



Cochrane Eyes and Vision Group Newsletter

Number 4

June 1998

CEVG one year on

It has been a year since we first registered the group, although it has been nearly five years since the idea was first mooted. As expected, the process of producing reviews is slow and we are learning all the time. However, in the first year of our (official) existence, we have made great strides in developing the infrastructure for the group.

The first and most important aspect is staff – people to do the work required to support reviewers. Moorfields Eye Hospital very generously supports our co-ordinator – an essential part of the group. Kate has helped to ensure that a large part of what we set out in our registration document has been achieved.

We have also made headway with the task of taking over the International Register of Vision Trials (originally developed by Kay Dickersin and Roberta Scherer in Baltimore) and organising the Cochrane Eyes and Vision Group Specialised Register of Controlled Trials. The register is the core of the group's activities and is the main rationale for a collaborative undertaking such as this. There are so many trials out there, many of which are difficult to identify, that it needs a huge collaborative effort to compile a complete database of controlled trials on eye health care. We currently have 3510 reports of trials on our register and a further 1309 awaiting assessment. These trials are accessible on the Cochrane Library.

The task of developing the register has been considerably speeded up by funding obtained from the UK National Health Service Research and Development Fund. This has enabled us to employ two further staff at the editorial base, Shona Burman-Roy and Anupa Shah (see page 2). We now have funding secured until 2000 and are very grateful to our current sponsors.

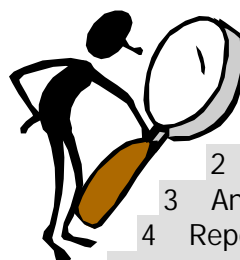
The future development of the group will depend on continuing to obtain timely funding and the right staff to keep the editorial base going. Obtaining the funding will depend on producing high quality reviews which are relevant to people making decisions about eye healthcare.

Although we have only two completed reviews to date, we have a number of interesting reviews in the pipeline and even more protocols in preparation. This is only the beginning however - we still need more committed reviewers to produce reviews.

Further developments are happening in clinical research which will also aid the future development of the group. In Denmark, ethical approval will only be given to those trials where the investigators can demonstrate that they have done a complete systematic review of the relevant research (BMJ 1998;316(18 April): 1189). In addition, they will be required to monitor the international literature and stop the research should the study question be answered elsewhere before the end of the study. This is an excellent development, which will act to reduce the number of unnecessary trials conducted (at least on the citizens of Denmark). If other countries follow suit, it will put the Cochrane Collaboration at the core of clinical research.

The existence of a register of trials and a collaborative structure will help clinical investigators produce systematic reviews with much less effort than if they had to start from scratch and find all the relevant trials themselves. Indeed that is one purpose of the Collaboration - to remove unnecessary duplication of effort. There is more than enough to do!

Jennifer Evans
Editor



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The Cochrane Eyes and Vision Group – Who we are...

We thought we would mark our first anniversary by reminding you of who we are and what we do. We also thought you might like to know who your fellow members are...

THE EDITORIAL BASE

The main purpose of the editorial base is to act as a centre for the co-ordination of the group activity. This includes providing support to reviewers, searching for trials and maintaining a specialised register of all relevant trials, and co-ordinating the publication of the group module on the Cochrane Library, comprising information about the group as well as reviews and protocols.

THE EDITORIAL TEAM

The Eyes and Vision Group has its editorial base at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London.

At present, the Editorial Team consists of four editors. They are:

Kay Dickersin, an epidemiologist and director of the Baltimore Cochrane Centre, based in Baltimore.

Jennifer Evans, an epidemiologist based in London.

Luca Rossetti, an ophthalmologist based in Milan.

Richard Wormald (co-ordinating editor), director of the department of ophthalmic epidemiology and honorary consultant ophthalmologist, based in London.

The Editorial team in London also includes:

Kate Oldfield, review group co-ordinator. Kate is the first point of contact for the group.

Shona Burman-Roy, trials search co-ordinator. Shona co-ordinates journal hand-searching activity and helps reviewers in their search for trials.

Anupa Shah, administrative officer providing support to the editorial team.

Elizabeth Hawes, a consumer representative.

EDITORIAL PROCESS

Title Registration

Reviewers register a title with the group, using a title registration form, before or after discussion with one or more editors. Once a title has been approved, a contact editor is assigned, usually on a geographic basis. Arrangements are made for reviewers to attend a Cochrane protocol workshop and they are provided with a copy of the Cochrane Reviewer's Handbook and Eyes and Vision Group methodology guidelines. Kate is available throughout the review process to answer any questions or help with problems. Shona helps reviewers to develop a strategy for searching for trials and will search the relevant Cochrane and Group registers. We also help with contacting trialists and pharmaceutical companies and experts in the field relevant to the review.

Protocol Development

Reviewers normally submit a protocol to the editorial board within nine months of title registration, but actual time-scales are agreed with individual reviewers.

Protocols may be discussed by a panel - including the reviewer, the contact editor, a statistician and a content area specialist and may also be sent out to external referees. Reviewers receive a response within four weeks of submitting their protocol.

