

Cochrane Review Group
Transformation
Programme
Implementation Plan

October 2017–September 2018

Cochrane Editorial Unit

January 2018



What is this document about?

This document is intended primarily for those involved in Cochrane Review Groups, but may also be of interest to the wider Cochrane Community.

This implementation plan details the structural and functional changes approved by the Governing Board, and sets out the first year (from October 2017 to September 2018) of the ‘Cochrane Review Group Transformation Programme’. The main goal is to establish a timeframe for the structural changes, and provide a roadmap of the necessary functional changes within each Network of CRGs, that will:

- improve the review production process, including quality, relevance and timeliness of reviews;
- improve governance and accountability.

Objectives within the first year

1. Establish new editorial leadership for the Cochrane Library (Editorial Board).
2. Continue to improve and increase consistency in the quality of Cochrane reviews.
3. Each Network to develop a strategic plan which will include a prioritization process focused on the needs of stakeholders.
4. Develop sustainable governance and accountability structures and relationships between Cochrane and CRGs.

Implementation stages and timelines

This implementation plan covers the first year of the CRG Transformation Programme. Table 1 describes the key milestones to be achieved during 2018, which have been divided into two stages. Figure 1 summarises the implementation stages, key milestones, and timelines.

Table 1: Implementation stages and timelines

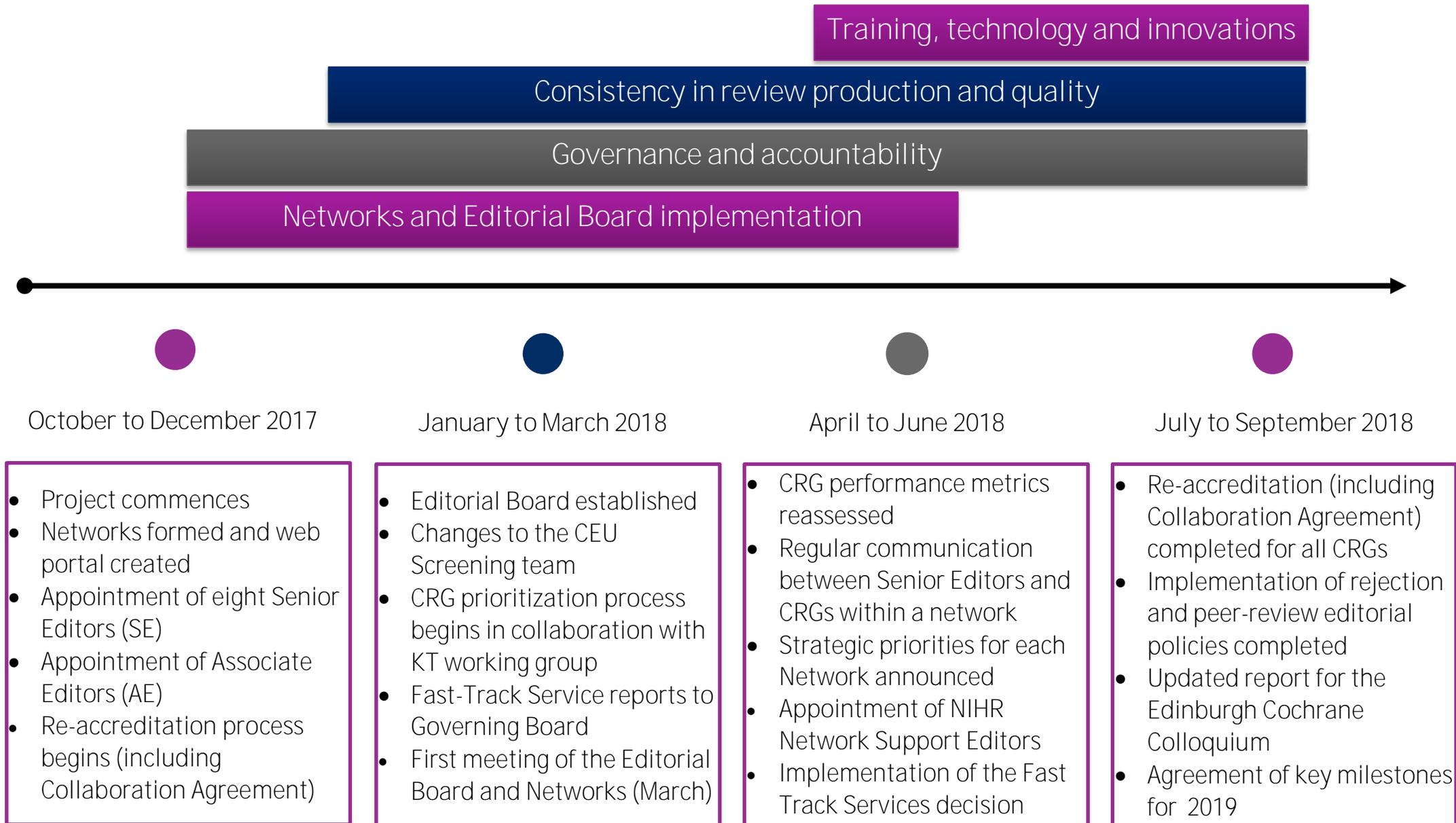
Key milestone	Brief description	Timeline
Stage 1: October 2017 to March 2018		
Formalize the creation of CRG Networks	The development of the Networks was based on the groupings of CRGs described in Appendix 1 of the ‘Cochrane Review Group Transformation Programme’ paper.	Started from October 2017 Networks launch January 2018
Creation of a CRG Network Portal	The Communications and External Affairs Department (CEAD) has created a new CRG Network portal that contains online resources for CRGs and Networks, which will be updated regularly.	Established in November 2017, updated regularly
CRGs re-accreditation guidance and webinars	All CRGs will need to be re-accredited every five years, in order to continue as Cochrane Groups. To support this process, the	November-December 2017

