Governance

Strategic Session | London 2016

The Cochrane Steering Group is considering a proposal for the transition to a new governance structure, including a transition from the Steering Group structure to a new governing Board. Full details of the proposal are available at http://community.cochrane.org/news/cochrane-consultation-on-governance-reform-deadline-18-march.

This proposal arises from a review of governance that the Steering Group conducted during 2015. Key aims for the new Board include ensuring that its membership reflects Cochrane as an evolving organization and our environment; supporting the Board's role in making decisions on behalf of Cochrane as a whole; opening the membership to bring in external perspectives and valuable skills; and refreshing our electoral procedures.

This proposal will be the subject of thorough discussion by Cochrane's leadership groups (including the various Group Executives and the Steering Group) at the Mid-Year Meetings on the day before the Strategic Session. Their discussions will be informed by feedback gathered during an initial consultation period in February and March, and will lead into this combined Strategic Session.

The Strategic Session will be an opportunity for all participants to come together and discuss the proposed changes, and to participate in an open and practical discussion about how we can ensure that Cochrane's contributors gain the benefits from an improved governance structure, while ensuring that the framework continues to support our collaborative and diverse community. The Session will be a genuine opportunity to influence the decisions and direction taken.

Organisers

Cindy Farquhar, Lisa Bero, Denise Thomson, Karin Dearness, Anne Lyddiatt
Cochrane Steering Group

Session Chair: Jonathan Craig
Former Co-Chair, Cochrane Steering Group

Supported by Miranda Cumpston, Head of Learning & Support, Cochrane Central Executive

Key aims

1. To agree on the rationale for change to Cochrane's Governance Structures
2. To approve outline of the proposed changes as recommended in the consultation document, and identify specific changes required.
3. To begin gathering input on the structure of the proposed Council, to feed into further development during 2016.

Agenda

8:30am	Facilitator briefing
9:00am	Welcome *Jonathan Craig*
9:05am	Introduction: How did we get here and directions for change| A new Cochrane Board: proposed changes and key feedback *Cindy Farquhar*
9:20am	A Cochrane Council: what is it and how should it work? *Karin Dearness and Anne Lyddiatt*
9:25am	**Whole group discussion**: Directions for change
9:40am	**Small group work:** Considering the proposals
10:10	Structured group feedback from facilitators and discussion (time permitting)
10:25	Close of session: conclusions and next steps *Jonathan Craig*

Engagement through social media during the session
Holly Millward will tweet out the questions being considered in the small group work for those not attending to be able to contribute to the discussion using #cochranelondon. Responses will be gathered and fed into the overall discussions.

Small Group Work
Small groups will be conducted at the round tables present in the Strategic Session room. A facilitator and scribe will be assigned to each table. The session will run for 30 minutes.

The role of the facilitators will be to ensure that discussion within the small groups stays reasonably on track and addresses the intended issues to a reasonable extent. There may be some strongly held views among the participants, and it's important these are heard and acknowledged. A balance to ensure all voices are equally heard will also be important.

	Facilitator	Scribe
1.	Jordi Pardo	Nuala Livingstone
2.	Ian Shemilt	Chris Mavergames
3.	Tianjing Li	Jo Anthony
4.	Steve McDonald	Charlotte Pestridge
5.	Nicky Cullum	Liz Dooley
6.	Anna Noel-Storr	Monaz Mehta
7.	Tamara Kredo	Lucie Binder
8.		Ruth Foxlee

9.		
10.		

Discussion guide

The three key areas for discussion are outlined below. You could consider giving each around 10 minutes, but it's important not to stifle or close down productive discussion on the earlier issues if they continue longer than planned. Other issues not on these lists may be discussed if felt to be important to the group, but try to ensure that the group does not get bogged down discussing single issues, or focus to much on the feelings of one individual.

1. The Cochrane Board:

- What are the most important areas of skills and expertise to be sought across the Board membership?

- Are there practical ways we can ensure diversity of gender, geographic location, languages spoken, age and areas of expertise?

- What could be the advantages and disadvantages of electing internal members from a single pool?

- Are there other changes to the Board as proposed that we should make?

2. A representative Council:

- What are the aims and expected outcomes of representation in our governance?

- What would the role and remit of the Council be? What kinds of activities could they undertake?

- Are there ways in which a Council could be more effective at collaboration and representation than the current CSG structure?

- Who should be represented on the Council?

3. Working together

- How should the Council and the CSG work together? How should they communicate?

- How can the Council effectively work to inform detailed proposals before they go to the CSG?

- What should happen if the Council and the CSG disagree?

Prepare for feedback (10 mins)

Each group will have one minute to provide verbal feedback to the group at large. We realise this is not long, and so a detailed report of the discussions are recorded will be collated and circulated after the meeting. You, or another nominated spokesperson, should present the three most important points from your group's discussion.