Review Development

Reviewers normally submit the completed review within about six months of gaining approval of a protocol. Arrangements are made for reviewers to attend a Review Manager software workshop. Once approved by the editorial board, the review is sent out for external peer review to the same referees who reviewed the protocol. Reviewers receive a response within 4 weeks of submission.

Keeping up to date

Reviewers are expected to keep their reviews up to date as new research becomes available. The editorial team advises reviewers of any new trials.

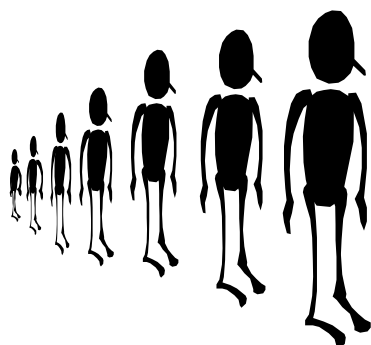


...and who you are.....

The following is a list of contacts for the group as of June 1998:

Adenike Abiose (Nigeria)
 Aries Arditì (USA)
 David Atkins (UK)
 G W Aylward (UK)
 Lars Backlund (Sweden)
 Ian Balmer (UK)
 Mark Batterbury (UK)
 Roy Beck (USA)
 Michael Belkin (Israel)
 Lorne Bellan (Canada)
 Rupert Bourne (UK)
 Ralf Buhrmann (USA)
 Burkhard Dick (Germany)
 Emilio Campos (Italy)
 James Cave (UK)
 I Chisholm (UK)
 Gabriel Coscas (France)
 Mary Frances Cotch (USA)
 Teresa Cuchi (Spain)
 Lalit Dandona (India)
 Rod Daniel (UK)
 John Dart (UK)
 V Dawda (UK)
 Jean Jacques Delaey (Belgium)
 C Edelsten (UK)
 Beth Edmunds (UK)
 Leonard Esakowitz (UK)
 Linda Ficker (UK)
 Alexander Foss (UK)
 Allen Foster (UK)
 Paul Foster (Singapore)
 Scott Fraser (UK)
 Tim Freegard (UK)

Andy Frost (UK)
 J Gibson (UK)
 W E Gillies (Australia)
 Pat Hart (UK)
 Argye Hillis (USA)
 Roger Hitchings (UK)
 A Horak (South Africa)
 Mark Hulbert (UK)
 Rebecca Ivers (Australia)
 Henry Jampel (USA)
 Gordon Johnson (UK)
 Joanne Katz (USA)
 Z U Khan (Saudi Arabia)
 Tero Kivela (Denmark)
 Stephen Kwok (NZ)
 Eugenio Leite (Portugal)
 C Lim (UK)
 Isabel Lopez (Spain)
 Denise Mabey (UK)
 Ian Macdonald (Canada)
 Margaret Macdonald (UK)
 Maureen Maguire (USA)
 Giovanni Maraini (Italy)
 Cathy McCarty (Australia)
 Pat McGettrick (UK)
 Clive Migdal (UK)
 Merrick Moseley (UK)
 Ian Murdoch (UK)
 Khristian Naeser (Denmark)
 Rajiv Nath (India)
 R Neumann (Israel)
 Thisarr Niyadurupola (UK)
 Colm O'Brien (UK)
 Barbara Oliveiros (Portugal)
 Jose-Carlos Pastor (Spain)
 Norbert Pfeiffer (Germany)
 Harry Quigley (USA)
 Jugnoo Rahi (UK)
 K N Rajkumar (UK)
 Philip Raskin (USA)
 Barnaby Reeves (UK)
 Anita Reynolds (UK)
 Robert Ritch (USA)
 Neil Rogers (UK)
 Nelson Sabrosa (UK)
 R Sanders (UK)



Who else might be interested?

We always welcome new members and hope to spread the word about this group.

Please pass on this newsletter to anyone who you think may be interested.

We would also welcome your suggestions for individuals or organisations who could be added to our mailing list.

Lotta Salmiven (Finland)
 M Saornil (Spain)
 Nicholas Sarkies (UK)
 Bernard Schwartz (USA)
 Aziz Sheikh (UK)
 Liam Smeeth (UK)
 Torkel Snellingen (Norway)
 Alfred Sommer (USA)
 Gisele Soubrane (France)
 Miles Stanford (UK)
 Gail Stephenson (UK)
 Hugh Taylor (Australia)
 Monika Temple (UK)
 Leslye Thies (Australia)
 Hugh Thomas (UK)
 John Thompson (UK)
 Juliet Thompson (UK)
 S M Thompson (UK)
 Bjorn Thylefors (Switzerland)
 Adnan Tufail (UK)
 Wilma Van Berkel (UK)
 Jolieke Van Der Pols (UK)
 Mike Wearne (UK)
 Karl Whittaker (UK)
 Christine Wildsoet (USA)
 Kirk Wilhelmus (USA)
 Mark Wilkins (UK)
 Cathy Williams (UK)
 E Zrenner (Germany)

Cochrane WWW Sites

The Cochrane Collaboration website is available at the following locations which offer identical, detailed information about the world-wide Collaboration.

