

**Statements:**

- **Do you have experience or expertise in one or more of the published list of essential areas of expertise for members of the Cochrane Board?**

My expertise lies in managing the editorial process and production of quality Cochrane reviews for 6 years as part of my role as the Managing Editor of the Cochrane Breast Cancer Group (portfolio: over 130 reviews). My experience includes leading or co-authoring several substantial Cochrane review updates in breast cancer, conducting a wide-range of non-Cochrane systematic reviews for the Australian Government (e.g. Department of Health, Defence Force) and university-affiliated cancer networks, and communicating with key clinical guideline developers, foundations and medical colleges regarding breast cancer review findings. Additionally, I am building experience in knowledge translation through project-based work and as a member of the Guidelines International Network (GIN) Implementation Working Group.

- **How have you contributed to Cochrane's work during your time as a member?**

I am a member of the Cochrane Managing Editor's Executive Committee (Sep 2015-current), presenter and facilitator of Cochrane Author Training Workshops in Sydney (since 2011), presenter of non-Cochrane workshops promoting Cochrane to medical oncologists and allied health professionals, adjudicator of applications for the Cochrane Workshop Committee (2016) and Methods Innovation Fund, co-chair for several Cochrane meetings, member of the Cochrane Peer-Review Policy Working Group, and contributor to poster and oral presentations at Cochrane Colloquia.

- **What experience do you have in leadership and governance roles within or outside of Cochrane? Please provide examples**

My experience in leadership involves initiating and driving Cochrane projects composed of multi-disciplinary teams and non-Cochrane projects with academic researchers (e.g. international comparative study on breast feeding, review for the military) over the last 6 years in Australia. I have taken the initiative to build rapport and relationships with key Government organisations, external breast cancer organisations, and clinical and research networks (medical colleges/societies). Additionally, in the UK, I was managing two country-wide clinical trials on stroke in collaboration with neurologists and stroke networks for 2 years.

- **What do you think would make you an effective member of the Board?**

I have worked with over 80 author teams across 20 countries to further Cochrane's vision to bring evidence-based research to the public. My strength is in operations, demonstrated by co-ordinating review production using the strengths of our volunteers (i.e. editors, authors, consumers, peer-reviewers) from around the world. I am a good listener and I would bring forth potential solutions to assist group decision-making. I am culturally educated having studied and worked in France and the UK, speaking French and born of Bosnia-Hercegovina heritage.

- **How do you see Cochrane developing or changing in the future, and why?**

In the future, I would like to see:

- Cochrane being read by mainstream media and in the format where a person who is grappling with a health problem can read a simple language summary in lieu of complicated medical terminology, and
  - the uptake of new methods in a more accessible fashion e.g. guidance, training and implementation. This is because Cochrane differentiates itself from its competitors through its methods. Emerging clinical questions need to incorporate other study designs and forms of information synthesis.
- **What do you see as the most important issues to be addressed by the Board during your term of office?**

Successfully implementing new technological platforms to facilitate review development, in line with Strategy to 2020.

Targeting and obtaining funding from key philanthropic organisations. This is to support review-based projects asking tractable clinical questions that will assist the medical profession, allied-health professionals and patient.

**How have you contributed to the Board during your term of office?**

Not applicable.

- **Is there anything else you would like to say in support of your nomination?**

In conclusion, I believe I have the qualifications, experience, enthusiasm, and work ethic that are needed to be a successful contributor to this collaborative organisation.

**Conflict of interest statement:**

**1. Financial interests**

a) Received research funding: any grant, contract or gift, commissioned research, or fellowship from The Cochrane Collaboration or a related organisation (i.e. any organisation related to health care or medical research) to conduct research?

Yes – Australian Army (2016), National Breast Cancer Foundation (2014-2015).

b) Had paid consultancies: any paid work, consulting fees (in cash or kind) from a related organisation?

No

c) Received honoraria: one-time payments (in cash or kind) from a related organisation?

No

d) Served as a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee or held a position of management with a related organisation?

No

e) Possessed share-holdings, stock, stock options, equity with a related organisation (excludes mutual funds or similar arrangements where the individual has no control over the selection of the shares)?

No

f) Received personal gifts from a related organisation?

No

g) Had an outstanding loan with a related organisation?

No

h) Received royalty payments from a related organisation?

No

**2. Do you have any other competing interests that could pose a conflict of interest that would reasonably appear to be related to the primary interest?**

No

19 December 2016

Dear Cochrane Voting Members,

**RE: Cochrane Board Nominations**

I am writing to apply for a position on the Cochrane Board as I believe we are in an exciting phase of change with new methods, technology platforms, and training to support our growth.

I will bring a fresh outlook, with an intimate knowledge of the day-to-day management of Cochrane review production. In my role as the Managing Editor of the Cochrane Breast Cancer Group, our success to date has been possible due to strong consumer involvement, highly motivated authors, and excellent clinical, methods and statistical editors.

I believe that having the best support structures in place in review production will help Cochrane deliver great outcomes.

Many thanks for your consideration,

*Melina Willson*

Melina Willson, PhD  
Managing editor  
Cochrane Breast Cancer Group  
NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre, The University of Sydney  
Australia

19<sup>th</sup> December 2016

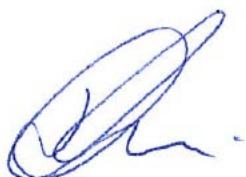
To Whom It May Concern

The purpose of this letter is to nominate Melina Willson for membership of the Cochrane Board.

Melina has been actively involved in the Cochrane Collaboration since she was appointed as Managing Editor (ME) of the Breast Cancer Group in 2010. In the time since taking up the post she has gained a breadth and depth of experience in the design and conduct of systematic reviews, and in supporting others undertaking this task. She has taken on leadership roles both within Cochrane (eg as a member of the current ME Executive) and in other agencies (eg the Guidelines International Network Implementation Working Group), and has experience working with guideline developers and others who use Cochrane reviews.

Melina is a calm, dedicated, thoughtful individual who is an asset to the Cochrane Collaboration and has the potential to make a valuable contribution to its future through membership of the board.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Davina Ghersi".

Davina Ghersi  
Senior Principle Research Scientist, National Health and Medical Research Council  
Adjunct Professor, Sydney Medical School  
Editorial Board, Cochrane Breast Cancer Group

**Department of Medical Oncology & Palliative Care**

Nicholas Wilcken MBBS PhD FRACP  
Director of Medical Oncology, Westmead Hospital  
Associate Professor of Medicine, University of Sydney  
Prov. No. 46330AT

December 19, 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Re: Cochrane Board Election – Melina Willson

Dear Sir, Madam,

I am writing to endorse the candidacy of Ms Willson for the above election. I believe she would be an excellent appointment and bring to the Board an extensive knowledge of the workings of the group at the coalface, as well as the ability to look at big picture issues.

Ms Willson has been Managing Editor of the Breast Cancer Group since 2010, before which she had laboratory bench experience as a researcher. Over the last 6 years, she has developed a very strong knowledge base in evidence-based medicine as well as a sound understanding of the science of systematic reviews.

She has expanded her role as Managing Editor in that she is closely involved in review development, carries out a lot of in-house editing of protocols and reviews, and is involved in the education of other Cochrane investigators. She has also involved herself in a number of Cochrane-related activities as listed in her cv. She thus has a good understanding of policy development and implementation.

It is this combination – on the ground detailed knowledge of how systematic reviews come into being, together with an overview understanding of how the Cochrane Collaboration works – that would be a sound and strong contribution to the Board.

Yours sincerely,



Co-ordinating Editor  
Cochrane Breast Cancer Group



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