways in which findings from qualitative research can add value to Cochrane reviews of effects and consider some of the methodological issues this development would raise.

*Jennie Popay, Co-Convenor, Qualitative Research Methods Group*



Jennie Popay, Paul Duignan and Mark Davies in Adelaide

## Update to commercial sponsorship policy

The latest edition of *The Cochrane Manual* (a 248-page document containing the policies and procedures of The Cochrane Collaboration) contains a significant update to Section 2.3, the Collaboration's policy on commercial sponsorship. The new policy includes more detail in relation to funding for Cochrane Methods Groups.

Thanks to the help of Nancy Owens, the latest edition is now available on the Collaboration website at [www.cochrane.org/admin/manual.htm](http://www.cochrane.org/admin/manual.htm). Due to the size of the document, it takes a little while to download. You can also access the commercial sponsorship policy as a separate document at [www.cochrane.org/docs/commercialsponsorship.htm](http://www.cochrane.org/docs/commercialsponsorship.htm).

The new edition of the Manual also includes a minor update to Section 2.1.5 on registering surveys with the Secretariat.

*Jini Hetherington, Administrator  
The Cochrane Collaboration Secretariat*

## Cochrane in Manila

The Philippines is a growing hub of Cochrane activity in South East Asia, with over 50 review authors representing some 15 review groups. Manila was recently the location of some intense Cochrane and EBP activity.

Twenty members of the SEA-ORCHID Project came together at the end of May for a week of meetings, seminars and workshops. SEA-ORCHID, which is a collaborative project between Australia and four countries in South East Asia (Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines), supports research synthesis and evidence implementation activities in the area of pregnancy and childbirth. We were inspired by many of the activities and achievements of the project teams across the sites in improving practice and addressing barriers to practice change.

Our Indonesian colleagues faced barriers of a very different kind; the recent devastating earthquake in their home city of Yogyakarta struck on the morning they were due to fly out to Manila. Fortunately, they escaped harm and were able to stay behind to help with the rescue efforts.

Alongside the Project meetings, we ran several evidence-based practice workshops for nurses and midwives at two of the largest public hospitals in Manila, and held a meeting and dinner for Philippine-based Cochrane review authors. Many of these authors attended a one-day Cochrane review workshop at which we made progress with several protocols and reviews. Finally, the Philippine General Hospital's computer training lab was the venue for two Cochrane Library workshops, and coincided with the launch of the hospital's complimentary access to *The Cochrane Library* (courtesy of John Wiley & Sons).



Nurses participate in an evidence-based practice workshop

Also in Manila, the Clinical Epidemiology Unit in the Department of Medicine is part of the Effective Health Care Research Programme Consortium, linked to colleagues in South Africa, China, India and Nigeria, preparing and disseminating systematic reviews, which helps provide some support to Cochrane activities, particularly in infectious diseases.

*Steve McDonald, SEA-ORCHID Project, Australasian Cochrane Centre*  
*Mario Festin, SEA-ORCHID Project, Philippine General Hospital*



Members of the SEA-ORCHID project team in Manila

## Resource Bank for Communication and Involvement in Health

The Consumers and Communication Review Group has developed a Cochrane 'Resource Bank for Communication and Involvement in Health.' It is an online list of all Cochrane reviews and protocols of interventions that affect people's interactions with the health system. The Resource Bank is located on the Consumers and Communication Review Group website at [www.latrobe.edu.au/cochrane/resourcebank/resourcebank.html](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/cochrane/resourcebank/resourcebank.html).

We developed the Resource Bank because we were asked to identify all Cochrane reviews (across Review Groups) relevant to people's interactions with the health system, and found that this was not an easy task. Reviews of communication and involvement interventions pertaining to people irrespective of health problem are published by the Consumers and Communication Review Group, but reviews of these interventions limited to one type of health condition are published by other Review Groups. These reviews cover many diverse interventions and types of participants. This makes it hard to stay up-to-date and to find everything that may be of interest.

The number of relevant reviews is growing fast, now totalling 177 reviews and 151 protocols. Reviews are grouped in the Resource Bank according to major themes, e.g. interventions relating to screening; or interventions to inform, promote participation and improve the responsiveness of care. The list is updated quarterly following publication of *The Cochrane Library*. Review titles are listed alphabetically by title and linked to lay summaries and abstracts on [www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org).

We encourage you to use the Resource Bank to help identify reviews and protocols of interventions affecting people's interactions with the health system, and we welcome your feedback.

*Megan Pictor, Review Group Co-ordinator, Consumers and Communication Group*

**[www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org)**  
your one stop resource for all things Cochrane

## Dublin Colloquium update

With the Colloquium only a few months away, visit the Colloquium website for a full update on the scientific programme, with details of the oral presentations and workshops taking place.