Key milestone	Brief description	Timeline
	Project Team has developed a guidance document and held two community webinars for CRGs.	
CRGs re-accreditation process: Collaboration Agreement between Cochrane and UK-based CRGs	<p>The Collaboration Agreement defining the responsibilities of Cochrane and the CRGs has been shared with all UK-based CRGs, and we will extend it to all CRGs from April 2018.</p> <p>The Agreement will be signed by the Editor in Chief on behalf of Cochrane and the Co-ordinating Editor on behalf of the CRG. If relevant for the CRG, the host institution will be involved.</p>	November 2017 to March 2018 for UK-based CRGs
Interview process and appointment of Senior Editors	<p>The Project Team received 18 applications and selected eight candidates for interview. Two Senior Editors have been appointed (Lisa Bero and Nicole Skoetz).</p> <p>The recruitment process for Senior Editors has been extended and we are now actively recruiting for the remaining Networks until March 2018.</p>	December 2017 to March 2018
Interview process and appointment of Associate Editors	The Project Team received 35 applications and selected 11 candidates for interview. All Associate Editors have been appointed and will start working as part of the Networks from January 2018.	December 2017
Establish new editorial leadership for the Cochrane Library	<p>The Editorial Board will be chaired by the Editor-in-Chief, supported by the Deputy Editor-in-Chief. Two Senior Editors, one end-user, and one expert in Knowledge Translation (KT) have been recruited, and appointments for one methodologist and six additional Senior Editors are underway. The Editor-in-Chief will announce the final selection in March 2018.</p> <p>Following its establishment, the Board will meet regularly, with at least one planned face-to-face meeting each year.</p>	November 2017 to March 2018
Changes to the CEU Screening programme	The CEU screening team has been reassigned to work directly with the Networks as Associate Editors. They will work closely with the CEU Quality Senior Editor, (Toby Lasserson), and the newly appointed Network Senior Editors to explore novel and more effective ways of triaging reviews. The aim is to streamline the editorial process by focusing scarce editorial resources on a smaller portfolio of priority reviews.	From January 2018
Collaboration with the KT Strategy Working Group to support prioritization within CRGs	KT working package on prioritization to start mapping CRG prioritization strategies and hold initial discussions on how to support the prioritization development of CRGs and Networks.	From December 2017
Report on Fast Track Service Pilot for the Governing Board	The pilot Cochrane Fast-Track Service received 13 applications from March to December 2017, and is currently processing seven applications. A complete report, including recommendations to on how to roll out this service across Cochrane, will be presented	End of February 2018

