



Cochrane Council

Meeting by videoconference

16 May 2022; 08:45-10:30 GMT+1

AGENDA

<https://community.cochrane.org/organizational-info/people/cochrane-council/agendas-and-minutes>

MEMBERS ATTENDING:

1. Santiago Castiello de Obeso (Early Career Professionals Network)
2. Ahmad Sofi-Mahmudi (Early Career Professionals Network)
3. Montserrat Conde (Fields)
4. Stefano Negrini (Fields & Co-Chair)
5. Ndi Euphrasia Ebai-atuh (Consumer Network)
6. Jack Nunn (Consumer Network)
7. Vanessa Jordan (Authors)
8. Agustin Ciapponi (Authors)
9. Lotty Hooft (Geographic Groups Directors)
10. Erik von Elm (Geographic Groups Directors)
11. Valerie Wells (Information Specialists)
12. René Spijker (Information Specialists)
13. Silvia Minozzi (Methods Groups)
14. Cinzia Del Giovane, (Methods Groups)
15. Gail Quinn (Managing Editors)
16. Liz Dooley (Managing Editors)

NON-VOTING ATTENDEES:

17. Catherine Marshall, Governing Board Co-Chair
18. Judith Brodie, Interim Chief Executive Officer
19. Karla Soares-Weiser, Editor in Chief
20. Lucie Binder, Head of Governance
21. Chris Champion, Head of Engagement, Learning & Support
22. Veronica Bonfigli, Administrative Officer
23. Sylvia de Haan, Head of Advocacy, Communications and Partnerships

APOLOGIES RECEIVED:

1. Robert Dellavalle (Co-ordinating Editors & **Co-Chair**)
2. Tracey Howe, Governing Board Co-Chair
3. Jo Morrison (Co-ordinating Editors)

The Council aims to ensure that Cochrane Groups retain an effective voice in Cochrane's leadership and strategic decision-making. The purpose of the Council is to provide:

- A forum for Cochrane Groups to consider high-level matters affecting Cochrane as a whole;
- A mechanism to raise matters and provide input to the Governing Board on behalf of Cochrane Groups and members; and
- A forum to consider matters at the request of the Board and inform Board deliberations.

The following constituencies are represented by two seats each on the Council:

- Author Forum
- Co-ordinating Editors board
- Consumers Executive
- Early Career Professionals Network
- Fields Executive
- Geographic Group Directors Executive
- Information Specialists Executive
- Managing Editors Executive
- Methods Executive

Declarations of Interest:

Council members must declare conflicts of interest related to their role on the Council, which are published on the Cochrane Community website and are updated annually or when circumstances change: <https://community.cochrane.org/organizational-info/people/conflict-interest/council>. Participants at Council meetings are also required to declare any possible material interests that could give rise to conflict in relation to any item under discussion at the start of each meeting. All interests so disclosed are recorded in the minutes. Conflicted members may be required to absent themselves from all or part of the discussion of the matter at the discretion of the chair of the meeting.

Use of a Consent Agenda:

A consent agenda groups the routine, procedural, informational and self-explanatory non-controversial items typically found in an agenda. These items are then presented to the Council in a single item, allowing anyone to request that a specific item be moved to the full agenda for individual attention. Other items, particularly those requiring strategic thought, decision making or action, are handled as usual.

Consent agendas are used because they help streamline meetings and allow the focus to be on substantive issues. Not all agendas will have Consent Agendas – it depends on the papers under discussion.

Use of Live Captions on Zoom

Once the meeting has started, you can turn on the Live Captions by clicking on **CC Live Transcript** and then on **Enable Auto-Transcription** on the main Zoom toolbar at the bottom of the screen.

Council priorities for 2022:

- 1) Support the operationalization of plans to restructure the organization under the *future of evidence synthesis* program of work and ensure the voice of Cochrane Groups is heard as this work is progressed.
- 2) Reconsider the Council's own role, representation, and terms of reference in light of the changes to the organizational structure.
- 3) Deliver a set of organizational values for Governing Board approval.
- 4) Improve Council communications to Cochrane Groups and the wider community.
- 5) Contribute to the strategy to deliver Open Access to Cochrane Reviews whilst maintaining the financial sustainability of Cochrane Groups and the Charity.