After a hard day's work, don't forget to attend the social events. The Welcome Reception is taking place at the Guinness Storehouse. The core of the Storehouse building is modelled on a giant pint glass, stretching up from the reception area on the ground floor to The Gravity Bar in the sky! The annual Cochrane game this year will be Ten Pin Bowling. Never played? Come and have a go. The Conference dinner will take place at The Burlington Hotel. We have an exciting evening lined up, so be sure not to miss it.

To find out more about the Colloquium and to register online, please visit the Colloquium website at [www.colloquium.info](http://www.colloquium.info).

We look forward to seeing you in Dublin in October.

*Caroline Rouse, Dublin Colloquium Local Organising Committee  
XIV Cochrane Colloquium*



**XIV Cochrane Colloquium**

23-26 October 2006  
Dublin, Ireland



### Key dates for Dublin

Meeting room request deadline	4 August 2006
Hotel registration deadline	8 September 2006
Cancellation deadline	22 September 2006

## Review of the CENTRAL trials register

In October 2005, the Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group (CCSG) decided to disband the Cochrane CENTRAL Advisory Group and create a new group to develop a strategic plan for CENTRAL, the Cochrane Collaboration trials register. The working group has taken on the short name of the CENTRAL Vision Group. 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, provided an opportunity to review CENTRAL and its role within the Collaboration, as well as within the broader community of researchers, educators, policy-makers and consumers. The CCSG appointed four members to serve on the CVG: Gerd Antes, Adrian Grant, Gail Higgins and Karen Robinson.

Immediately after being officially formed in November 2005 we developed a remit that was submitted in December (available at [www.cochrane.org/admin/structure.htm#cvg](http://www.cochrane.org/admin/structure.htm#cvg)). Since that time, we have been conducting activities to obtain perspectives on CENTRAL from a wide variety of people. A survey of Trials Search Co-ordinators was completed in April. In June, we conducted a survey of other people within the Collaboration. A third survey, with a minimal set of questions, is being designed for users of CENTRAL from outside the Collaboration. Finally, we are conducting interviews with various stakeholders both within and outside the Collaboration.

Based on this input, we are developing a Strategic Plan to be presented to the CCSG at the Dublin Colloquium. We will provide recommendations about the development of CENTRAL, including its relationship with the entity-based Cochrane specialized registers, and its future relationship with non-Cochrane prospective trials registers. At the moment our vision is that the Plan would include a series of recommendations, along with possible advantages and limitations of each, as appropriate. Detailed reports of our activities, such as the methods and results of the surveys, will be provided as appendices.

Preliminary examination of the survey results makes it clear that people have differing views on what CENTRAL is and what it can or should be. What is agreed, however, is that CENTRAL is a very valuable resource. We have appreciated the willingness of everyone to share their concerns, suggestions and ideas. We hope that the Strategic Plan reflects your considerable efforts.

*Karen Robinson, CENTRAL Vision Group*

The Cochrane Collaboration online  
[www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org)

## A Canadian in Melbourne

### The 2006 Cochrane Collaboration Visiting Fellowship

The Cochrane Collaboration Visiting Fellowship, introduced in 2004, aims to facilitate high-quality processes in the production of Cochrane reviews. This fellowship provides funding for one individual to spend time with another entity working on specific projects.

As the Review Group Co-ordinator (RGC) for the Effective Practice and Organisation of Care (EPOC) Group, I was very impressed with the high level of Cochrane activity in Melbourne. The Australasian Cochrane Centre (ACC), the Cochrane Consumers and Communication Group (CCCRG) and the Cochrane Health Promotion and Public Health Field (CHPPHF) are all based in Melbourne and all have some overlap with EPOC activities. Furthermore, EPOC was establishing a satellite, based at the National Institute of Clinical Studies (NICS) in Melbourne.

While in Melbourne in October 2005 for the Colloquium, I spent time with staff and members of the three Cochrane entities and NICS staff to develop the objectives of my application for the Fellowship:

1. To train and develop a close working relationship with the new staff of the EPOC satellite based in Melbourne.
2. To work with the CCCRG to develop a policy to address overlapping reviews.
3. To work with the CHPPHF to develop a plan to publish Cochrane Reviews relevant to both HPPH and EPOC.

I applied to spend four weeks in Melbourne, with the majority of the time working on the first objective. In February 2006, I was fortunate to hear that I had been awarded the Fellowship. The EPOC satellite was staffed in March 2006, and May 2006 was determined as a good time to be in Melbourne.



A complex interventions workshop at NICS, Melbourne

The EPOC Satellite was fortunate to hire Emma Tavender, who had been the RGC for the Cochrane Oral Health Group for over 7 years. Emma and I reviewed EPOC policies and procedures. We were also able to meet with the authors of seven EPOC reviews. The authors had differing levels of experience with The Cochrane Collaboration and systematic reviews in general. Furthermore, we were able to offer two workshops and one presentation describing review methods and specific issues related to complex interventions. All these sessions were very well attended and received very positive feedback.

