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Databases included in the Cochrane Library

Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR)

- Cochrane Reviews and Protocols
- Editorials
- Supplements
- Editorial responsibility
- Metrics: impact factor; article metrics
- Access to archived Cochrane Reviews

The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR) is the leading resource for systematic reviews in health care. The CDSR includes Cochrane Reviews (the systematic reviews) and protocols for Cochrane Reviews as well as editorials. The CDSR also has occasional supplements.

In November 2004, The Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group agreed that the Cochrane Library should continue to be limited to the publication of Cochrane Reviews dealing with human health issues.

Cochrane Reviews and Protocols

Cochrane Reviews are systematic reviews of primary research in human health care and health policy, and are internationally recognised as the highest standard in evidence-based health care. They may either investigate the effects of interventions for prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation, or alternatively may assess the accuracy of a diagnostic test for a given condition in a specific patient group and setting. A unique feature of Cochrane Reviews is that they are living documents in that they are updated with new evidence that emerges. They were conceived as electronic publications from the outset, and designed to take advantage of features unique to electronic publishing.

Each systematic review addresses a clearly formulated question; for example: Can antibiotics help in alleviating the symptoms of a sore throat? All the existing primary research on a topic that meets certain pre-determined criteria is searched for and collated, and then assessed using stringent guidelines, to establish whether or not there is conclusive evidence about a specific treatment.

Each Cochrane Review is a peer reviewed systematic review that has been prepared by a team of authors and supported by a Cochrane Review Group editorial team in the Collaboration. Cochrane Reviews are prepared using Review Manager (RevMan) software provided by the Collaboration, and adhere to a structured methodological approach and format that is described in the Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions or Cochrane Handbook for Diagnostic Test Accuracy Reviews.

Protocols for Cochrane Reviews are peer reviewed articles that describe the rationale for the review, the objectives, and the methods that will be used to locate, select, and critically appraise studies, and to collect and analyse data from the included studies.
There are four types of Cochrane Review published in the CDSR: intervention; methodology; diagnostic test accuracy; and overviews of reviews. Most reviews in the CDSR are intervention reviews, methodology reviews are prepared by one Cochrane Review Group, and the other two types are newer additions to the CDSR.

Editorials

Editorials aim to stimulate discussion and ideas around the development of evidence synthesis to promote good decision-making in clinical care and health policy.

One to four editorials are published each month. The timing of publication may coincide with the publication of a linked Cochrane Review or with particular events, such as health awareness days or The Cochrane Collaboration's 20th anniversary.

Editorials are usually about 800 words in length with about six to eight references, although longer or shorter editorials may be published at the discretion of the Editor in Chief, David Tovey (dtovey@cochrane.org).

Provenance

Editorials may be solicited or unsolicited, and authorship is not limited to contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration contributors or by those outside the organisation. The Editor in Chief or Cochrane Editorial Unit staff may commission editorials linked to Cochrane Reviews of interest or on topics likely to be of interest to a broad readership. Proposals for editorials are welcome and should be submitted to the Editor in Chief for consideration.

Editorial process

The Editor in Chief has editorial responsibility for editorials. They are managed, edited, and published by the Cochrane Editorial Unit. Editorials can be published at any time.

Authors of editorials must declare potential conflicts of interest using the standard ICMJE Conflicts of interest form and must complete a licence for publication form.

Feedback on editorials is welcome and may be published as a comment alongside the editorial.

Editorials are indexed in PubMed and are free to access via the Cochrane Library homepage.

Supplements

Since 2009, the Cochrane Colloquium abstracts (for oral presentations and posters) have been published as a Supplement and, since 2010, Cochrane Methods (ISSN: 2044-4702), the official annual newsletter for methodological issues within The Cochrane Collaboration, has been published as an annual Supplement.
Editorial responsibility

Cochrane Reviews are prepared by Cochrane Review Groups, which are led by one or more Co-ordinating Editors. The Co-ordinating Editors are members of an Editorial Board. The Editor in Chief oversees the CDSR content.

The Editor in Chief is responsible for the Editorials and oversees the preparation of the Supplements.

Metrics

Impact factor

Each year in June, Thomson Reuters publish the impact factors of all journals indexed in the ISI Journal Citation Report. The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR) impact factor describes the ratio of the number of Cochrane Reviews published, for example, during 2010 and 2011 to the number of citations these reviews received in 2012. The CDSR received its first impact factor in 2007.

