

## **Election to the Cochrane Consumer Network Executive**

- **Nominations are invited for membership of the Cochrane Consumer Network Executive (two positions)**
- **Nominations close Friday 29th March 2019**
- **One position reserved for a person from a low or middle-income country (LMIC)**
- **New members take office at the Cochrane Colloquium, Santiago, Chile, October 2018**

Nominations are invited to fill two voluntary positions on the Cochrane Consumer Network Executive. Please read the following notes carefully as they set out the background, nomination and election processes for appointment, and crucially, the skills, knowledge, experience and leadership qualities that would make ideal candidates.

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **About the role**

Cochrane Consumer Network members have a key role in the production of healthcare evidence and the governance of the organisation. Members of the Cochrane Consumer Network Executive are elected by consumers to support this process and to help meet the challenges of Cochrane's Strategy to 2020 and beyond. Helping with the implementation of the Consumer Network Delivery Plan to 2020 (and what follows) will be a key part of the successful candidates' role. Representing the consumer voice on the Cochrane Council is also a key role for two members from the Consumers' Executive, and candidates should be willing to take up this role if they join the Executive.

#### **What it means to become a member of the Consumer Network Executive (CE)**

The current Consumer Network Executive encourages nominations from an enthusiastic and diverse range of people, including in terms of gender and geography. Please note the definition of eligibility to stand and vote in the forthcoming elections.

- 1) Members of the Consumers' Executive (CE) are responsible for the implementation of the Consumer Network role which is presently: 'To support Cochrane groups in the inclusion of consumers in their work, to support consumers contributing effectively to the Collaboration and to help to explain the role of Cochrane and of evidence in healthcare to consumers and their representatives globally'.
- 2) This is an unpaid position. Members of the CE presently meet monthly via teleconference and in between meetings work on assignments and communicate via email. This requires approximately 8 hours of work per

week, plus attendance at the Cochrane business meeting in March/April each year and meetings held during the Colloquium in the autumn of each year (dependent on funding). Your expenses for these meetings are paid by Cochrane.

- 3) The CE is made up of five elected members of the Consumer Network with the Consumer Engagement Officer as the sixth, non-voting, member. The CE aims always to have a representative from a non-English language country and a low or middle-income country. This is either one individual fulfilling both criteria or two individuals. Some CE elections will therefore have restrictions for nominations. For this current election, there are two vacancies and at least one position is reserved for someone from a Low or Middle-income country (LMIC).
- 4) The Consumers Executive has one Chair, and one Vice-chair, elected from within the CE.
- 5) Members of the Consumers' Executive are expected to:
  - a) actively contribute to the work of the Consumer Executive, including email discussions
  - b) attend Consumer Executive meetings, include the face-to-face meeting at the Cochrane Mid-Year meeting in March/April each year and meetings held during the Colloquium in the autumn of each year (though attendance at these meetings depends on funding)
  - c) participate in monthly teleconferences
  - d) contribute to the work of one of its sub-committees and other work as required
- 6) The term of office is three years, with individuals serving no more than two consecutive terms (six years). Candidates must then wait for three years before standing for another term.
- 7) CE members are eligible for reimbursement of travel and accommodation expenses incurred in attending Consumers' Executive meetings. Cochrane will also fund the monthly teleconferences, and the registration fee for the Cochrane Colloquia attended during the CE members' time in office. Consumers' Executive members do not receive any other remuneration from Cochrane.
- 8) People considering standing for election should be active consumer members of Cochrane and should read the requirements for Consumer Executive members (page 5-6 of this document). Candidates are strongly encouraged to find out what is involved before they stand, from a member of the Consumers' Executive. Current members of the Consumers' Executive are:

Chair

Anne Lyddiatt (Canada) (retiring)

Vice-Chair and Non-English language member:

Sara Yaron (Israel)

Low or Middle-income country member:

Joy Oliver (South Africa) (eligible for re-election)

CE member

Nancy Fitton (USA)

CE member

Vacant. A decision has been made to maintain this post as vacant and the decision will be reviewed at the Mid-Year Meeting in 2019).

Consumer Engagement Officer (non-voting member):  
Richard Morley (Cochrane Central Executive Team)

## Consumers Executive Election Process

### KEY DATES

Nominations should be sent to the Cochrane Consumer Co-ordinator no later than midnight (UTC) on **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019** by e-mail to [rmorley@cochrane.org](mailto:rmorley@cochrane.org).

Voting will take place online from **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April to Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2019** (should there need to be an election).

The election results will be announced **Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019** and the successful candidate can begin their term at the Cochrane Colloquium, Santiago, Chile <https://colloquium2019.cochrane.org/>

### PROCESS FOR NOMINATION

#### 1 Candidate's statement

Candidates must submit a statement of candidacy which covers:

- a) Their role as a consumer of health care, or as an advocate or contributor to health research, either as an individual or within a healthcare organisation
- a) Their contribution to the work of Cochrane
- b) Their contribution to the work of the Cochrane Consumer Network
- d) How they think they would contribute to the work of the Consumer Executive

The maximum length should be 1000 words.

Each candidate must also state any potential conflicts of interest that might limit his/her participation in Consumers' Executive discussions and decision-making.