To address the second and third objectives, we held discussions with staff at CCCRG and CHPPHF. Potential solutions are now being circulated to other contributors for input and feedback. We anticipate being able to discuss these two objectives at the Dublin Colloquium, either through poster sessions or entity meetings, and provide final reports on the deliverables to the Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group after the Colloquium. Emma and I were also able to meet with staff at the ACC to discuss possibilities for further collaboration including joint workshops.

This Fellowship provides an excellent opportunity for an individual to work on a specific project that might not otherwise be feasible. In the case of this application, face-to-face training and meetings helped to establish working mechanisms to achieve the objectives. Furthermore, we expect that this is the beginning of future collaborative activities between the entities.

Clearly, there are many individuals who helped to make this project successful. First, the Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group and the Quality Advisory Group who administered the Fellowship. Second, I would like to acknowledge the support of Jeremy Grimshaw, staff and the editors of EPOC. Third, Heather Buchan, Emma Tavender and the other staff at NICS; Sophie Hill, Megan Prictor and the staff at the CCCRG; and Liz Waters, Rebecca Armstrong and Jodie Doyle from CHPPHF who all supported the application. Finally, a big thank you to those who made my stay in Melbourne fun.

*Alain Mayhew, Review Group Co-ordinator  
Effective Practice and Organisation of Care Group*

### Searching *The Cochrane Library* Did you know?

New options are now available for searching *The Cochrane Library*. Changes include searching using field labels (such as :au for author), simplified results display, saving searches to your local drive, simplified searching for hyphenated terms, searching no longer case sensitive, and improved searching for author names containing diacritical marks. For more information, including

Frequently Asked Questions, see  
[www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/mrwhome/106568753/ReleaseNotes.html#26jun](http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/mrwhome/106568753/ReleaseNotes.html#26jun)

## A tale of four Review Groups

All Cochrane Review Groups (CRGs) spend a lot of time developing group-specific websites and materials and offering ongoing support to our contributors. We work towards effective and efficient communication, try to reduce barriers to contribution, encourage diversity, and involve people with different skills and backgrounds. However, we have no idea if authors perceive this 'support' as helpful, if it affects their ongoing involvement with the group, or helps them publish and maintain their reviews.

To determine this, we sent a short survey to all lead authors who, as of 25 May 2005, had a registered title or a published protocol or review with one of four CRGs: the Back; Bone, Joint and Muscle Trauma; Effective Practice and Organisation of Care; and Musculoskeletal Groups. We asked the authors if the training, resources and ongoing support provided by The Cochrane Collaboration in general, and these CRGs in particular, were as helpful as we meant them to be.<sup>1</sup>

Using a modified Dillman<sup>2</sup> method for electronic surveys, we sent out a total of 286 questionnaires. We received 120 (42%) completed surveys. Since we were surveying folks during the summer (northern hemisphere), we were pleased with the results.

Respondents reported a range of experience. While 60% said this was their first Cochrane review, others informed us that they were editors and peer reviewers with one or more review groups. Seventy-one per cent of the authors had published in other peer-reviewed journals.

The top five resources considered *very* or *somewhat* useful were, in order, the Cochrane *Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions*, the Cochrane website, content-specific articles (e.g. specific outcomes, methods guidelines), the individual CRG websites and the RevMan User Guide. Out of thirteen resources, the workshops were rated sixth (How to develop a Protocol), ninth (How to develop a Review) and eleventh (Statistical analysis for a review). Considering the number of 'new' authors with Cochrane, that was somewhat disconcerting – are they not offered at the right time or place, or are people just unaware they are offered?

We also asked about the 'customer service' aspect of our editorial staff. Respondents listed editing their manuscripts, comments from peer referees, and assistance with registering their title, updating the review and developing the protocol as the top five services they found *very* or *somewhat* helpful.

Wanting a more comprehensive picture, we asked for 'the best and the worst'. Respondents told us that they liked help with developing search strategies, solving methodological issues and the general support and help throughout the process. One person told us that "just being there, for us to know that you are there and will answer our 'dumb' questions" was important, while another felt that "the peer review process was most helpful, and frequent contact with our Co-ordinator was very encouraging... final review much improved... would be very difficult and almost very unrewarding to do without their input."

Areas for improvement included a plea for further encouragement if there had obviously been no progress for a while, a request for ideas for reviews, a short list of resources for new collaborators, up-front statement of update expectations, the same referees for both the protocol and review, and an assurance that referees have relevant clinical experience.

Clearly, there are areas where we can be more consistent in our approach, post more information on our websites and provide more hands-on support. Finding the resources to meet all expectations is always a challenge. However, given that Cochrane is very concerned about the support of our authors and our commitment to continuous improvement of our product, it seems we should also assess whether we are meeting those goals. We are happy to share the questionnaires and protocol with other interested groups. We should consider whether feedback from authors should be elicited on a continuous basis.

