Responsibilities of Cochrane’s Central Executive Team (CET) to Cochrane’s Geographic Groups

This document is applicable to Affiliates, Associate Centres, Centres and Networks.

# Preface

Cochrane “Networks”, “Centres”, “Associate Centres” (formerly “Branches”) and “Affiliates” are Cochrane Groups that act for the organization with a focus on a particular country or region. Their primary roles are to represent Cochrane, to support contributors to the collaboration’s work and to facilitate uptake of Cochrane’s outputs within a defined geographical or linguistic area. These Cochrane Groups are resourced by national governments or agencies and/or their host institutions and other funders; through the efforts of their Director(s) and other Group staff who attract core and project funding for Cochrane activities.

The purpose of this document is to define the responsibilities of Cochrane and its Central Executive Team (CET) to assist and support the work of Cochrane Networks, Centres, Associate Centres and Affiliates. The document has been structured around the four goals of [*Strategy to 2020*](http://community.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Cochrane_Strategy%20to%202020_Final%20public%20access%20version_corrected.pdf), which set out Cochrane’s aspirations and priorities; and how the organization plans to achieve its mission to ‘promote evidence-informed health decision making by producing high quality, relevant, accessible systematic reviews and other synthesized evidence’. This document forms part of a package of mutual accountability agreements between Cochrane’s Central Executive and its regional/country representative structures in addition to the Cochrane policies, procedures and operational guidelines already in place (see Appendix 1); and should be read in conjunction with the Collaboration Agreement between the CET and each Centre, and the Strategic Plan of the Centre/Network.

As stated in the Collaboration Agreement, Cochrane will provide the services and support stated below both to the Network/Centre and the Associate Centres and Affiliates they manage.

# Goal 1: Producing evidence

Centres/Networks play an important role in the production of Cochrane evidence through their training and support of Cochrane authors; contribution to priority setting of Review topics through the engagement of local stakeholders; and production of Cochrane evidence through the development of knowledge translation (KT) products and outputs.

**Cochrane’s Central Executive team will:**

### *Support the production of evidence through training for authors and editors*

* 1. Through its Learning & Support Department (L&SD) develop, guide, support and oversee the consistent application and implementation of Cochrane’s training, learning and support strategies, policies and practices;
  2. Support the author and editor training programmes of the Centre/Network by providing access to tools and resources developed by L&SD, and provide e-learning resources to accompany face-to-face training offered;
  3. Support the Centre through the provision of technical solutions, such as webinar software, and a central database to record and manage credentials of learners as well as learning events;
  4. Facilitate the translation of training and other relevant materials into other languages through the provision of a translation infrastructure and a Translations Coordinator.
  5. Support the Director in relation to problem solving where appropriate;

### *Priority setting*

* 1. Create and maintain a Cochrane list of high priority reviews.

# Goal 2: Making our evidence accessible

Centres & Networks contribute significantly to the delivery of *Strategy to 2020*’sGoal 2 by undertaking a significant amount of knowledge translation, communication and dissemination work to ensure the accessibility of Cochrane evidence to their local stakeholders. They are also the structure through which Cochrane’s translation groups operate, allowing the organization to make our evidence accessible to non-English speakers.

**Cochrane’s Central Executive team will:**

### *Communications, dissemination and knowledge translation*

* 1. Oversee the consistent application and implementation of Cochrane’s communications, dissemination and knowledge translation strategies, policies and practices; share best practices; provide resources and support to the Centre/Network for local dissemination and communications activities of Cochrane evidence; and undertaking centrally driven dissemination and communications work where appropriate.
  2. Provide tools to support communications work, such as templates, examples and software, e.g., newsletter mailing software.
  3. Support Centres in the area of communicating and disseminating evidence to local consumers by supporting the Centre/Network’s local consumer engagement work.
  4. Support the Director in relation to problem solving where appropriate.

### *Translating Cochrane Content*

* 1. Establish, implement and oversee a translations strategy for Cochrane’s evidence outputs, websites and other materials; and a Translation Co-ordinator will provide support to the global network of translation teams.
  2. Provide translation tools and training to use these tools (or access to training through a third party where relevant).
  3. Provide specific additional translation resources to a Centre (subject to resources and separate agreements).

# Goal 3: Advocating for evidence

Goal 3 is central to the work of Centres/Networks as they promote Cochrane locally, speak on Cochrane’s behalf, advocate for the use of evidence and build partnerships in their country/region.

