Terms of Reference for the Cochrane Advocacy Advisory Group

July 2019

Purpose

The purpose of the Advocacy Advisory Group is to advise on the strategic direction of Cochrane’s advocacy activities.

These advocacy activities might include following and responding to international policy debates; ensuring interaction with global funding fora; issuing global statements on behalf of Cochrane; building capacity among policymakers to use Cochrane evidence; and facilitating and supporting the advocacy work of Cochrane Groups, Networks and Fields.

Goal 3 of Cochrane’s [*Strategy to 2020*](http://community.cochrane.org/organizational-info/resources/strategy-2020) – Advocating for evidence – aims to *‘make Cochrane the ‘home of evidence’ to inform health decision making, build greater recognition of our work, and become the leading advocate for evidence-informed health care’*.

Furthermore, Cochrane has developed a Knowledge Translation (KT) Framework, which elaborates on Strategy to 2020’s fundamental commitment to the dissemination, use and impact of Cochrane evidence. Advocacy activities should link to and align with the KT Framework, particularly with regards to the ‘exchange’ and ‘improving climate’ themes. The KT Framework also identifies the major audiences Cochrane should be serving (consumers and the public; practitioners; policy-makers and healthcare managers; researchers and research funders), which intersect with potential advocacy audiences.  
  
An Advocacy Plan was developed for 2019, with the aim of a full Advocacy Strategy being in place for 2020.

Objectives

* Advise on issues related to the implementation of Cochrane’s Advocacy Plan in 2019 and inform the development of Cochrane’s Advocacy Strategy
* Provide strategic guidance and help decide where advocacy work may add most value
* Help ensure that advocacy activities are evidence-based and reflect the values/needs of the Cochrane community
* Helping identify and facilitate new advocacy opportunities
* Help review advocacy opportunities that Cochrane community members may have alerted us to
* Help nurture and promote a culture of advocacy throughout the Cochrane community
* Act as an advocate and champion for Cochrane

Accountability and reporting

* Produce written reports for the Governing Board as requested
* Hold yearly meeting at colloquium to seek input from the Cochrane community, if feasible
* Administrative support to this group will be provided by the Cochrane Executive Team.

Membership

The group will consist of about 8 members, and aims to bring a broad range of experience in topics, and geographical spread. The aim is to involve individuals who have been actively engaged in advocacy who are able to guide the direction of Cochrane’s advocacy activities.

The Group should include:

* A representative/representatives of the Cochrane Senior Management Team
* A representative from the Cochrane Governing Board
* Cochrane’s Advocacy and Partnership Officer (secretary to the Committee)
* 4 to 6 members of the Cochrane community with knowledge, expertise and connections
* A representative/representatives of the Cochrane Consumer Network

Membership is for a period of two years on a rotating schedule.

Conflict of Interest

Members will act in accordance with the Conflict of Interest Policy for Cochrane Groups which can be found here: [Conflict of Interest](https://community.cochrane.org/organizational-info/resources/policies/conflict-interest-policy-cochrane-groups)

Decision-making

* The Advocacy Advisory Group aims to take decisions by consensus.
* The Advocacy and Partnership Officer consults with the Senior Advisor (Centres, Partnerships, & Fundraising) part of the CEOO team for operational level decisions within the work plan.
* The Advocacy Advisory Group provides strategic and technical guidance to the Advocacy and Partnership Officer for any issues arising from advocacy activities.
* If the Committee does not manage to reach consensus on an issue, or considers a decision to be made too important for decision at Advisory Group level, the CEO will decide or bring the issue to the attention of the Governing Board who will take a final decision. In addition, the CEO will update the Governing Board regularly on any issues arising from the Advocacy Advisory Group that are of strategic importance to Cochrane.

Meetings and communication

* The Advocacy Advisory Group will meet 3-4 times per year by teleconference. Face to face meetings may be organized occasionally should the opportunity arise.
* There may be a need for more frequent meetings initially, while the Advocacy Strategy is being developed. This can be discussed by the Group.
* In between teleconferences the Group may be consulted by email.

Responsibilities of Advocacy Advisory Group members

* Be available to attend 3 to 4 teleconferences per year
* Be responsive to email requests for advice and input
* Act in an advisory role for advocacy activities
* Be responsive to requests from the Advocacy and Partnership Officer to take an active role in advocacy activities
* As is feasible, monitor the environment for new advocacy developments and opportunities and share with the Advocacy and Partnership Officer
* Nurture and promote a culture of advocacy throughout the Cochrane community