*Victoria Pennick, Review Group Co-ordinator, Back Group*

*Lesley Gillespie, Review Group Co-ordinator, Bone, Joint and Muscle Trauma Group*

*Lara Maxwell, Review Group Co-ordinator, Musculoskeletal Group*

*Alain Mayhew, Review Group Co-ordinator, Effective Practice and Organisation of Care Group*

1. Pennick V, Gillespie L, Maxwell L, Mayhew A. A tale of four review groups [poster]. 22-26 October 2005. XIII Cochrane Colloquium, Australia.
2. Dillman Don A. Mail and Internet Surveys: The tailored design method, 2nd edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. New York: NY, December 1999.

### Joining, moving, leaving?

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

## News and announcements

### Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group

Mark Davies will be stepping down as Co-Chair of the Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group at the Dublin Colloquium in October. Lorne Becker, Co-ordinator of the Cochrane Primary Health Care Field and member of the Steering Group and Monitoring and Registration Group since 2004, will replace him. We are most grateful to Mark for his hard work as Co-Chair since April 2005, and to Lorne for being prepared to take over this responsibility.

Jon Deeks has taken over new responsibilities and will step down from the position of Treasurer in October, although he will remain on the Steering Group as Methods Group representative. We are very grateful to Jon for his input into the role of Treasurer, and to Donna Gillies, Author representative on the Steering Group, who has undertaken to replace him.

Two new members have also been elected to join the Steering Group in October:

- Representing the Consumer Network: Janet Wale (Australia) - re-elected for a second term.
- Representing Centres (Centre staff): Joy Oliver (South Africa).

*Steff Lewis, Co-Chair  
Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group  
Claire Allen, Deputy Administrator  
Cochrane Collaboration Secretariat*

### Canadian Cochrane Network and Centre

The Canadian Cochrane Network and Centre is very happy to welcome two new staff members:

- MaryEllen Schaafsma, Executive Director ([mschaafs@uottawa.ca](mailto:mschaafs@uottawa.ca)).
- Cheryl Arratoon, Knowledge Broker ([carratoo@uottawa.ca](mailto:carratoo@uottawa.ca)).

*Jeremy Grimshaw and Miranda Cumpston  
Canadian Cochrane Network and Centre*

### Consumers and Communication Group

The Consumers and Communication Group invites suggestions for review topics that fall within our scope. An easy online form is available at [www.latrobe.edu.au/cochrane/reviewideas.html](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/cochrane/reviewideas.html). We hope that people will let us know if they identify a particular problem in communication or information provision that could be addressed more effectively, or if they are interested in seeing a review on a particular intervention. Completing the form is open to anyone - it does not in any way imply that the person wants to do the review themselves. We welcome your suggestions!

*Megan Prictor, Review Group Co-ordinator  
Consumers and Communication Group*

### Health Equity Field

The Cochrane Health Equity Field is pleased to announce its co-registration status with the Campbell Collaboration. Given that the Campbell Collaboration organizational structure is different from that of Cochrane and they don't have a 'Fields' entity, we are registered as the 'Campbell Equity Methods Group'. To avoid confusion we will no longer be known as the Campbell and Cochrane Health Equity Field, but as the Cochrane Health Equity Field and the Campbell Equity Methods Group. We look forward to working with both Collaborations to further the inclusion of equity considerations in systematic reviews.

We are also pleased to welcome Jil Beardmore as the new Field Administrator. Jil is based at the Institute of Population Health, University of Ottawa, and can be reached at [jbeardmo@uottawa.ca](mailto:jbeardmo@uottawa.ca).

*Peter Tugwell and Mark Petticrew, Co-Convenors  
Health Equity Field*

### Childhood Cancer Group

We are pleased to announce that the Cochrane Childhood Cancer Review Group (ChCRG) was officially registered with The Cochrane Collaboration on 5 May 2006. The ChCRG aims to produce high quality systematic reviews on the effectiveness of interventions for children with cancer. Contact details for the ChCRG are as follows:

Emma Children's Hospital  
Academic Medical Center  
PO Box 22660  
1100 DD Amsterdam  
The Netherlands  
Email: [cherg@amc.uva.nl](mailto:cherg@amc.uva.nl)

Leontien C. Kremer, Co-ordinating Editor  
Elvira C. van Dalen, Review Group Co-ordinator  
Jos Noorman, Assistant Review Group Co-ordinator  
Edit Leclercq, Trial Search Coordinator

*Jos Noorman, Assistant Review Group Co-ordinator  
Childhood Cancer Group*

### UK Cochrane Centre

The UK Cochrane Centre has a new website at [www.cochrane.co.uk](http://www.cochrane.co.uk). This website is part of a pilot project to develop templates for use by Cochrane entities within the 'Cochrane Entity Website Builder'. This system is still being tested by several entities, and will be made available to all entities later this year. For more information, contact Dave Booker and the Cochrane Web Team at [web@cochrane.org](mailto:web@cochrane.org). We hope you will find the new website a useful resource and we welcome any feedback you may have.