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Impact factor (IF)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>6.124</td>
<td>IF fact sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>6.103</td>
<td>IF fact sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>6.035</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5.182</td>
<td>IF fact sheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>4.654</td>
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Individual Cochrane Review Groups receive impact factor reports and citation analysis reports prepared by the publishing team at Wiley. The publishing team at Wiley runs Impact Factor Webinars for Cochrane contributors. Contact Tony Aburrow, Associate Editor, Wiley, for more information; taburrow@wiley.com, +44 (0)1243 770 644.

The Cochrane Editorial Unit has compiled advice and information (January 2012) for Cochrane Review Groups about measures aimed at influencing the impact factor of the CDSR.

Article metrics
In 2011, Wiley introduced an article metric for each Cochrane Review. Users can now see which other articles have cited the Cochrane Review (via a live feed from CrossRef).

Wiley has also partnered with Altmetric, a service that tracks and measures the impact of scholarly articles and datasets on both traditional and social media. Altmetric scores and badges are displayed on Cochrane Reviews and Editorials published in the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews.

More information on Altmetric for CDSR

Access to archived Cochrane Reviews

All published versions of Cochrane Reviews (including Protocols for Cochrane Reviews) are stored on the Cochrane Collaboration’s central server, Archie. This also includes versions published before the launch of Archie in 2005–2006. The published versions stored in Archie cannot be deleted. Archie also contains versions of draft Cochrane Reviews that are not published.

Full access to the archive of all published Cochrane Reviews in Archie is available only to a few individuals in each Cochrane Group, such as Cochrane Review Groups (CRGs), as well as Archie ‘Super Users,’ and system and data administrators. This access to the archive can help CRG editorial teams answer queries about previously published versions that are not available in the public archive through the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR) (see below). However, it is at the discretion of the CRG editorial teams as to whether they choose to provide copies of Cochrane Reviews to people who have asked for them.

Researchers who are proposing to use the archived data for methodological purposes can also apply for permission for access to all previously published reviews by contacting Cochrane’s ticketed technical support helpdesk – techsupport@cochrane.org. These requests are escalated to Cochrane’s Editor in Chief and Chief Information Officer for approval. If permission is granted, the Informatics and Knowledge Management Department can assist in providing these data, but there may be a cost for this service, depending on the complexity of the request.

Please note that any request must include the following basic information:

- Name
- Role within Cochrane
- Brief description of the project/reason for request
- Duration of requested access

The CDSR includes an archive of all citation versions of published Cochrane Reviews (including Protocols) starting from Issue 4, 2003 (www.cochranelibrary.com). Where previous versions of a Cochrane Review exist in the CDSR, these can be accessed via the ‘Other Versions’ link on each Cochrane Review.

Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL)
The Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL) is a bibliographic database that provides a highly concentrated source of reports of randomized controlled trials. Records contain the list of authors, the title of the article, the source, volume, issue, page numbers, and, in many cases, a summary of the article (abstract). They do not contain the full text of the article.

Cochrane Groups maintain and update Specialized Registers, which are collections of controlled trials relevant to the groups. CENTRAL is comprised of these Specialized Registers, relevant records retrieved from MEDLINE and EMBASE, and records retrieved through handsearching (planned manual searching of a journal or conference proceedings to identify all reports of randomised controlled trials and controlled clinical trials). The Cochrane Collaboration contracts a technology company, Metaxis, to merge the records from the sources outlined above and provide a data feed to the publisher. New and changed data are delivered to the publisher on a monthly basis.

Each of the Cochrane Review Groups and other entities within the Collaboration that submit a Specialized Register is responsible for its content. The Editor in Chief oversees CENTRAL, and Metaxis manages the technical aspects of compiling the database.

CENTRAL is freely available to Cochrane members via the Cochrane Register of Studies Online (CRSO). The CRSO allows searching of CENTRAL records five to six weeks before they are available in CENTRAL and can be accessed with an Archie login.

Cochrane Methodology Register (CMR)

The Cochrane Methodology Register (CMR) 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 by the UK Cochrane Centre through handsearching and sources including MEDLINE.

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.

CMR records contain the title of the article, information on where it was published (bibliographic details), and, in some cases, a summary of the article. They do not contain the full text of the article.

Until recently the CMR was produced by the UK Cochrane Centre on behalf of the Cochrane Methodology Review Group. The CMR is currently under review; further information on the progress and developments of this review will be updated on the CMR help site. Any queries about the current status of the CMR should be sent to Jackie Chandler (jchandler@cochrane.org), Methods Coordinator, Cochrane Editorial Unit.