Estimated time (mins)	AGENDA:			
	ITEM		INTRODUCED BY:	PURPOSE:
15'	COFFEE (OPTIONAL)			
10'	OPENING BUSINESS:			
	1.	Welcome, Apologies, Declarations of Interest for this meeting	Council Co-Chairs	For information
	2.	Approval of the Agenda		For approval
	3.	Approval of the minutes from 2 March 2022 meeting		For approval
	4.	Council Co-Chair Report [VERBAL REPORT] Including: 4.1. Board and Council Co-Chair matters		For information and discussion
	SUBSTANTIVE BUSINESS:			
25'	5.	2022 COUNCIL PRIORITY 1: Support the operationalization of plans to restructure the organization under the <i>future of evidence synthesis</i> program of work and ensure the voice of Cochrane Groups is heard as this work is progressed. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Report from the Editor in Chief [VERBAL REPORT]Discussion of issues raised in Council constituency reports	Karla Soares-Weiser	For discussion
5'	6.	2022 COUNCIL PRIORITY 2: Reconsider the Council’s own role, representation, and terms of reference in light of the changes to the organizational structure. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Update on the planned governance review [VERBAL REPORT]	Lucie Binder	For information
5'	7.	2022 COUNCIL PRIORITY 3: Deliver a set of organizational values for Governing Board approval.	Jack Nunn & Judith Brodie	For information

		- Update on plans [VERBAL REPORT]		
25'	8.	2022 COUNCIL PRIORITY 4: Improve Council communications to Cochrane Groups and the wider community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plans for improving internal communications [VERBAL REPORT] - Council constituency reports: addressing inconsistencies in submission from Council representatives 	Sylvia de Haan & Managing Editor representatives	For information PAPERS: 16052022-4 16052022-5 16052022-6 16052022-7
10'	RECURRING BUSINESS:			
	9.	Constituency Reports: 9.1. Discussion of issues identified not otherwise covered by the Agenda	All members	For information and discussion
	10.	Any Other Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Membership & Awards Committee: Council representatives 	Council Co-Chairs Chris Champion	For discussion
	11.	Date of next meeting: Informal meeting on 15 June 22:45-00:30 BST	Council Co-Chairs	For information
10'		COUNCIL ONLY TIME		

Supporting Papers:

1) AGENDA ITEM 3: Council minutes:

<https://community.cochrane.org/organizational-info/people/cochrane-council/agendas-and-minutes>

2) AGENDA ITEM 4: Council constituency reports: Papers 16052022-4/5/6/7/8

Constituency Reports:

Constituency	Report received?	Council paper
Author Forum	-	
Co-ordinating Editors board	-	160522-8: chat summary of 28 March Co-Eds meeting
Consumers Executive	-	
Early Career Professionals Network	-	
Fields Executive	YES	160522-6
Geographic Group Directors Executive	-	
Information Specialists Executive	YES	160522-7
Managing Editors Executive	YES	160522-5
Methods Executive	YES	160522-4

[CONCIL PAPER 16052022-4]

Cochrane Methods Executive, Methods Groups and Methods Community Report to Council:

May 2022

Achievements since last formal meeting

Updates from the Methods Executive and Methods Support Unit

- [SynQ \(Synthesis Questions reporting checklist and guide\)](#) is available on Task Exchange for comment and feedback. This is from **Statistics** and is one of [five collaborative projects](#) aimed at delivering practical resources to help authors and editors in areas found to be challenging.
- The **Methods Executive** met on **23 March**, which included the following highlights (next meeting is on **17 May**):
 - Discussion with Karla on communication with the methods community about the future of evidence synthesis changes.
 - New methods proposals on QUADAS2 (**Screening and Diagnostic Tests**) and recommendations for random-effects methods (**Statistics**) discussed.
 - 2022 Methods Symposium - shortlisted for October on the topic diversifying our methods arsenal when using other types of data/evidence. Novel ways to plan and search that can be used in scoping exercises (e.g. if you are considering using NRSIs, qualitative evidence, etc.) or developing your search. More details to follow soon.

Updates from Methods Groups:

- **Screening and Diagnostic Tests** have [released three more chapters](#) of the new version of the *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Diagnostic Test Accuracy*; chapter 7 on searching for and selecting studies, chapter 12 on presenting findings and chapter 14 on writing a plain language summary.
- **Statistics** are joining the Methods Support Unit for two upcoming web clinics. One on a checklist and guide for defining the questions to be addressed in the synthesis of public health intervention reviews (**14 April**) and one on the development of materials to facilitate presentation and statistical synthesis when data are not amendable to meta-analysis (**11 August**); how to register and full schedule through 2020 [here](#).
- Tianjing Li (**Comparing Multiple Interventions - NMA**) and **Bias** are hosting two-day training on [assessing bias in randomised and non-randomised studies](#), Colorado, USA, with leads from Bias and Comparing Multiple Interventions. Open to all, course fee applies.