*Lisa Horwill, UK Cochrane Centre  
Dave Booker, Cochrane Web Team*

## News and announcements (cont.)

### New Zealand Order of Merit

On 5 June 2006, the Queen's Birthday Honours list was published, recognising outstanding contributions by New Zealand citizens. Under the New Zealand Order of Merit category, Professor Cindy Farquhar from Auckland was awarded a MNZM (Members of the Order) for services to women's health. Cindy is well known throughout The Cochrane Collaboration and is currently the Co-ordinating Editor of the Cochrane Menstrual Disorders and Subfertility Review Group and Co-Director of the NZ Branch of the Australasian Cochrane Centre.

*Mark Jeffery, Co-Director, New Zealand Branch  
Australasian Cochrane Centre*

### La Biblioteca Cochrane Plus

Update Software and the Iberoamerican Cochrane Centre have joined forces with BIREME - the major health information source for the whole of Latin America and the Caribbean - to provide access to La Biblioteca Cochrane Plus (BCP) via the Evidence portal of BIREME's Virtual Health Library (BVS). This will integrate products, services, news and events related to evidence to support the decision-making processes in health in Latin America and the Caribbean. Read the full article at <http://espacio.bvsalud.org/boletim.php?articleId=04160637200639> and link to BCP at [www.update-software.com/Clibplus/clibplus.asp](http://www.update-software.com/Clibplus/clibplus.asp)

*Rachel Stancliffe, Update Software*

### Child Health Field

The Cochrane Child Health Field is pleased to announce its fourth bursary scheme. Through these bursaries, we aim to increase the number of child-relevant reviews in *The Cochrane Library* by providing financial assistance to researchers undertaking a Cochrane systematic review in child health. For more information about the bursaries and to download application forms, please visit our website: [www.cochranechildhealth.org](http://www.cochranechildhealth.org).

*Denise Thomson, Administrator,  
Child Health Field*

### Quality Advisory Group

The Quality Advisory Group has set up a website to provide information about the Group's membership, core functions, projects, and reports. It also contains information on the new procedure for surveys, which will be available in the next version of the Cochrane Manual (August 2006). The website can be viewed at [www.cochrane.org/ccsg/qag](http://www.cochrane.org/ccsg/qag).

*Harriet G. MacLehose, Co-Convenor,  
Quality Advisory Group*

### Sexually Transmitted Diseases Group

The Cochrane HIV/AIDS Group will now be managing the activities of the Cochrane Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) Group. We are in the process of establishing a Satellite in Porto Alegre, Brazil, to assist with the STD reviews. Dr. Mauro Ramos, of the Centro de Estudos de AIDS/Doenças Sexualmente Transmissíveis do Rio Grande do Sul (CEARGS), will take the lead. The eventual goal is for the STD Group's re-establishment as a free-standing entity. We'll send out more news about this as things progress!

*Tara Horvath, Assistant Review Group Co-ordinator,  
HIV/AIDS Group*

### Methods Groups Newsletter

We are pleased to announce that the 10th edition of the Cochrane Methods Groups Newsletter 2006 is now available at [www.cochrane.org/newslett/MethodsGroupNewsletter2006.pdf](http://www.cochrane.org/newslett/MethodsGroupNewsletter2006.pdf).

This year's Methods Groups Newsletter also includes a special supplement containing an "Overview of systematic methodology reviews of the design and conduct of randomized trials and systematic reviews of healthcare interventions", at [www.cochrane.org/newslett/MethodsGroupNewsletter2006supplement.pdf](http://www.cochrane.org/newslett/MethodsGroupNewsletter2006supplement.pdf).

*Sally Hopewell, Co-Scientific Editor,  
Cochrane Methods Groups Newsletter*

### Heart Group

The Heart Group has appointed staff at the new editorial base at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Julia Mortimer is the new Review Group Co-ordinator (email [julia.mortimer@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:julia.mortimer@lshtm.ac.uk)). Sheetal Patel is working as part-time research secretary (email [sheetal.patel@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:sheetal.patel@lshtm.ac.uk)). Kirsten Ward is a research fellow (email [kirsten.ward@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:kirsten.ward@lshtm.ac.uk)). I shall still be working as the TSC for the group, but will remain based at the University of Bristol. Contact details are:

Department of Epidemiology & Population Health  
London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine  
Keppel Street  
London, WC1E 7HT  
Ph: +44 (0) 20 7927 2086

*Margaret Burke, Trials Search Co-ordinator,  
Heart Group*

### Australasian Cochrane Centre



A big welcome to Kate, a brand new daughter for Sally Green, Director of the Australasian Cochrane Centre and member of the Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group.

## News and announcements (cont.)

### Communication sciences and disorders

The Special Interest Division 5 – Speech Sciences and Orofacial Disorders - of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association is publishing two special issues of their newsletter, *Perspectives in Speech Science and Orofacial Disorders* (July and October 2006), devoted to evidence-based clinical practice. The newsletter can be accessed at [www.asha.org/about/Membership-Certification/divs/div\\_5.htm](http://www.asha.org/about/Membership-Certification/divs/div_5.htm) or by contacting [JBOrange@uwo.ca](mailto:JBOrange@uwo.ca).