#### 2 Nomination by a member of the Consumer Network

Candidates will require a healthcare consumer member of the Consumer Network to nominate them for the Consumers' Executive.

#### 3 Nomination by a Cochrane group

A Cochrane group (Review Group, Centre or Field) is required to second the nomination.

Nominations

Each person nominating or seconding a candidate should provide a letter of support explaining his/her reason for nominating or seconding that person. The maximum length should be 400 words. This letter of support will accompany the nominees' personal statements when online voting takes place .

## **ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible to stand you must be:

- A member of the Cochrane Consumer Network
- Not an employee of Cochrane
- A healthcare consumer as defined by the Cochrane Consumer Network Executive i.e. a patient, carer or family member, health advocate, member of a patient group, or citizen seeking high quality, unbiased information about a health condition or treatment.
- Have no conflict of interests that would prevent full participation in discussions and voting
- N.B. The Consumer Network also welcomes, as non-voting members, staff of organizations, journalists or professionals such as healthcare practitioners/trainees and health researchers who share the ethos of Cochrane and are interested in building patient empowerment and autonomy. Such members are not eligible to stand for election to the Consumer Network Executive

## **Declaration of Interests**

Members of the Consumer Network, who serve in a governance role on the Consumers Executive, are asked to disclose:

### **A) Financial interest**

1. All relationships with related commercial organisations (other than for direct health care, participation in a clinical trial) that could pose a conflict of interest that would reasonably appear to be related to their role in the Consumer Network
2. All relationships with related not-for-profit organisations (including Cochrane), for example, being a paid member of a patient support organization, Cochrane Review Group or Centre
3. All received personal gifts from related organisations
4. Whether, as a paid employee of a patient or consumer organisation, your organisation receive money from the drug or device industries. If so, what percentage or amount?

### **B. Non-financial interests**

For example you should state if you have any other competing interests that could pose a conflict of interest that would reasonably appear to be related to the primary interest. If there are, please explain.

What is a conflict of interest?

A conflict of interest is a set of circumstances that creates a risk that judgement or actions regarding a primary interest will be unduly influenced by a secondary interest. Primary interest refers to the principal goals of the activity (e.g. service on the Cochrane Consumer Network). Secondary interest includes not only personal financial gain but also such motives as the desire for professional advancement and the wish to do favours for family and friends. The secondary interests are not treated as wrong in themselves, but become objectionable when they are believed to have greater weight than the primary interests. (modified from Cochrane Manual)

## **PURPOSE OF THE CONSUMERS' EXECUTIVE (CE)**

The core functions of the Consumer Network Executive have been identified as follows:

1. To support Cochrane groups in the inclusion of consumers
2. To support consumer participation in Cochrane
3. To increase consumer membership in low income and non-English speaking countries
4. To increase awareness of Cochrane evidence among consumers globally
5. To develop and disseminate information for consumers

The responsibilities of Consumers' Executive members are:

- To arrange and provide support for consumers contributing to the work of Cochrane.
- To represent consumers from their geographical area.
- To request input from the wider membership and other Cochrane entities.
- To participate actively by e-mail, teleconference and face-to-face meetings at Cochrane meetings

### Objectives

- To facilitate open, effective communication among all relevant stakeholders
- To advise the Cochrane Council, via its CE representatives, on all aspects relating to the role and function of consumers
- To identify collective consumer concerns and issues, and bring them forward to the appropriate arena
- To feed back to the CE any relevant decisions or discussions from the Cochrane Council
- To help with communication through the consumers' mailing list, news digest, and social media as appropriate
- To link with consumer representatives in governance positions within Cochrane and provide feedback to the Consumers' Executive

- To provide advice to ensure that consumer participation meets the needs of both consumers and Cochrane
- To support the work of the Cochrane Consumer Engagement Officer
- To plan and organise relevant meetings at Cochrane Colloquia

### Accountability and reporting

- The Consumers' Executive is broadly accountable to the Consumer Network membership but ultimately to the Cochrane Board
- The Consumers' Executive will record its activities in minutes of meetings, and where possible at a meeting at the Cochrane Colloquium
- The Consumers' Executive will produce written reports or papers for the Board, Council and others as required

### Decision-making

- The Consumers' Executive will aim to reach decisions by consensus but where this is not possible decisions will be taken based on a majority vote. In the case of a tied vote, the Chair will have the deciding vote
- For decisions to be taken at Consumers' Executive meetings a quorum of more than half the membership of the Consumers' Executive is necessary. For decisions to be taken by e-mail correspondence, it is expected that all members of the Consumers' Executive will vote but if this is not possible the above quorum stands.
- Wherever possible, decisions on relevant and significant matters will be based on consultation with consumers

### Meetings and communications

- Meetings will generally be held at the annual Cochrane Colloquium (subject to funding) and during the Mid-year meeting.
- E-mail discussions will be held as needed ([consumersexec@lists.cochrane.org](mailto:consumersexec@lists.cochrane.org)).
- Monthly teleconferences will be held.
- The wider Consumer Network membership will be kept informed in newsletters and monthly news digests sent through the consumers' mailing list ([consumers@lists.cochrane.org](mailto:consumers@lists.cochrane.org)).