Challenges, including issues for the Council to discuss

None

Priorities for the next 3 months

In the last Methods Exec teleconference, we discussed with Karla that two groups within the methods community would benefit from specific webinars dedicated to their questions and concerns they could have about the restructure of Cochrane groups and their roles:

1. Methodologists supporting Cochrane Reviews
2. Convenors and staff of Methods Groups

Ella Fleming is working to facilitate the organization of one the webinars that have been planned by Karla dedicated to concerns and problems specific for these two groups. She is going to email statisticians, methods editors, other methodologists and information specialists who support CRGs asking for their availability to attend the dedicated webinar and a list of concern, doubts or questions to be recollected, collated and sent in advance to Karla before the webinar.

Dear Lucie,

Thank you for the email.

Gail and I decided not to contact MEs in preparation for the next Council meeting, as we did not receive responses to the MEs' issues we presented at the last formal Council meeting as the issues were not discussed. See pages 7-9.

With that in mind, we do not have any achievements to report since the last formal meeting.

Our priorities for the next three months are two-fold:

1. Gather responses to the MEs comments and queries presented at the last formal Council meeting, and communicate the responses to MEs.
2. The well-being of our colleagues as we transition to the work model proposed by Cochrane, and impending job losses.

Challenges remain unchanged, both on the review production side, and the issues MEs face with job losses and the transition to the new Cochrane structure.

Kind regards,
Liz

From: Council <council-bounces@lists.cochrane.org> **On Behalf Of** Lucie Binder via Council
Sent: Thursday, 5 May 2022 5:52 PM
To: Council Secretary via Council <council@lists.cochrane.org>
Subject: [Council] Preparing for the Council meeting on 16 May - request for your input by 5 May

[CAUTION: External Sender]

Dear all,

The next Council meeting will be on 16 May. You can check the timings and schedule, here: <https://community.cochrane.org/organizational-info/people/cochrane-council/agendas-and-minutes>. Please let me know if you will not be attending this meeting.

I am working with Stefano and Bob to put together the agenda. Items that will be covered include:

- Communications issues between Council representatives and constituents, and plans for improving internal communications more generally in Cochrane
- A regular update on the future of evidence synthesis program

Please let me know if you have any other items you would like the Council to discuss.

In addition, significant issues raised through your constituency reports will be addressed. A reminder that you should submit short written reports on behalf of your constituency covering the following:

1. **Achievements since last formal meeting (2 March)**
2. **Challenges, including issues for the Council to discuss**
3. **Priorities for the next three months**

If you have nothing to report, please also let me know this. All reports are published on the Cochrane Community website. The deadline for your reports is **Tuesday 10 May**.

Many thanks and best wishes,
Lucie

Lucie Binder
Head of Governance
Cochrane Central Executive



[COUNCIL PAPER 16052022-6]
Report to Council by Fields Executive
10 May 2022



The Fields Executive has had two meetings in 2022. Members of central executive also attended; this has provided essential active linkage for cohesive engagement during this time of change within the organisation.

Fields community attended the first of the planned series of webinars about the Future of Cochrane Evidence Synthesis. Fields are actively engaging in all the initiatives the Board is proposing, with the aim of making their expertise available to the future of Cochrane.

Fields Executive is up-dating a summary of relevant Fields information including key stakeholders, review production, dissemination and their last three months main activities. This document will be submitted to Council and sent to future@cochrane.org before the next Future of Cochrane Evidence Synthesis webinar on 26 May 2022.

The Field's Executive has prepared the following questions, comments and proposals in order to make as much information as possible available to Council, and share what is happening with Fields and what they feel is important to protect in the new structure of Cochrane.

Challenges, including issues for the Council to discuss

- Will it be possible for Fields to remain an individual entity if part of a Thematic Group (TG)?
- Many Fields will need to keep their identity and brand so as not to lose funding, how will this work?
- Fields could be considered TGs. Big stakeholders are looking for big issue areas that may not correspond to current Fields. However, it is important to bear in mind that there are also stakeholders looking for smaller TGs, this should not be overlooked.
- The Field's executive feel it would be very useful to receive formal information about the restructuring of teams and departments, as an example: The Knowledge Translation department.
- The Next generation of Cochrane professionals and leaders needs to include methodologists, clinicians - that need groups coherent with their specific understanding -, and early degree professionals who should be involved in all groups. It is easier for people to engage in smaller groups, whereas they tend to get lost in bigger ones (TGs on big issues?).
- It is important for Council and the Board to communicate with individual Executives since the present organization may change in the near future.
- There is concern that the Cochrane Library that could go too global, losing sight of the 'smaller' themes which have been a big part of the Library content.