*J.B. Orange, University of Western Ontario*

### Updating Cochrane reviews

An article on updating Cochrane reviews has been published recently by a member of the Complementary Medicine Field: [www.explorejournal.com/article/PIIS1550830706002655/fulltext](http://www.explorejournal.com/article/PIIS1550830706002655/fulltext)

*Eric Manheimer, Administrator,  
Complementary Medicine Field*

### Behavioral Medicine Field

The recently registered Cochrane Behavioral Medicine Field now has a website: [www.cochranebehavmed.org](http://www.cochranebehavmed.org).

*Karina Davidson, Convenor,  
Behavioral Medicine Field*

### MeerKat User Guide

The new MeerKat User Guide (for version 1.4) is now available free from the MeerKat website at:

[www.cochrane.co.uk/en/meerkatsupportpages.htm](http://www.cochrane.co.uk/en/meerkatsupportpages.htm).

For a printed version, please contact Judy Wright at [jwright@cochrane-sz.org](mailto:jwright@cochrane-sz.org).

*Sally Hopewell, MeerKat Working Group*

For an up-to-date list of training workshops, visit The Cochrane Collaboration website:

[cochrane.org/news/workshops.htm](http://cochrane.org/news/workshops.htm)

## Events and workshops

### Standard and advanced statistics

Christian Medical College, Vellore, Tamil Nadu, India  
August 21-26, 2006

The South Asian Cochrane Network and Cochrane Statistical Methods Group present a workshop on standard statistics in meta-analysis, to be followed by an advanced statistics workshop for those completing the standard workshop and other experienced participants. Priority will be given to residents of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and India. Cost: Rs.3000 for both courses, including materials, refreshments and lunch on workshop days, and a social evening. Closing date: 15 August 2006. Contact Zenobia Kanagaraj at [cochrane@cmevellore.ac.in](mailto:cochrane@cmevellore.ac.in). Program and registration form are at [www.cochrane-sacn.org](http://www.cochrane-sacn.org).

*Prathap Tharyan, Co-ordinator,  
South Asian Cochrane Network*

### Symposium on non-RCT evaluations

Birkbeck College, Rm B34, Malet Street, London, UK  
6 November 2006

The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine is planning a free symposium: 'Evaluating public health interventions: alternatives to RCTs'. Speakers will discuss situations where RCTs are not useful and consider other evaluation designs and methods. For further information or to register, contact Huyette Shillingford at [huyette.shillingford@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:huyette.shillingford@lshtm.ac.uk).

*Chris Bonell, London School of Hygiene & Tropical  
Medicine*

### Meta-synthesis of qualitative research

Leuven, Belgium, 20-22 November 2006

The Belgian Branch of the Dutch Cochrane Centre and the Belgian Campbell Group present a two-day course on meta-synthesis of qualitative research. Participants will be introduced to the concept of systematic reviews, the different frameworks to synthesize findings from qualitative research, and the critical appraisal of qualitative research studies. The cost is €300 (€250 for students). For more information on this program, contact [ester.vanachter@med.kuleuven.be](mailto:ester.vanachter@med.kuleuven.be).

*Karin Hannes, Co-Convenor  
Qualitative Methods Group*

### University of Birmingham Masters course

Department of Public Health and Epidemiology  
Masters in Evidence-based Healthcare and Health  
Technology Assessment

This course is designed to give a broad grounding in evidence-based health care and health technology assessment (HTA). The course is offered full-time for one year but can be part-time over two years and is organized in week-long modules. Modules are also available as short courses enabling skills and experience in specialist topics to be gained. Details are available at <http://pcpoh.bham.ac.uk/publichealth/programmes/hta/index.htm>. For further information contact Ms Tricia Henley, ph: +44 121 414 3163, email [T.Henley@bham.ac.uk](mailto:T.Henley@bham.ac.uk).

*Jonathan Roberts, University of Birmingham*

## Changes to Cochrane mailing lists

The German Cochrane Centre (GCC) hosts many of the Collaboration's mailing lists at the University of Freiburg. After consultation, Georg Koch at the GCC has amended the Collaboration mailing list addresses to replace the suffix '@cochrane.de' with '@lists.cochrane.org'. Some list names have been amended to reflect current names or acronyms (e.g. the Handbook Advisory Group's list address is now [hag@lists.cochrane.org](mailto:hag@lists.cochrane.org)). Many thanks to Georg for making all these improvements.

