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1) Evaluation of the UK NIHR Investment in Cochrane Infrastructure and Systematic Reviews

The 'Evaluation of NIHR Investment in Cochrane Infrastructure and systematic reviews' report, as requested by the Chief Medical Officer for the Department of Health, is now live and available open access on the NIHR Journals Library website [here](#).

The report is accompanied by Cochrane’s formal response. Comments on both are welcome and can be submitted through the website until 10th March 2017.

The headline message from this independent report is support for continued NIHR funding of Cochrane, and the report also provides a number of recommendations to both Cochrane and NIHR.

Professor Tom Walley will present NIHR views on the report, and recommendations for Cochrane in the future, at the 2017 UK & Ireland Cochrane Symposium in Oxford, 14-15th March.

2) Audit report of published abstracts and Summary of Findings

One of the key objectives of the Structure and Function Review proposal approved by the Governing Board in October 2016 in Seoul was to develop and implement a rapid screening tool to evaluate reviews that had been signed off for publication by CRGs. Our hope was that this would be a sound proxy for the overall quality of the review and would be feasible to implement across all new and updated reviews given existing CEU resources. From the outset, we recognised the limitation of this audit given that only the Abstracts and “Summary of Findings” tables of a sample of published reviews were checked.

The audit was conducted by CEU Editors during December 2016 and involved scoring the last 5 published reviews for each CRG with a 12-points checklist. More information and results can be found [here](#).

3) Updating classification system: update on publication

The Updating Classification System (UCS) guides readers as to whether a Cochrane Review is up to date, likely to be updated in future, or does not need updating at the current time. The UCS is available for Cochrane Review Groups (CRGs) to use for intervention and diagnostic test accuracy reviews. Over 10% of Cochrane Reviews have now been classified, with more than half of the CRGs having classified one or more Cochrane Review(s). We’ll provide a brief report about the current use of the system and how reviews are being classified in the next Digest.

The intention has always been to publish the classifications alongside reviews in the *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR)*. The ‘update status’ (up to date, update pending, no longer updated), the rationale (from a pick list), and the free-text explanation as to how the rationale and status were reached will all be published. We are actively working on the timelines to publish this additional information (which is separate to the publication of review versions) and will provide an update in the next few weeks. The work on this phase of the roll-out is affected by the continued development on the new platform for the Cochrane Library. We are working with our colleagues and publishing partners to co-ordinate the projects, and we will provide an update in the next few weeks.

For further information:

- [Section about the UCS](#) in the [Editorial and Publishing Policy Resource](#)
- Contact about the UCS: Harriet MacLehose (hmaclehose@cochrane.org), Senior Editor/Monaz Mehta (mmehta@cochrane.org), Editor
- Help with using the UCS in Archie or applying classification: ME Support team (mesupport@cochrane.org)

4) Cochrane Scientific Committee

We are pleased to announce the launch of the Cochrane [Scientific Committee](#) (CSC). Thirteen members will form this new Committee, see member details on the website. Arrangements for its first meeting are underway and the website will update on its activities.

5) Strategic Methods Fund

We are pleased to announce Cochrane will fund two projects to support the implementation of Methods. We congratulate lead investigators Hilary Thomson and Carl Moons, and their colleagues.

Hilary Thomson, Joint co-ordinating editor of Cochrane Public Health of the MRC, CSO Social & Public Health Sciences Unit, University of Glasgow will lead a project for “Improving Conduct & reporting of Narrative Synthesis of Quantitative data (ICONS-Quant)”.

Carl Moons, Co-convenor of the Prognosis Methods Group of the Julius Center for Health Sciences and Primary Care, University Medical Center Utrecht will lead a project for “Trusted methods and Support for Cochrane Reviews of Prognostic Studies”.

6) Cochrane Handbook Associate Scientific Editors

We have four *new* positions for Cochrane Handbook [Associate Scientific Editors](#) to support two Senior Scientific Editors and a Senior Editor in the update of the Handbook. Please see website for further details on these important and influential positions.

7) Free use of Covidence for Cochrane entities that are directly conducting non-Cochrane systematic reviews

At the Centre Directors’ meeting in Seoul we confirmed our intention to provide free access to Covidence to Centres for work that is undertaken by the Centre on non-Cochrane systematic reviews. We are pleased to confirm that this process is now in place and Centres can access Covidence by making arrangements with Julian Elliott.

Question: Who can access Covidence under this agreement?

Answer: This will apply to all Groups, e.g. Centres, Associate Centres, Affiliates as well as Review Groups, Methods Groups and Fields.

Question: What can you use Covidence for under this agreement?

Answer: This is only for work that is being undertaken directly by the Cochrane Group that is not going to be published on the Cochrane Library, e.g. a systematic review of animal studies. It is important that this benefit is used only by members of the Centre for work that is led by and directly benefits the Centre. This access is not intended for members of your faculty who are also working on non-Cochrane systematic reviews.

We also hope that you can help us promote Covidence within your institution and introduce Covidence to your library or other groups that might be interested.

To access Covidence in this way, please email Julian Elliott from the Central Executive Team: julian.elliott@monash.edu.

8) EQUATOR Publication School 2017

Registration now open for the [EQUATOR Publication School 2017](#)

9) GRADE effectiveness and GRADE-CERQual for qualitative research Methods Training Event

Two parallel training streams with joint sessions to consider common concepts will run from the 13-15th June 2017, Modena, Italy. This event is re-scheduled from December 2016. For information click [here](#).

10) Global Evidence Summit 2017: Call for abstracts open – Deadline extended to 15th March 2017

Opportunities to present special sessions, workshops, oral presentations, and poster abstracts is open as of 5 January 2017. This is your chance to be part of the Global Evidence Summit (GES) and we look forward to receiving abstracts around the theme: *Using evidence, Improving lives*. The GES replaces the normal Cochrane Colloquium this year.

For more information, please visit the [GES website](#).

11) Cochrane's support for the March for Science

Cochrane is delighted to announce our official support for the March for Science.

For more information, please visit our [website](#).