

[COUNCIL PAPER 011221-3]

Constituency:	Methods
Period of Report:	November 2021
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Cochrane Methods Executive, Methods Groups and Methods Community Report to Council: November 2021

Achievements since last formal meeting

Updates from the Methods Executive and Methods Support Unit

- The Methods Support Unit is hosted a [special web clinic on including different study designs and evidence](#) on **11 November** with updates on the five projects aiming to tackle methodological challenges in public health intervention reviews (project being led or advised by **Statistics, Non-Randomised Studies of Interventions, Bias, Equity, Priority Setting, Qualitative and Implementation** and CRGs). All welcome.
- The **Methods Executive** is meeting next on **30 November**.
- **Cochrane Council seeks new methods representation - deadline 31 December 2021:** We seek one representative from the methods community (either a Methods Group Convenor, staff or active member) to sit on the Cochrane Council. This is an exciting opportunity to speak for, and listen to, the methods community in Cochrane. The position starts in April/May 2022

(Sarah Nevitt is going on maternity leave in April 2022). Further information and details of how to apply can be found [here](#).

Updates from Methods Groups:

- The Editorial and Methods Department launched the [annual Cochrane Methods Report](#) on 1 November and have added Methods Group spotlight on reports each day in alphabetical order.
- **Qualitative and Implementation** launched the [Qualitative Evidence Synthesis learning Live webinar series](#) with an introductory session; with over 500 attendees it was the most attended webinar Cochrane Training has ever held! Next webinar was on [question formation and searching for qualitative evidence](#) on **15 November**.
- **Bias** are hosting their [annual meeting virtually](#) – the first was on **28 October** and the second was on **17 November** and dedicated to presenting findings from recent methodological research from across the Group.
- **Screening and Diagnostic Tests** have shared the [fifth draft chapter from the new version of the Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Diagnostic Test Accuracy](#) on undertaking meta-analysis (Chapter 11).
- **Equity** published a Cochrane Library [Editorial on increasing the global relevance of Cochrane Reviews by applying an ‘equity lens’](#).
- [Cochrane Methods Symposium](#) recordings available with speakers from **Non-Randomised Studies of Interventions, Qualitative and Implementation, Equity** and **GRADE**, and chaired by the **Methods Executive**.

Challenges, including issues for the Council to discuss

Comments from the Methods Executive and Methods Groups for Council

Comment 1:

Most of the methods development work in Cochrane has been pro bono and people involved are genuinely enthusiastic about methods work. I don't see a clear role of methods groups in the proposed changes. Who will be pushing the envelope? Will Cochrane lose the methods community as a result?

Comment 2:

Most of the members of the Cochrane Methods Community are not paid directly by Cochrane and essentially, we do our Cochrane work in a volunteer / pro-bono status because they want to and they are passionate about Methods. Without a clear role for Methods in the new Cochrane structure, the risk is losing engagement with the Methods Community.

The Methods Community overall has not yet been very vocal about the proposed changes. This may be because as a Community, currently we have no idea what the proposed changes mean for us. Will our role be essentially the same but within a different structure? Will there be a different role, or a role at all?

More clarity on some of these questions is needed quickly before engagement is lost with the Methods Community entirely. We think some people are feeling alienated and even under appreciated with the lack of specific mention of Methods within the latest Strategy. Without clarity around the role of Methods in the 'new' Cochrane soon, even the most enthusiastic Cochrane Methods people may start to turn their attention elsewhere to spend their volunteer time.

Priorities for the next 3 months

To engage further with the Methods Executive, Methods Groups and wider Methods Community regarding the role of Methods and the Methods community in the future of Cochrane.

Engagement will involve:

- Discussion of the role of Methods and the Methods community in upcoming Methods Executive meetings
- Reflecting upon the Methods Community projects (in depth interviews conducted with all Methods Groups in 2019)