Priorities for the next three months

- Regular Fields Executive meetings will continue including engagement with central executive and other groups.
- Fields community will continue to attend and contribute to the webinars and related activities related to the Future of Cochrane Evidence Synthesis programme of work, with a specific focus on developments around Thematic Groups.
- Fields will up-date their activities in the excel file as an ongoing process.



[COUNCIL PAPER 16052022-7]

Information Specialist Executive report for Council 10th May 2022

Activities

- We held our regular IS Executive Meeting on April 21st
- We held a virtual IS Coffee Meeting on April 20th which provided an opportunity for Information Specialists to meet online and raise any issues or concerns.
- The first joint meeting of the Cochrane Information Retrieval Methods Group (IRMG) and the IS Exec was held on April 27th. Amongst other issues, we discussed the recruitment of the post of Cochrane Information Specialist Co-Convenor for the IRMG; the impact of the loss of the IS support team and issues of mutual concern around future Cochrane developments.
- We held a constructive and supportive meeting with Toby Lasserson, Deputy Editor in Chief, Cochrane Library on May 5th. We discussed issues related to the future of Information specialist in the new Cochrane structure.

Future activities

- Meeting with UK based IS at the Cochrane UK in Manchester in May - Cochrane: collaborating for the future.
- Further meetings with Robin Featherstone (Cochrane Editorial and Methods Department) and Anna Noel-Storr (Central Executive) on possible future employment for Information Specialist by the Central team rather than in Evidence Synthesis Units.
- Webinar on Search Tools as part of the collaborative Continuing Professional Development series with NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) CADTH (Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health) and AHRQ EPC (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality / Evidence-based Practice Centres) 11th May
- The next IS Exec is scheduled for 25th May

Challenges

- Dealing with the uncertainty around the *Future of Evidence Synthesis* and its impact on Information Specialist.
- Several UK based Information Specialist have already left Cochrane due to the uncertainty around the future of UK based Cochrane groups. This is an issue of significant concern for Cochrane and does impact directly on the sustainability of the Executive going forward.
- Communication and real engagement with Executives is essential to ensure the success of the proposed changes to Cochrane

Priorities

Representing and communicating with all IS on the future of Cochrane during a period of significant change.

Council paper 160522-8

Co-Eds Online Meeting with Karla Soares-Weiser, 28 March 2022

Chat text from the meeting:

21:07:43 From Roger Soll to Everyone:

I greatly appreciate your taking the time for these sessions...especially as a non UK group

21:14:36 From Zarko Alfirovic to Everyone:

How can we ensure that we have adequate communication regarding emerging thematic groups to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure that all relevant stakeholders have an opportunity to contribute. Is 'confidentiality' and competition be a big problem in this respect?

21:16:12 From Emma Sydenham (Injuries) to Everyone:

Dear Karla, I think there has been some confusion in the communication thus far. The strategic plans have indicated that Cochrane does not want 52 Groups going forward. It is not clear whether Cochrane wants CRGs to continue if the existing staff are willing/interested in carrying on?

21:16:33 From Karla Soares-Weiser to Everyone:

That is one of the ideas we are discussing - creating specific webinars and whenever possible to identify ways of meeting face-to-face. All results of discussions will form the topic of workshops later on (3-6 months) before a final decision

21:21:05 From Jacob Rosenberg to Everyone:

In Denmark we have 4 CRGs, and we are all willing to continue as such. We currently have funding, and if this structure with the 4 CRGs is changing then our funding is actually in danger of going away. So it may actually be a little dangerous to force a new structure through when looking from the Danish point of view. Maybe it is a similar situation in other countries where funding is secured?

21:23:06 From Emma Dennett to Everyone:

Where is the money coming from for the thematic groups?

21:24:13 From Alex Todhunter-Brown to Everyone:

I'm part of the "vascular" thematic group which has been mentioned. There is a question of what comes first - the thematic group or the funding. We have identified UK topic specific funding we could apply for - but don't feel we can apply without being able to explicitly say that we will definitely be recognised as a thematic group.

21:25:10 From Jan Hoving (v2) to Everyone:

Jacob, yes we have a similar challenge. New funding is coming and our funders like to 'recognize' our CRG's topic

21:26:01 From GRAZIELLA FILIPPINI to Everyone:

from Graziella

21:26:06 From Martin Burton to Everyone:

The question we have for discussion about thematic groups is as follows: 3.

