

Summaries of Cochrane Reviews in journals – April 2021

This document summarises the meetings from the 29th March and 1st April 2021 on publishing summaries of Cochrane Reviews in journals.

Important Resources:

- [Cochrane’s Editorial and Publishing Policy Resource \(EPPR\)](#): provides the official policy which includes a [co-publication](#) section and a [list of journals](#) with existing co-publication agreements.
- [Summaries of Cochrane Reviews in Journals](#): in the [Cochrane KT learning resources](#) pages which includes information about writing, sharing and evaluating summaries of Cochrane reviews in journals.

Useful contacts:

- **Cat Fowler**, Associate Editor, Wiley (cfowler@wiley.com): can advise on, and set up co-publication agreements and memorandums of understanding for journals.
- **Justin Mann**, Assistant Editor, Editorial and Methods Department, Cochrane (jmann@cochrane.org): can help advise on co-publication queries
- **Karen Head**, Project Manager, Knowledge Translation Department, Cochrane (khead@cochrane.org): can help share knowledge of others who may be doing similar work.

1. Working with journals and Wiley

What are the different types of summary articles?

Republication of a short version of a Cochrane Review: this includes republishing the short versions of the review (abstract/plain language summary/abridged version); short version alongside an original commentary/article or a short version of the review alone translated from English.

To republish a short version of a review (e.g. Plain language summary or abstract) in a journal, the journal **must** get permission from Wiley via either a single request or, for a series, by setting up a co-publication agreement. See ‘[Setting up a co-publication agreement](#)’. Contact Cat Fowler to support with this (cfowler@wiley.com).

Original review summaries are summaries of a Cochrane review where the authors of the article provide a commentary on the Cochrane review in their own words. The summary does not republish exact content of the Cochrane Review.

Original summaries can be written on a one-time basis, or as a series of original summaries within a specific journal. When a journal wants to publish a series of original review summaries, they should set up an agreement with Wiley through signing a simplified version of the co-publication agreement (for original articles based on Cochrane Reviews only). Cat Fowler can support you with these requests (cfowler@wiley.com).

Summaries of Cochrane Reviews in journals – April 2021

We have been publishing summaries in journals without a co-publication agreement – what should we do?

Don't worry but talk to Cat! She will be able to help work through co-publication agreements for future publications. In addition, it would be great to know about which summaries that you have already produced so that we know where the Cochrane Reviews have gone.

If we have a co-publication agreement in place, do we still need to notify Wiley each time?

Yes, even if there is a co-publication agreement in place a single request should be submitted but only sections 1 and 2 of the form will need to be completed. This is to make Wiley and the Editorial and Methods Department aware of new review summaries and will allow Wiley to track the submissions and help with reporting statistics on usage.

I want to quote some of the results from a Cochrane review in an article, does this need a co-publication agreement?

No, if you are taking an extract from a Cochrane review then you just need to cite the review as a reference in the same way as you would any other direct quote. If you have any questions about when you would need a co-publication agreement, then please contact Cat.

How long does it take to set up a co-publication agreement?

- **For a single request to republish:** the single request form goes to Review authors, the CRG, Wiley and the Editorial and Methods Department. The agreements usually take between a few days and a couple of weeks.
- **For a co-publication agreement for a series of articles:** Wiley puts together the agreement and sends to the journal. Wiley have a template and this part is very quick. The time it takes will depend on how long the journal takes to sign.

Who is a co-publication agreement between?

The agreement is between the journal who wants to re-publish content and Wiley.

Do I need a co-publication agreement to publish on Cochrane website or newsletter?

No, Cochrane Groups can share the plain language summaries and abstracts of Cochrane Reviews on their website.

What do you consider a 'journal'? What about posting on an external website?

If any Cochrane content is replicated on a non-Cochrane website, newsletter, magazine etc. they should follow the same procedure as for 'co-publication'.

How long does a co-publication agreement last?

Usually 2 years to start with but can be extended or adjusted as needed.

Can I use a co-publication agreement to re-use tables and figures from the Review?

Co-publication agreements only covers the written content of the review. To re-use tables and figures from the review, you need to use the 'request permissions' section of the specific Cochrane Review in the Cochrane Library. If this is something that you want to do routinely it is probably best to speak with Cat to work out the best solution.

Do you need a co-publication agreement for submitting an abstract to a conference?

This is a separate case and more details can be found in the Editorial Publishing and Policy Resource ([submitting abstracts to conferences](#)). The situation will change depending on whether the Cochrane content is published or unpublished

Summaries of Cochrane Reviews in journals – April 2021

The journal wants to put the summary of the Cochrane Review through their peer review process, is that normal?

It is not unusual that a journal wants to do this. It isn't necessarily a problem but the best thing to do is to involve Wiley into the conversation so that they can support you in the conversations you are having with the journal. In the EPPR it says that minor editorial changes may be OK, but any significant changes need to be flagged.

