30 Years of the Cochrane Collaboration: why and how did it get started? A conversation with some of those who were there at the beginning

Iain Chalmers, J Muir Gray, Jini Hetherington, Jos Kleijnen, Kay Dickersin (video), Mark Starr (video), Paul Garner (video), Xavier Bonfill, Carol Lefebvre (video), Mike Clarke (video), Jimmy Volmink, Karla Soares-Weiser

Pioneering contributors to the Cochrane Collaboration

In tribute
Chris Silagy
1960-2001
Chair,
Cochrane Collaboration
Steering Group
Alessandro Liberati
1954-2012
Director,
Centro Cochrane Italiano
David Henderson-Smart
1945-2013
Reviewer, Cochrane Neonatal Group
Monica Kjeldstrøm
1968-2014
Director,
Information Management System
Jack Sinclair
1933-2014
Co-ordinating Editor,
Cochrane Neonatal Group
Dave Sackett

1934-2015

Chair,
Cochrane Collaboration
Steering Group
Andrew Herxheimer
1925-2016
Convenor,
Cochrane Adverse Effects
Group
Doug Altman
1945-2018
Convenor,
Cochrane Statistics Network
Murray Enkin
1924-2021

Managing Editor,
Cochrane Pregnancy and
Childbirth Group
The Cochrane Collaboration: How did it get started?

Stage 1
Archie Cochrane’s criticism
A. L. COCHRANE

Effectiveness and efficiency
Random reflections on health services

THE ROCK CARLING FELLOWSHIP
1971
Archie Cochrane emphasized the need for effectiveness, efficiency, equity and 'tlc' in health care, and drew attention to the importance of evidence from randomised controlled trials.
1979

“It is surely a great criticism of our profession that we have not organised a critical summary, by speciality or subspeciality, adapted periodically, of all relevant randomized controlled trials.”

Archie Cochrane
Stage 2

Responding to Archie Cochrane's criticism
1978
The UK Department of Health and WHO funded the National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit to compile a register of controlled trials of perinatal care
A Classified Bibliography of Controlled Trials in Perinatal Medicine 1940–1984

Prepared by the National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit, Oxford, UK, with the support of the World Health Organization

OXFORD NEW YORK TOKYO
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
1985
An international collaboration was convened to prepare systematic reviews of all controlled trials in pregnancy and childbirth.
100+ contributors from Australia, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Zimbabwe, coordinated by the National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit
EFFECTIVE CARE IN PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH

VOLUME 1: PREGNANCY PARTS I–V

VOLUME 2: CHILDBIRTH PARTS VI–X and INDEX

A Guide to Effective Care in Pregnancy and Childbirth

Murray Enkin, Marc J. N. C. Keirse, and Iain Chalmers
From 1988 to 2023
Updates and corrections of Cochrane reviews of perinatal care have been published as 'living reviews' for 35 years, initially on floppy discs, subsequently through the world wide web.
OXFORD DATABASE OF PERINATAL TRIALS

CHALMERS

ODPT
Excerpt from Archie Cochrane’s Foreword in ECPC

“The systematic review of the randomized trials of obstetric practice presented in this book is a new achievement, a real milestone in the history of randomized trials and in the evaluation of care, which I hope will be widely copied by other specialties.”
Stage 3

Initiating
The Cochrane Collaboration
February 1992

The success of ECPC, GECPC, & ODPT led the NHS R&D Programme to fund 'a Cochrane Centre'
'to collaborate with others, in the UK and elsewhere, to facilitate systematic, up-to-date reviews of randomized controlled trials of health care'
October 1993

The UK Cochrane Centre convened a 2-day colloquium in Oxford at which c. 80 participants agreed to establish an international Cochrane collaboration.


1993 Preparing and updating systematic reviews of randomized controlled trials of health care. *Milbank Quarterly* [Chalmers I, Enkin M, Keirse MJNC]


“Compelling. Memorable. An enlightening must-read for people willing to have their minds opened a little wider regarding medicine and medical decision-making.”

--Amazon reviews

Order here
Kay Dickensin
30
Cochrane
30 years of evidence
Mark Starr and Iain Chalmers