



Interim Chief Executive Officer's Report

Judith Brodie
27th October 2021

Trusted evidence.
Informed decisions.
Better health.



1. A transformation agenda and the *Strategy for Change*
2. Achieving sustainability and resilience through re-organization



Cochrane is brilliant and crucial

“Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.”

Harriet Tubman

“Change is the law of life, and those who look only to the past and present are certain to miss the future”

John F. Kennedy

“The measure of intelligence is the ability to change”

Albert Einstein

The transformation agenda

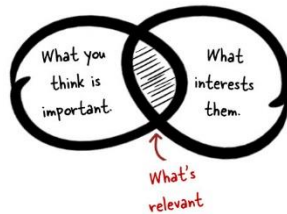
- Introduction of the *Strategy for Change*
- A **Review and Re-organization** across Cochrane to **reduce costs** and inefficiencies, and seek new and **more streamlined ways of working**, to include:
 - Substantial work on improving editorial & publishing systems and processes – the ‘future of evidence synthesis’ in Cochrane
 - Consideration of how we achieve an Open Access future
 - A review & restructure of evidence production; and the Central Executive Team
- Investment in organizational **fundraising** to grow and diversify our income and increase sustainability

How will we transform?

By focusing on changes the organization needs to make
in the next couple of years to remain sustainable *in the long-term*

And maintaining commitment to the key principles of:

| COLLABORATION | RELEVANCE | INTEGRITY | QUALITY |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--|
| Underpins everything we do locally and globally | The right evidence at the right time in the right format | Independent and transparent | Reviewing and improving what we do, maintaining rigour and trust |



Ambitions for 2021-2023 defined in the Strategy for Change:



Strategy to 2020

Consultation with the Cochrane Community through 2020 on strategic priorities

Strategy for Change: 2021-2023

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Our Vision | Our vision is a world of better health for all people where decisions about health and care are informed by high-quality evidence | | | |
| Our Mission | We are an independent, diverse, global organization that collaborates to produce trusted synthesized evidence, make it accessible to all, and advocate for its use | | | |
| Key Principles | COLLABORATION Underpin everything we do locally and globally | RELEVANCE The right evidence at the right time in the right format | INTEGRITY Independent and transparent | QUALITY Receiving and ensuring what we do, maintaining rigour and trust |
| Our Goals | GOAL 1: Producing trusted evidence To produce trusted and timely synthesized evidence addressing the most important questions for health and care decision making | GOAL 2: Advocating for evidence To be a leading global advocate for evidence-informed health and care | GOAL 3: Informing health and care decisions To inform health and care decisions by making our evidence accessible, usable, and available to all | |
| Objectives for Change | We will deliver Goal 1 by: 1. Delivering timely, high-quality responses to priority global health and care questions, which the users of our evidence help define 2. Streamlining production of reviews and simplifying editorial systems and processes | We will deliver Goal 2 by: 3. Advocating for evidence-informed decision-making and integrity in research, including by pursuing high-impact partnerships and activities | We will deliver Goal 3 by: 4. Making all Cochrane Reviews Open Access by 2023 at the latest without placing the financial burden on review authors 5. Improving user experience by increasing the accessibility and usability of our products | |
| Enabling Objectives | Our Objectives for Change will be enabled by: Improved efficiency Reducing editorial and production complexities, and simplifying organizational key to Cochrane's work Sustainability Realizing our Open Access ambitions by moving towards a new organizational model that delivers long-term sustainability for the whole organization Increased awareness and impact Increasing the visibility and profile of Cochrane globally, demonstrating our value meeting the needs of future generations Enhanced accountability Strengthening communications and engagement with Cochrane members, supporters, and industry, and making a commitment through the evidence we produce and our care priorities and evidence health inequalities | | | |