What are the aims and objectives of the thematic hubs and what are the core activities and optional activities? Activities may include

- a. knowledge translation activities,
- b. promoting evidence-based practice and Cochrane within disciplines,

- Cochrane
- c. providing expertise for peer review, editing and prioritization within
 - d. seeking funding for hub activities and/or review production
 - e. review production*,
 - f. training in a variety of things, including but not limited to, using systematic reviews, understanding systematic reviews, preparing systematic reviews, etc
 - g. others

* but with the caveat that the decision to publish rests solely with the Central Editorial Team

21:26:58 From Zarko Alfirovic to Everyone:

Thank you Alex - your point is absolutely critical. Without a new Cochrane badge of approval, there will be no new funding and even current one may be lost.

21:27:17 From Roger Soll to Everyone:

what constitutes "all" editorial work? Does this include deciding what reviews will be undertaken by the review groups? Title registration? Assignment of authors? protocol development?

21:29:19 From Martin Burton to Everyone:

"review production" in the context I outlined above = authoring reviews, and not editing them

21:29:41 From Neil O'Connell to Everyone:

Suggest we need a clear demarcation of roles for thematic groups soon, currently they are a bit of an odd proposition to sell to a funder

21:29:45 From Alex Todhunter-Brown to Everyone:

My understanding of Martin's list of activities is that thematic groups could potentially "author" reviews, but not edit. Cochrane Stroke and others can see the advantage of this....

21:30:22 From Martin Burton to Everyone:

"My understanding of Martin's list of activities is that thematic groups could potentially "author" reviews, but not edit. Cochrane Stroke and others can see the advantage of this...." = YES - exactly what I mean

21:33:08 From Emma Dennett to Everyone:

Good Q Roger - are "we" keeping registered titles and publishing protocols?

21:33:29 From GRAZIELLA FILIPPINI to Everyone:

from Graziella Filippini. the MS and Rare diseases CNS Group has produced several Cochrane reviews in the last 20 years and was able to obtain independent public grants. We would like to continue supporting Cochrane

21:33:44 From Zarko Alfirovic to Everyone:

Martin, have you any thoughts on the possible funding models for the thematic groups - thanks.

21:38:09 From Jan Hoving (v2) to Everyone:

Jacob: we have a similar luxury of getting more funding the next few years

21:39:01 From Jim Wright to Everyone:

We also have a similar situation to Jacob and Jan.

21:39:16 From Roger Soll to Everyone:

we have similar funding issues...nice to know this vision is several years downstream

21:39:26 From Emma Dennett to Everyone:

Is it desirable to find out CoEd's thoughts about what is going to happen with their CRGs? What if some big UK ones just disappear before March 23?

21:41:04 From Zarko Alfirovic to Everyone:

Unless someone waves a magic wand, our Pregnancy and Childbirth Group will s]cease

21:41:15 From Zarko Alfirovic to Everyone:

Opps

21:41:32 From Emma Dennett to Everyone:

Airways too, Zarko.

21:41:39 From Zarko Alfirovic to Everyone:

...will cease to exist on March 23

21:42:05 From Francesco Nonino to Everyone:

Multiple Sclerosis RG: For us too the possibility of surviving as a Cochrane group within a funding institution is connected with a topic (might not be MS, but should be within a similar area)

21:44:39 From Karla Soares-Weiser to Everyone:

I am mindful there are a number of questions in the chat - we will do our best to answer all questions, but could you please raise your hands if you would like to discuss in this call?

21:50:13 From Martin Burton to Everyone:

If you can find a funder who wants to pay for something to be done by volunteers (supported by a professional systematic reviewer) rather than by an experienced, professional author team able to work quickly and efficiently, then all will be well. But my guess is that most funders don't want to pay for that sort of review production.

21:50:41 From Martin Burton to Everyone:

And "he who pays the piper calls the tune" as they say

21:51:03 From janclarkson to Everyone:

I think it is so hard - to generate the next phase - it requires time and many co-eds don't have that precious commodity in addition to their regular jobs

21:53:03 From Alex Todhunter-Brown to Everyone:

In response to Martin - perhaps better articulated as a model "co-production"....a thematic hub with methods expertise, working in partnership with leading international clinical topic experts. This would potentially enhance knowledge translation as well...

22:00:16 From Robin Grant to Everyone:

The thematic groups when formed have to get in discussion with the international theme bodies - e.g. Cancer or Neurosciences as they have more contacts within the groups than Cochrane. Need to get the themes out quickly

22:00:51 From GRAZIELLA FILIPPINI to Everyone:

da g filippini we need to know whether cochrane is a UK editorial publication or an international collaboration

22:01:08 From Francesco Nonino to Everyone:

I agree in keeping these regular meetings

22:01:44 From gianni virgili to Everyone:

Thanks