Key milestone	Brief description	Timeline
	to the Governing Board at the Cochrane Governance meetings in Lisbon in March 2018.	
Update on the Transformation Programme for the Governing Board	A report of all activities from October 2017 to March 2018 will be prepared and presented to the Governing Board at the Cochrane Governance meetings in Lisbon in March 2018.	End of February 2018
Cochrane's Governance Meetings in Lisbon	First face-to-face meeting between Network Senior and Associate Editors, and members of the community. Strategic session will introduce the Networks' plans for 2018.	March 2018
Stage 2: April to September 2018		
CRG performance metrics	As part of the "Sustainability Review," we identified a number of parameters that highly successful CRGs appear to incorporate: strong leadership allied to a well-functioning editorial board with appropriate methodological expertise and capacity; strong commitment to quality; sustained and relatively secure funding; and a prioritization process supported and connected to key stakeholder needs. These parameters will be used to continue to monitor the Networks' performance.	From April 2018
Appointment of NIHR Network Support Editors	We anticipate that Cochrane will receive support from the UK NIHR to appoint up to eight Network Support Editors, each assigned to support the work of one Network. Their focus will include supporting CRGs inside and outside the UK in the production of timely and high-quality systematic reviews that are priorities for the NHS and NICE, and other activities that strengthen the networks.	From April 2018
Strategic Plan and prioritization process for Networks	During the first year the Networks will produce a Strategic Development Plan. This plan will outline the Networks' priorities, including the most important reviews that they will seek to expedite. The prioritization and strategic plan of each Network will be informed by the scope of the Network (aligned with the scope of each component CRG), and should also aim to identify gaps in review coverage. Networks will identify reviews to be prioritised by each CRG, outline any formal prioritization process, and describe how these reviews will be delivered in years one and two. The prioritization process will be completed in partnership with the KT working group.	From April 2018
CRGs re-accreditation process: Strategic Plan	It is vitally important that CRGs focus resources on producing reviews which are likely to make the most impact on policy and clinical practice globally.	From April 2018

Key milestone	Brief description	Timeline
	Cochrane and the Senior Editors will provide support to CRGs to develop their strategic plans, and align such plans with the Networks' strategies and priorities.	
CRGs re-accreditation process: Collaboration Agreement between Cochrane and all remaining CRGs	The Collaboration Agreement defining the responsibilities of Cochrane and the CRGs will be rolled out to all non-UK-based CRGs, and will be signed by the Editor in Chief on behalf of Cochrane and the Co-ordinating Editor on behalf of the CRG. If appropriate for the CRG, the host institution will be involved.	April to September 2018 for the remaining CRGs
CEU implementation of editorial policies	A key aim for Networks is to ensure that editorial policies and best practice are implemented across their component CRGs. During the first year of the implementation plan, the CEU team will focus on increasing uptake of the rejection and peer-review policies, with the aim of improving the efficiency, quality and timeliness of review production. This will involve using technology to facilitate implementation, training and support, communication, and audit. The CEU will work with the Networks, and other Cochrane Departments to accomplish this.	From April 2018
Cochrane Fast-Track Service	Implementation, pending the decision by the Governing Board.	From June 2018
Key milestones for the Transformation Programme in 2019	At the end of the first year, we will work with the Networks to publish the key milestones, implementation stages, and timelines for 2019.	September 2018
Edinburgh Cochrane Colloquium (16-18 September)	Updates on progress and lessons learned during the first year of the Transformation Programme.	September 2018

Figure 1: Summary of the implementation stages, key milestones, and timelines



Communication plan

A comprehensive communications plan has been developed to support this implementation document and the wider CRG Transformational programme. Compiled with the input of the Central Editorial Unit, Project Team and CRG staff, it includes guidance, usage documents, brand and targeted messaging for key internal and external stakeholders and groups, as well as more general communications to inform and frequently update the Cochrane community.

In addition, we have created a community online portal for the newly established Networks and their component CRGs. This portal <http://community.cochrane.org/organizational-info/resources/resources-groups/crg-networks-portal> will house important information, documents, Community FAQs, blogs and up-to-date resources for CRGs and CRG Networks. Your feedback is extremely valuable as we continue to improve our communication with you, and we welcome new and innovative ideas.

We will continue to fully engage with you and your CRG over the coming weeks and months as we work closely with all members of the community in our planned implementation. Regular communications will follow on the online portal as we launch our eight CRG Networks, as well as in our regular Reviews and Methods Digests.

If you wish to get in touch, tell us what you think, or offer further suggestions, please feel free to contact: Jo Anthony janthony@cochrane.org or Muriah Umoquit mumoquit@cochrane.org