### Restricted membership lists

Cochrane Centres (all staff) .....	centres@lists.cochrane.org
Cochrane Centre and Branch Directors .....	cbds@lists.cochrane.org (NEW LIST)
Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group (CCSG) .....	ccsg@lists.cochrane.org
Colloquium Policy Advisory Group (CPAG) .....	cpag@lists.cochrane.org
Consumer Network (worldwide) .....	consumers@lists.cochrane.org
CRGs - Co-ordinating Editors (CoEds) .....	coeds@lists.cochrane.org
CRGs - Review Group Co-ordinators (RGCs) .....	adminors@lists.cochrane.org
Editorial Management Advisory Group (EMAG) .....	emag@lists.cochrane.org
Evidence Aid (formerly Tsunami Support) .....	EvidenceAid@lists.cochrane.org
Feedback Editors .....	feedbackeds@lists.cochrane.org
Feedback Management Advisory Group (FMAG) .....	fmag@lists.cochrane.org
Executive of the CCSG .....	exec@lists.cochrane.org
Field contact people .....	fields@lists.cochrane.org
Handbook Advisory Group (HAG) .....	hag@lists.cochrane.org
Information Management Software Group (IMSG) .....	imsg@lists.cochrane.org
Methods Group contact people .....	methods@lists.cochrane.org
Monitoring and Registration Group of the CCSG (MRG) .....	mrg@lists.cochrane.org
Publishing Policy Group of the CCSG (PPG) .....	ppg@lists.cochrane.org
Quality Advisory Group (QAG) .....	qag@lists.cochrane.org
RevMan Advisory Group (RAG) .....	rag@lists.cochrane.org
Trials Search Co-ordinators (TSCs) .....	tscs@lists.cochrane.org

### Open lists

AusInfo (people in Australasia and South-East Asia) .....	ausinfo@lists.cochrane.org
CCInfo (interested people worldwide) .....	ccinfo@lists.cochrane.org
Cochrane Library Users' Group (CLUG) .....	clug@lists.cochrane.org
RevMan software users .....	revman@lists.cochrane.org

Please note that the CCInfo and Cochrane Library Users' Group (CLUG) mailing lists HAVE NOT YET CHANGED! Until notified, please use the address you have always used.

E-mails that are sent to the old addresses will automatically be forwarded to the new ones. You will want to update the addresses in your own electronic address books in due course, but there is no urgency to do so. If you are responsible for any of the Collaboration's written or electronic material (e.g. an entity or advisory group website), please make these changes when you next update that material/site.

To join any of these mailing lists, please go to [www.cochrane.org/admin/maillist.htm](http://www.cochrane.org/admin/maillist.htm).

*Jini Hetherington, Administrator, Cochrane Collaboration Secretariat*

## Methodology Register now available free

The Cochrane Methodology Register is now available to the public free of charge at [www.cochrane.org/cmr](http://www.cochrane.org/cmr). This Register is a database of studies relevant to the methods of systematic reviews of healthcare and social interventions. The register includes journal articles, book chapters, conference proceedings, conference abstracts and reports of ongoing methodological research. Relevant records are identified primarily through a programme of handsearching undertaken by the UK Cochrane Centre. The register aims to include all published reports of empirical methodological studies that could be relevant for inclusion in a Cochrane methodology review, along with comparative and descriptive studies relevant to the conduct of systematic reviews of healthcare interventions. In Issue 3, 2006, of *The Cochrane Library*, the Cochrane Methodology Register contains 8408 records.

*Sally Hopewell, Methodology Review Group*

## Top 25 Cochrane reviews



### Top 25 reviews accessed from *The Cochrane Library*, May 2006

Figures include access from Wiley InterScience online version

	Article Title	Abstract accessed	Full text accessed
1	Interventions for preventing falls in elderly people	1225	807
2	Interventions for preventing obesity in children	883	611
3	Compression stockings for preventing deep vein thrombosis in airline passengers	2111	544
4	Botanical medicine for low-back pain	2071	392
5	Support surfaces for pressure ulcer prevention	468	372
6	Glucosamine therapy for treating osteoarthritis	640	362
7	Acupuncture for low-back pain	535	320
8	Nicotine replacement therapy for smoking cessation	360	295
9	Physiotherapy interventions for shoulder pain	424	292
10	Antibiotics for acute otitis media in children	407	281
11	Wound cleansing for pressure ulcers	300	274
12	Interventions for helping patients to follow prescriptions for medications	421	273
13	Vaccines for measles mumps and rubella in children	447	265
14	Continuous support for women during childbirth	369	263
15	Interventions for preventing oral mucositis for patients with cancer receiving treatment	446	263
16	Music for pain relief	441	251
17	Cognitive behaviour therapy for schizophrenia	313	248
18	Exercise therapy for low-back pain	456	241
19	Pulmonary rehabilitation for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	271	241
20	Audit and feedback: effects on professional practice and health care outcomes	371	238
21	Pre-operative bathing or showering with skin antiseptics to reduce surgical site infection	617	237
22	Interventions for treating obesity in children	368	236
23	Calcium supplementation for improving bone mineral density in children	907	233
24	Organised inpatient (stroke unit) care for stroke	301	232
25	Cholinesterase inhibitors for Alzheimer's disease	471	230

### Did you know?

New search options are available in *The Cochrane Library*, such as using field labels (such as :au for author), simplified results display, saving searches to your local drive, searching for hyphenated terms, no case sensitivity, and searching for author names with diacritical marks. See [www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/mrwhome/106568753/ReleaseNotes.html#26jun](http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/mrwhome/106568753/ReleaseNotes.html#26jun)

These and other Cochrane reviews can be found at [www.thecochranelibrary.com](http://www.thecochranelibrary.com).