Approved by Cochrane Governing Board, June 2021

Strategy for Change 2021-2023



Strategy for Change: 2021-2023

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| Enabling Objectives | Our Objectives for Change will be enabled by: | | | |
| | Improved efficiency | Reducing editorial and production complexities, and simplifying organizational structures to support the global collaboration that is key to Cochrane's work | | |
| | Sustainability | Realizing our Open Access ambitions by moving towards a new organizational business model that reflects expanded fundraising and delivers long-term sustainability for the whole organization | | |
| | Increased awareness and impact | Increasing the visibility and profile of Cochrane globally; demonstrating our value and impact to decision-makers and funders; and meeting the needs of future generations | | |
| | Enhanced accountability | Strengthening communications and engagement with Cochrane members, supporters, staff and beneficiaries; improving diversity and inclusion; and making a commitment through the evidence we produce and how we collaborate to addressing global health and care priorities and reducing health inequities | | |

Approved by Cochrane Governing Board, June 2021

Highlights in delivering our goals 2020-21

GOAL 1: Producing trusted evidence

- Fantastic, collaborative response to COVID-19
- Shaping together the future of evidence production
- A focus on editorial integrity and independence
- Citizen scientists identifying relevant studies for inclusion in reviews in weekly Cochrane Crowd challenges

GOAL 2: Advocating for evidence

- Cochrane Convenes: learning from COVID & looking forward
- Strong partnership with World Health Organization (WHO)
- Partner in World Evidence-based Healthcare day, calling on individuals and organizations round the world to take action

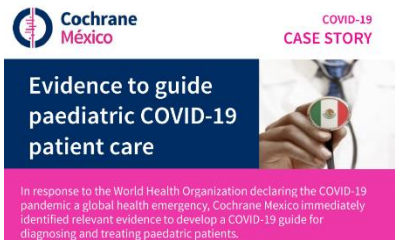


Cochrane Oral Health COVID-19 CASE STORY

Evidence to help reopen dental services

Many dental services across the world were closed at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. This was to keep patients and dental professionals safe but left a lot of people without dental care.

We collated international guidance to help policy-makers decide when and how to reopen dental services safely.



Cochrane México COVID-19 CASE STORY

Evidence to guide paediatric COVID-19 patient care

In response to the World Health Organization declaring the COVID-19 pandemic a global health emergency, Cochrane Mexico immediately identified relevant evidence to develop a COVID-19 guide for diagnosing and treating paediatric patients.



Cochrane Germany COVID-19 CASE STORY

Working together to share research evidence

Cochrane Germany is working with university medical centres, the media, researchers and other Cochrane Groups to share evidence about COVID-19 in a user-friendly format. Working together helps us all reach a wider audience.



Collaborating in response to COVID-19: editorial and methods initiatives across Cochrane

cochranelibrary.com



Our crowd is made up of valued contributors who curate high-quality health evidence.

Volunteers from around the world help us identify the research we need to determine if a treatment or diagnostic test works.



Highlights in delivering our goals 2020-21

GOAL 3: Informing health and care decisions

- Re-commitment to Open Access by 2025
- Plain Language Summary Project: to see whether a team of professional writers could improve the quality, consistency, and translatability of Cochrane PLSs. The project has produced a template for writing PLSs. We would like as many people as possible to test it and tell us what they think about it – see community.cochrane.org.

And many more achievements - as you will hear today



The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews remains the **most** referenced medical journal on Wikipedia

Wikipedia references 53% of all Cochrane Reviews published in the past 10 years

Cochrane and the World Health Organization (WHO):

86% of new WHO guidelines were informed by Cochrane Reviews in 2020. Overall, **701 reviews** from **45 Cochrane Groups** have informed **229 WHO accredited guidelines** from 2008 to 2020.

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An organization-wide review and re-organization to address a number of challenges

Financial

- Commitment to Open Access, which will significantly affect the Charity's income from 2025
- Cochrane Group income is also less secure
- The Charity has been spending down reserves as planned, but we need to reduce that spending to remain sustainable
- We need to diversify our income through investing in fundraising and product development

Efficiency and impact

- Significant and organic growth of Cochrane has resulted in complexity and inefficiencies
- COVID has demonstrated the value and importance of fast responses to health challenges – we need to streamline review production to make this possible
- We need to look to what the future could be for information and evidence - and anticipate and adapt
- We have to be clear on our priorities and focus on the right things
- Increased competition and need to fundraise => even more important to demonstrate our value and impact