**Cochrane’s Central Executive team will:**

### *Cochrane’s profile*

* 1. Establish, oversee and support the implementation of a Spokesperson Policy and a Policy Development Framework to guide Centres/Networks in their representative, communications, advocacy and external affairs work.
  2. Establish, oversee and support the implementation of brand guidelines to help Centres/Networks present themselves and their outputs in a consistent way.
  3. Advise and support the Director and the Centre/Network in relation to communications, media and social media outputs.
  4. Advise and support the Director and the Centre/Network on communications and media management, including problem solving and crisis management where appropriate.

### *Advocacy*

* 1. Establish advocacy positions for the organization. Cochrane’s Communications and External Affairs Department (CEAD) will provide advice, guidance, tools and resources to assist Centres/Networks in their work advocating for evidence and promoting Cochrane.

### *Partnerships*

* 1. Establish a Partnerships Policy, a Framework for the management of Partnerships, and an annual Partnership Plan to lead and guide Centres/Networks in their own partnerships.
  2. CEAD will offer advice and support to Centres/Networks with their local partnership development work.

### *Impact*

* 1. Provide systems to increase and monitor the impact of Cochrane Reviews, and provide feedback on the impact of Cochrane Reviews.

# Goal 4: Building an effective & sustainable organisation

Centres/Networks play a critical role in supporting Cochrane collaborators, contributors and members; and in liaising with funders to help achieve financial sustainability both for the Centre and for the other Groups in the Centre’s country or region.

**Cochrane’s Central Executive team will:**

* 1. Establish and maintain a clear organizational structure, in which the Centre/Network’s and CET’s roles are clear, and in which Centres/Networks have an opportunity to input into strategic developments and in the development of organizational policies.
  2. Engage with, advise and support the Centre/Network Director and his/her staff in their work, including addressing problems or complaints, and helping with conflict resolution.
  3. Respond to requests in a timely, efficient, and effective manner.
  4. Arrange at least one Centre Directors’ Board meeting per year.
  5. Maintain a collegial, respectful relationship with all Centres/Networks via polite, timely communications in accordance with the principles of Cochrane’s *Charter of Good Management*.

### *Reporting and record keeping*

* 1. Manage the monitoring and reporting processes of Centres/Networks and their Associate Centres and Affiliates. Wherever possible, minimizing the effort required by Centres/Networks to fulfil monitoring and reporting activities, and utilising data provided to funding institutions where possible.
  2. Use reporting and monitoring data to provide feedback to the Centres/Networks to assist their work.

### *Arrangements with funders and third parties*

* 1. Support the Centres/Networks in discussions with external stakeholders if required.

Appendices

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## Appendix 1: Cochrane Policies

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| “Cochrane Centres, Branches & Networks Structure & Function Review” Paper | The 2016 Structure & Function Review established a revised set of functions and structures for Cochrane’s geographic and representational Groups (<http://community.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/inline-files/centres___branches_structure___function_review_-_final_-_june_2016.pdf> ). |
| Cochrane’s *Charter of Good Management Practice* | See: <http://community.cochrane.org/organizational-info/resources/charter-of-good-management-practice> |
| “Cochrane Organisational Policy Manual” | Resource that brings together Cochrane's organisational policies ((<http://community.cochrane.org/organisational-policy-manual>) |
| “Cochrane Editorial and Publishing Policy Resource” or “EPPR” | Resource that brings together Cochrane’s editorial and publishing policies (e.g. conflict of interest and Cochrane Reviews, plagiarism), as well as general information about the editorial and publishing processes, and the published products, including the Cochrane Library; updated and added to from time to time (<http://www.cochrane.org/editorial-and-publishing-policy-resource>). |
| “Cochrane Spokesperson Policy” | Cochrane’s Spokesperson Policy was approved by its Steering Group in May 2015 (<http://community-archive.cochrane.org/organisational-policy-manual/2113-acting-cochrane-spokesperson>). |
| “Cochrane Partnership Policy” | Cochrane’s Partnership Policy was approved by its Steering Group in January 2016 (<http://community.cochrane.org/sites/default/files/uploads/inline-files/Cochrane%20Partnership%20Policy.pdf> ). |
| “Membership scheme” | Cochrane’s Membership Scheme will be launched within the organization in October 2016 and worldwide in Quarter 1, 2017 (<http://community.cochrane.org/organizational-info/resources/membership>). |

Version control

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