*Deborah Pentesco-Gilbert, Publisher  
The Cochrane Library,  
John Wiley & Sons, Ltd*

To receive *Cochrane News*, contact your nearest Cochrane Centre.  
[www.cochrane.org/contact/entities.htm#CENTRES](http://www.cochrane.org/contact/entities.htm#CENTRES)

Contact details for other Cochrane groups are available at  
[www.cochrane.org/contact/entities.htm](http://www.cochrane.org/contact/entities.htm)

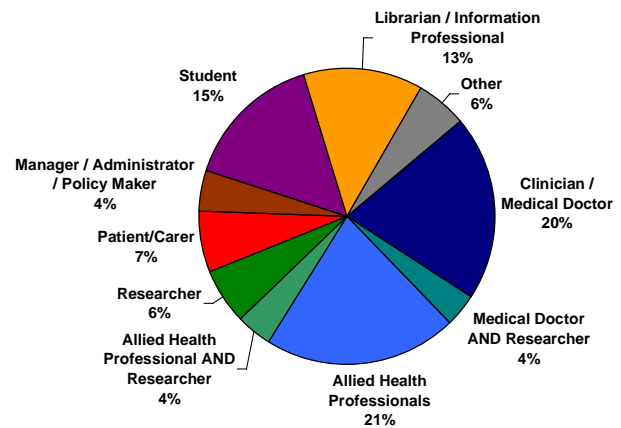
## Who is using *The Cochrane Library*?

The latest online survey of *Cochrane Library* users was conducted during the first three weeks of June, 2006, finding some interesting facts:



### User occupation

- Australia had a relatively high percentage of users who were librarians, policy-makers and administrators. They also had slightly more patients/carers than other countries. Other countries with national provisions to *The Cochrane Library* had a similar profile.
- European countries (excluding the UK) had the largest percentage of clinicians/medical doctors and researchers.
- The UK had the largest percentage of Allied Health professionals.
- Overall, the percentage of patients/carers was considerably higher than observed in the previous survey, including many from Europe.

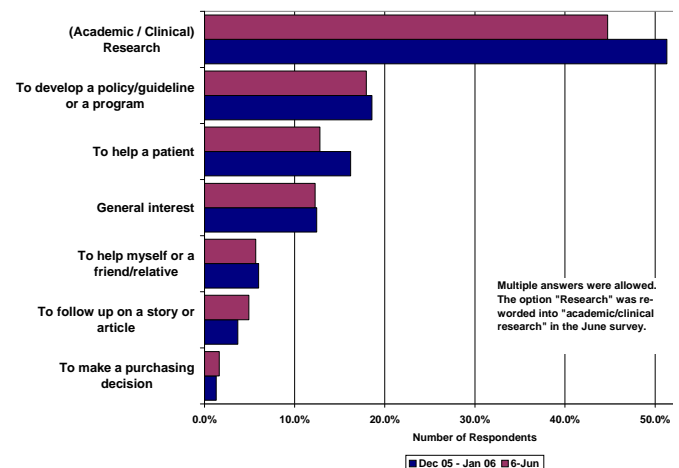


### Place of work

- In the UK, over 70% of users came from institutions involved in patient care and treatment. Academic research institutions and government and funding bodies were comparatively low.
- In European countries with a national provision, the medical institutions group was even higher. In European countries without a national provision, more users came from research institutions, and the percentage from government and funding bodies was high. Similar results were seen in the US and Canada.
- Australia had the highest percentage of users from funding and policy-making bodies.

### Frequency of use

- Countries with national provisions had the highest number of regular users, as expected.
- Heavy users usually accessed *The Cochrane Library* via their institution's website or Pubmed. Almost 30% of first time visitors arrived via Google, and 12% found the site via [www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org).



### Reason for visiting

- In countries with national provisions, a relatively large percentage used the Library to develop a policy.
- General interest users were an exceptionally high percentage in European countries without a national provision.

Deborah Pentesco Gilbert, Publisher, *The Cochrane Library*, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

## Deadlines and publication dates for *The Cochrane Library*

<i>The Cochrane Library</i>	Copy Edit Support deadlines	Submission deadlines	Publication dates
Issue 4, 2006	n/a	23 August 2006	18 October 2006
Issue 1, 2007	25 October 2006	15 November 2006	24 January 2007

**Note:** Submission of specialised register records for the CENTRAL database has been suspended until further notice. Further details are available at [www.cochrane.org/resources/hsearch.htm#cevir](http://www.cochrane.org/resources/hsearch.htm#cevir).

Submission deadlines are for Cochrane Review Groups (CRGs) and other Cochrane entities. Individual authors should contact their CRGs for editorial deadlines.