About The Cochrane Collaboration
Groups in The Cochrane Collaboration – Cochrane Review Groups, Methods Groups, Fields, Cochrane Centres, the Cochrane Editorial Unit, Network for Consumers, Satellites and Branches, Cochrane Informatics and Knowledge Management Department (IKMD), and the Central Executive Team – use this database to publish information about their purpose, scope, and activities, as well as contact details. The type of information provided varies by group. Cochrane Review Groups, for example, provide additional information, including a list of new reviews, updated reviews, and protocols to be published in the next issue of the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (alongside the updated version of this article); registered and vacant titles; names of editors, authors, and peer reviewers; the methods that they use in their reviews; a glossary of terms which are commonly found in their reviews; and relevant publications.

Each group is responsible for the information in the article about their group.

Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects (DARE)

The Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects (DARE) contains details of systematic reviews that evaluate the effects of healthcare interventions and the delivery and organisation of health services. DARE also contains reviews of the wider determinants of health such as housing, transport, and social care where these impact directly on health, or have the potential to impact on health.

Reviews are quality assessed for inclusion making DARE a key resource for busy decision-makers in both healthcare policy and practice. DARE complements the CDSR by identifying and including systematic reviews that have not been carried out by The Cochrane Collaboration.

A critical commentary on the reliability of the evidence is provided for reviews of key relevance to the UK NHS. The records for these reviews contain a summary of the review and a critical commentary about the overall quality and reliability of the findings. For bibliographic records where a commentary has not yet been prepared, users can submit a request via the CRD website: priority is given to UK NHS, public health, and social care services. The commentaries are written and independently checked by researchers with in-depth knowledge and experience of systematic review methods.

DARE contains details of all Cochrane Reviews, Protocols for Cochrane Reviews, and other publications based on Cochrane Reviews. Details of Campbell Reviews (prepared by The Campbell Collaboration) are included where the interventions evaluated impact directly on health or have the potential to impact on health.

DARE was produced by the NIHR Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) at the University of York, UK. NIHR funding to produce DARE ceased at the end of March 2015. However, the database can still be accessed via the Cochrane Library. Searches of MEDLINE, Embase, CINAHL, PsycINFO and PubMed were continued until the end of the 2014. Bibliographic records were published on DARE and NHS EED until 31 March 2015 and included in Issue 4, 2015 on the Cochrane Library. This database is also available from the CRD database website.
Health Technology Assessment Database (HTA)

The Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Database brings together details of completed and ongoing health technology assessments from around the world. Database content is supplied by members of the International Network of Agencies for Health Technology Assessment (INAHTA) and other HTA organisations internationally. The scope for inclusion is broad, encompassing any study designated as a health technology assessment by the contributing organisation. All new content is checked, proof read, and published on the database by the in-house team at CRD.

Records for published projects contain full bibliographic details and contact information for the organisation publishing the report. Contributing organisations can also provide brief details of the authors’ objectives and conclusions if they wish. Links to reports, project pages, and/or organisation websites are provided wherever possible so that database users can access full details directly. The HTA database also contains brief details of ongoing HTA projects which are updated when projects complete. This enables funders and researchers to identify work already in progress and may help reduce unintended duplication of effort.

Unlike the other CRD databases, DARE and NHS EED, the published records are not critically assessed. However, where a review or economic evaluation listed in the HTA database has met the inclusion criteria for DARE or NHS EED and a critical abstract has been written, links to that abstract are included in the HTA database record.

The HTA database is produced by the NIHR Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) at the University of York, UK. This database is also available from the CRD database website.

NHS Economic Evaluation Database

The NHS Economic Evaluation Database (EED) contains economic evaluations of healthcare interventions. Economic evaluations are studies in which a comparison of two or more interventions or care alternatives is undertaken and in which both the costs and outcomes of the alternatives are examined. This includes cost-benefit analyses, cost-utility analyses, and cost-effectiveness analyses.

To assist decision-makers with this increasingly complex and technical literature, critical commentaries are produced for economic evaluations of key relevance to the UK National Health Services (NHS). These commentaries contain a brief description of the effectiveness information on which the economic evidence is based and details of the key components of the economic evaluation. A critical commentary summarises the overall reliability and generalisability of the study, and presents any practical implications for the UK NHS.

For bibliographic records, where a commentary has not yet been prepared, users can submit a request via the CRD website: priority is given to UK NHS, public health, and social care services. The commentaries are written and independently checked by health economists with in-depth knowledge and experience of economic evaluation methods.
NHS EED was produced by the NIHR Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) at the University of York, UK. NIHR funding to produce NHS EED ceased at the end of March 2015. However, the database can still be accessed via the Cochrane Library. Searches of MEDLINE, Embase, CINAHL, PsycINFO and PubMed were continued until the end of the 2014. Bibliographic records were published on DARE and NHS EED until 31st March 2015 and included in Issue 4, 2015 in the Cochrane Library.

This database is also available from the [CRD database website](http://www.crd.york.ac.uk/).