2. Examples of original summary articles

Thank you for sending some examples of the types of original summary articles that different Cochrane Groups produce. I will update the [KT learning resources pages](#) to include examples of the original summaries there. Please feel free to send any more examples through via email to Karen Head (khead@cochrane.org)

3. Writing the summary of the original review

There was a variation of who writes the summaries across the people from the meetings including:

- Original Review Author (e.g. Cochrane Heart; Cochrane Movement Disorders) who then work with the journal (BMJ Heart) summarise the Cochrane Review following the journal guidelines. The editorial staff suggest topics to the journal and the journal selects the ones of most interest.
- Cochrane core staff who write the articles.
- Volunteers. These may be healthcare professionals although there were some experiences of it being difficult for healthcare professionals without a good knowledge of systematic reviewing to write the summary of the review. A solution seems to be that the healthcare professionals provide the clinical scenarios and then the Cochrane Group adds the summary of the Cochrane Review.

In all cases it is important to:

- Cite the full Cochrane Review in the summary, preferably as the first reference
- For original summaries not written by the authors of the Cochrane review; ensure that the article clearly states that the authors of the summary are different to the authors of the Cochrane review to which it relates.
- For summaries that include both a publication of a short version of a Cochrane Review alongside an original commentary; ensure that these two parts are separated and made clear that they are by different authors.

3. Working with original authors and Cochrane Review Groups

Re-publications of a short version: The CRG and Cochrane authors will be notified of the intention to publish a direct copy of the short version of a review through the co-publication request form.

Original summaries of Cochrane reviews: For original summaries published outside the Cochrane Review Group that produced the original Review (e.g. by Geographic Group or Fields etc) there is no standard process for how to include the original Cochrane Review authors and CRG staff. If possible, it is courteous to inform CRGs and Review authors as early as possible in the process, especially if you would like them to review and comment on the summary. The CRGs appreciate as much notice as possible to fit the work into their plans. There was good

Summaries of Cochrane Reviews in journals – April 2021

experience of this noted between Cochrane Fields (e.g. Rehabilitation and Nursing) and the CRGs (e.g. Cochrane Cystic Fibrosis and Genetic Disorders Review Group).

However, where the review summary is an original commentary by someone outside the author team, it is not strictly necessary to involve the Cochrane Review authors. It is acknowledged that there may also be occasions where this is not possible (such as when the content is published in a different language) and so a balanced approach is necessary.

Once the summary has been published, the CRG should always be made aware of the publication so that they know how the Review has been used to support the reporting their reach back to their funders.

4. Review summaries in languages other than English

Re-publication of a short version: If you want to create or re-publish a Review summary in languages other than English, contact the [Cochrane Translation Group](#) responsible for that language about your plans.

- If a translation already exists, let them know that you want to re-use it.
- If there is no existing or planned translation by the Translation Group, you are welcome to translate, but please let the Translation Group know so that they can add it to Cochrane Library

Once the short version has been published please let the Translation Group know as they may be able to help disseminate.

Original summaries of a Cochrane review: if you are translating an original summary into a language of one of the Cochrane Translation Groups, please notify them once it is published. They may be able to help disseminate. In addition, if there are any Cochrane Groups in countries that speak the language of your summary, please let them know about the publication.

5. Ways of sharing the review summaries

Awareness of existing summaries within Cochrane

Across the meetings there was a desire to have clearer visibility of the summaries that had been written across Cochrane in order to minimise duplication of effort (e.g. where two Cochrane groups are both writing summaries of the same review) and to promote summaries of reviews which may be relevant to their stakeholders (e.g. Rehabilitation summaries may also be interesting for Cochrane Work). However, the process must minimise additional burden to the Groups.

There is no current process for this and is something that the Knowledge Translation Team, Editorial and Methods Department, Wiley and representatives from Cochrane Groups producing summaries could work on.

Sharing summaries with external audiences

Some Cochrane Groups noted that they listed all their summaries on their Cochrane websites (e.g. Cochrane Insurance Medicine, Cochrane Rehabilitation).

The question of whether the summary could be linked to the Cochrane Review in the Cochrane Library was raised. It was felt that separating by audience may be helpful too. Monaz is

Summaries of Cochrane Reviews in journals – April 2021

undergoing a review of the ‘related content’ section this year and will consider this and come back to this group if there are questions.

6. Evaluating the success of the review summaries

There was a clear desire to try to evaluate whether the review summaries were effective as ways of translating knowledge. The experience of the group included:

- **Cochrane Belgium:** there hadn’t been much enthusiasm from the journal in terms of evaluating these articles so they were having difficulty finding out information like the page reads or what the audience thinks of Cochrane corners. Without information from readers it was difficult to understand what they should change to improve the format.
- **Cochrane Work:** the publishers of his (non-indexed) journal ran a survey amongst their readers about the content of their journal and found that the Cochrane Corners were rated very highly. The readers liked the ‘start to end’ case stories and the simple language that was used. He noted that it was difficult to get the case stories but it really helps!
- **Cochrane New Zealand:** the publisher of the journal has told them that one the Cochrane corners was one of the most accessed articles from last year from the journal. Cochrane Croatia commented that they translate the PEARLS produced by New Zealand for their national GP journal.
- **Cochrane KT Department:** has spent some of last year putting together [resources to support evaluation](#) of KT activities. This includes a ‘Cochrane Corner’ specific simple [evaluation table](#) and [evaluation plan](#) based on the work from Cochrane Nursing.

If there are any groups would like to work together to support each other in planning and running an evaluation of their Cochrane Corners, please contact Karen Head (khead@cochrane.org)