

Terms of Reference for
the Cochrane WHO
Working Group

August 15, 2017



1 Purpose

Cochrane is an NGO in official relations with the WHO. The Cochrane WHO Working Group aims to develop and strengthen this official partnership. It does this through facilitating technical input around systematic reviews and evidence-informed decision making to the various programmes, initiatives and departments of the WHO, and through working with the WHO to reach people making decisions in health.

2 Objectives

- To **support the implementation of Cochrane’s strategic plan of collaboration with the WHO**, as well as the development of the three-yearly plan of collaboration requested by the WHO that includes outputs that are mutually beneficial to the two groups achieving their organisational goals.
- To monitor and evaluate these outputs in terms of the quality and timeliness.
- To ensure timely reporting to the WHO on the plan.
- To keep informed of WHO priorities, particularly for guidelines, to which Cochrane entities can respond.
- **To listen to feedback received from WHO staff on Cochrane’s reviews, methodological expertise and/or training provided.** Ensure appropriate response and communicate key messages from WHO to the wider Cochrane community.
- To ensure Cochrane presence at the World Health Assembly and other WHO meetings where relevant.
- To follow trends and new developments within WHO to ensure a Cochrane response when appropriate and feasible.
- To facilitate regular communication between the various technical departments in WHO and Cochrane.
- **To inform Cochrane’s** Governing Board on issues arising from the partnership that are relevant to Cochrane governance and/or strategic direction, enabling Cochrane to respond.

3 Accountability and reporting

- Produce written reports for the Governing Board and other stakeholders as requested.
- Provide an annual work plan.
- Hold yearly meeting at colloquium to seek input from the Cochrane community.
- Administrative support to this group will be provided by Cochrane Executive Team.

4 Membership

The group will consist of ten members, of which 5 are based in a Low or Middle Income Country, as follows:

- Cochrane Senior Advisor (Partnerships, External Affairs & Fundraising) (Co-chair);
- A representative from the Cochrane Governing Board;
- **Cochrane’s Editor-in-Chief** or his designated representative; and
- 7 members active within the Cochrane network and with knowledge of WHO processes and programmes.
- The expertise of the group as a whole aims to cover a diverse range of thematic areas (including NCDs; infectious diseases; public health), technical areas (including methodological expertise; guideline development; training; essential medicines), and WHO regions.

Membership is for a period of three years, renewable once.

5 Decision-making

- The Working Group aims to take decisions by consensus.
- The Working Group provides strategic and technical guidance to Cochrane's Senior Advisor (Partnerships, External Affairs & Fundraising) for any issues arising from the on-going interactions the Senior Advisor has with WHO staff and Cochrane contributors.
- The Working Group calls upon additional technical expertise from the Cochrane network when needed. Most notably this will be done for Cochrane statements to be made at WHO meetings on topics that are beyond the technical expertise of the Working Group members, as well as to alert the Cochrane network to WHO calls for members of various committees
- If the Working Group does not manage to reach consensus on an issue, or considers a decision to be made too important for decision at Working Group level, the co-chairs of the Working Group will bring the issue to the attention of the Governing Board who will take a final decision. In addition, the Working Group will update the Governing Board regularly on any issues arising from the partnership that are of strategic importance to Cochrane.

6 Meetings and communication

- The Working Group will meet 3-4 times per year by teleconference. Face to face meetings may be organized occasionally should the opportunity arise.
- In between teleconferences the Working Group may be consulted by email for urgent issues.
- Information on the collaboration with WHO will be posted on the Cochrane website.

7 Responsibilities of Working Group members

- Be available to attend 3 to 4 teleconferences per year.
- Be responsive to email requests for advice and input.
- Comment and approve the written reports and the plan of work for WHO.
- Scan the WHO environment, scout for new opportunities of expanding the partnership with WHO, and report back to Cochrane.