The focus of review and re-organization

Members & Supporters

- Continue to support growth
- Focus on improving diversity and inclusion

Cochrane Groups

- Focus first on changes to Cochrane Review Groups & Networks (evidence production) before addressing other Group-types

Central Executive Team (Charity staff)

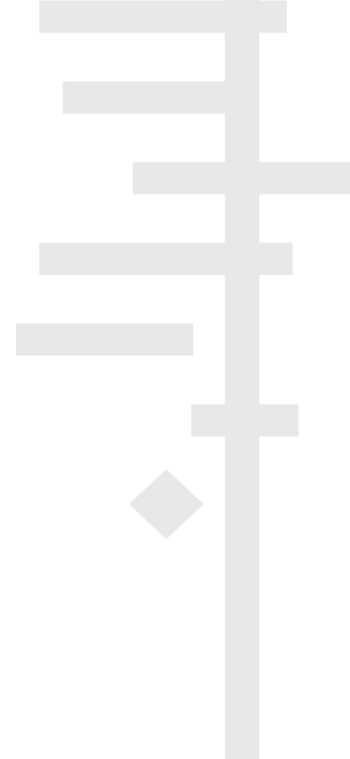
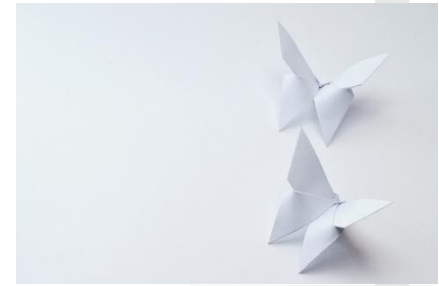
- Simplification of structure
- Reduction in costs and staff
- Investment in capacity for fundraising



There will be fewer Cochrane Groups in the future. The major funder of UK-based Cochrane Review Groups, the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR), will cease funding in its current form by 2023. Other Group funders worldwide are indicating similar plans. Many Group staff will lose their current roles with Cochrane.

Although Cochrane does not employ staff of Groups, we recognize this loss. We will do what we can to support people through change.

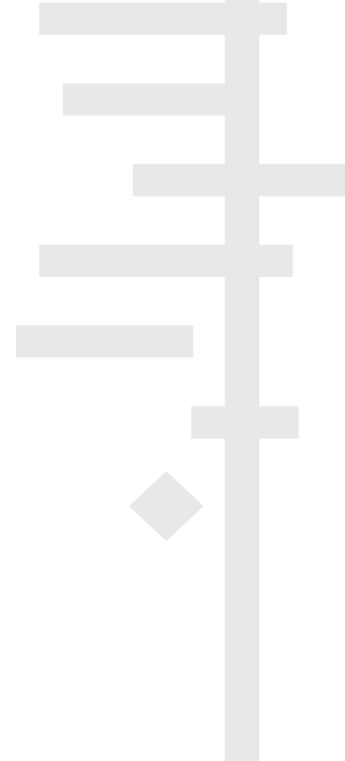
There is also change for the Central Executive Team, which will be reduced in size.

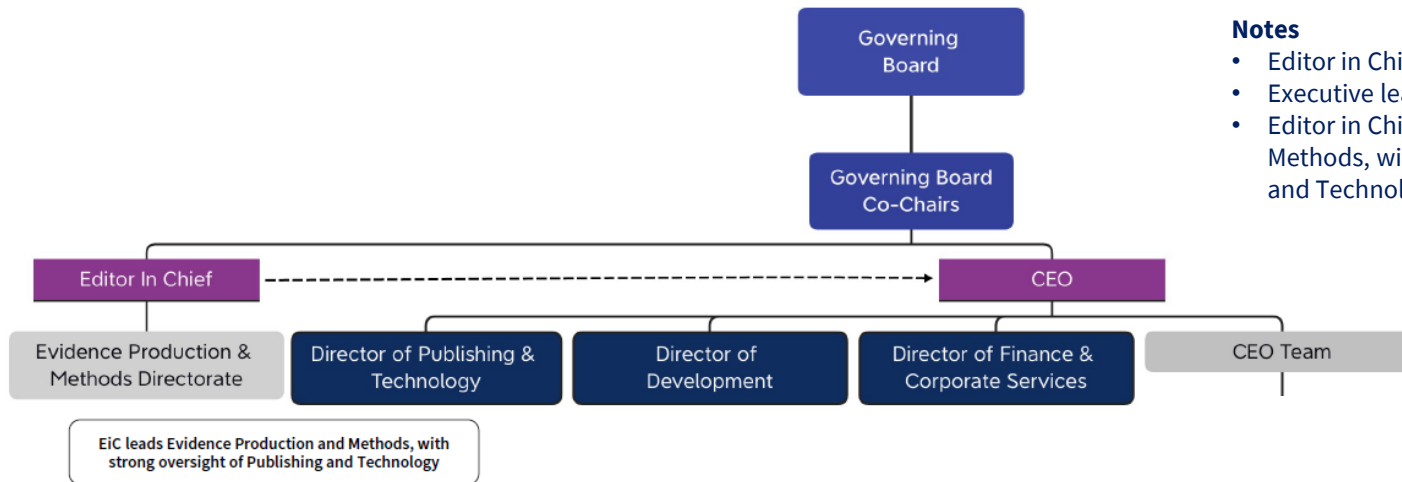


Central Executive Team restructure

Over £2million GBP saved for 2022, rising to £2.7million GBP in 2023 (staff and non-staff savings)

- July – process launched, led by senior management, supported by advisory consultants
- August – consultations with staff, Governing Board and advisors
- September – proposal approved by Board to be shared with staff for consultation and feedback
- October/November - implementation





Notes

- Editor in Chief reports to Co-chairs
- Executive leadership team of 5
- Editor in Chief leads Evidence Production and Methods, with strong oversight of Publishing and Technology



What impact will the CET restructure have on the Cochrane community?

- The new Development Director and Directorate will lead the development of a **global fundraising strategy** with the aim of increasing funding for Cochrane, engaging and supporting all parts of the community
- Advocacy, communications, and *Engagement, Learning & Support* present an opportunity to **strengthen internal communications and collaboration**
- The **future of evidence synthesis** change programme may lead to further changes in structures or functions
- Reduction in central Knowledge Translation capacity, but a new Communications Manager role has a remit to promote Knowledge Translation (KT) across Cochrane in line with the current KT strategy, ensuring it is embedded and integrated; and supporting local strategies and activities. **Everyone has a role in KT**, promoting the use and uptake of evidence in policy and practice.
- Support to the language translation teams remains

More about fundraising

- ❖ A global approach – engaging the community to increase global funding for Cochrane’s work
- ❖ In line with our Conflict of Interest policies
- ❖ A strategic priority: a Director-level appointment in the Central Executive Team
- ❖ This Director will lead organizational culture change as we adapt to access new sources of funding. It will require Cochrane to develop a much greater focus on its impact
- ❖ Consortia and partnerships with other organizations who share our values will maximise opportunities from major funders
- ❖ There are real prospects for success (*having commissioned a review of potential funders*)
- ❖ Need to invest now – returns will flow in 2-4 years

“**Fundraising** or **fund-raising** is the process of seeking and gathering voluntary financial contributions by engaging individuals, businesses, charitable foundations, or governmental agencies”

Wikipedia, 2021

Culture and ways of working: CET focus for 2022

Likely to include:

- ❖ **Strengthening community** communications, engagement and collaboration
 - ❖ Becoming more **enterprising and entrepreneurial**, and fundraising oriented
 - ❖ Better understanding of **costs, value, impact** and contribution of activities
 - ❖ Becoming more **flexible and adaptive** to change
 - ❖ Ensuring the culture allows and encourages **debate, feedback and engagement**
 - ❖ Ensure the new structure works well, adapting if needs be, and promoting **cross-team working**
 - ❖ Focussing on how we become a **diverse, happy, healthy and productive** workforce
 - ❖ Establishing **new ways to connect** and meet in the context of a (mainly) virtual office
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- **The Consumer Network and Council will initiate the process to develop our community values**

Thank you!

Judith Brodie

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