Australia - <http://som.flinders.edu.au/fusa/cochrane>

Canada - <http://hiru.mcmaster.ca/cochrane>

Germany - <http://www.cochrane.de>
(includes Cochrane information for German speakers)

Japan - <http://www.nihs.go.jp/acc/default.html>
See also JANCOC for Cochrane information in Japanese.

Norway - <http://www.cochrane.dk/default.html>

Spain - <http://www.altaveu.chpt.es/cochrane/>
El Centro Cochrane Español (includes Cochrane information in Spanish and several other languages)

Information about the Cochrane Colloquium and Cochrane handsearching activity can be found at <http://www.cochrane.org>

TRIALS REGISTRATION

We are establishing a register of on-going trials. This is an important step to help ensure that all trials are included in reviews, and overcome potential bias in reviews resulting from publication bias. We will be able to inform reviewers as soon as trials are complete.

If you know of any on-going trials that might be relevant for inclusion on this register, please let us know by completing a Trial Registration Form on page 7. We also welcome details of unpublished trials.

Keep informed by joining the Collaboration e-mail list

CCINFO is a low volume, moderated e-mail list for announcements on matters of relevance to the Collaboration. Everyone who is involved with Cochrane is urged to subscribe to the list.

To subscribe, send an email (from the address you normally use) to: listproc@fhs.mcmaster.ca

The content of your message is simply:
subscribe ccinfo firstname lastname (fill in your own name: e.g. subscribe ccinfo Jane Smith)
Don't fill in the subject or add a signature.

Subscription is free. When you want to share information with the other subscribers, address an email to ccinfo@fhs.mcmaster.ca and your message (after being checked by the moderator) will be sent to all the other subscribers.

REPORT FROM MEETINGS

The annual congress of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists in Glasgow and the annual meeting of the ARVO, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Successful dissemination of information about the group took place at both these meetings.

In Glasgow, Kate manned an exhibition stand for 3 days while many delegates visited and collected information about the Collaboration. Richard gave a talk about evidence based medicine and the role of the CEVG at a small but select fringe meeting hosted by Pharmacia Upjohn, which was well received.

At ARVO, about 40 delegates visited our special interest group session. The two and a half hour meeting included an introduction to evidence based medicine and the group by Richard followed by a demonstration of the Cochrane Library by Kate. Luca Rossetti presented the findings of his review on the prevention and treatment of Cystoid Macular Oedema. Kirk Wilhelmus, a new reviewer to the group and an eminent US ophthalmologist based in Texas, presented his work on a complex review of the management of Herpes Simplex Keratitis. Finally, Richard presented ongoing work in his review of antimetabolites in glaucoma surgery. Many potentially influential delegates contributed to discussions which were lively and constructive, a typical characteristic of meetings at ARVO. In all, the session was well received. Significant additions to the database of potential contributors to the group were added at both meetings.

Dates for your diary

28th International Congress of Ophthalmology.

Amsterdam, The Netherlands. 21st-26th June

2nd European Congress on Tropical Medicine.

Liverpool, UK. 14th-18th September

6th International Cochrane Colloquium.

Baltimore, USA. 22nd-26th October

Further information at:

<http://www.cochrane.org>

Centre for Statistics in Medicine

Second Symposium on Systematic Reviews
Oxford, UK. 6th -7th Jan 1999

Contact Rochelle Seifas: r.seifas@icrf.icnet.uk

<http://www.his.ox.ac.uk/csm>

Workshops

Cochrane Centres organise workshops for reviewers. Most courses are free, although reviewers must pay for accommodation and travel. For more information on these and other Cochrane workshops please visit the Cochrane web site (<http://som.flinders.edu.au/fusa/cochrane/cochrane/workshop.htm>) or contact Kate.

AUSTRALASIA

Australasian Cochrane Centre

Preparing a protocol/ Using RevMan

June/July 98	Brisbane
Sept 98	Sydney
Nov/Dec 98	Adelaide

Child health - Australia

Evidence-based Child Healthcare

Short course

19-20 Nov 98	Melbourne
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USA & CANADA

Baltimore Cochrane Centre

Ad-hoc	Baltimore
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Canadian Cochrane Center

Protocol writing

Spring 98	Ottawa
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Systematic overviews and introduction to RevMan

May/June 98	McGill
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Advanced methods

12 Nov 98	McMaster
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New England Cochrane Center

How to conduct a systematic review and use of the RevMan software

13-14 June	Boston
14-15 November	Boston

San Antonio Cochrane Center

Systematic reviews workshop

14-16 Sept 98	San Antonio, Texas
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EUROPE

Italian Cochrane Centre

14-15 Oct 98	Palermo, Sicily
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Nordic Cochrane Centre

Preparing a protocol

24 Sept 98	Helsinki
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Handsearch workshop

23 Sept 98	Helsinki
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Review manager (RevMan) workshop

25 Sept 98	Helsinki
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Spanish Cochrane Centre

Systematic reviews

18-19 June 98	Sabadell
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Preparing a protocol

19 Nov 98	Sabadell
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Using RevMan

20 Nov 98	Sabadell
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UK Cochrane Centre

Developing a protocol for a review

22 June, 14 Sept 98	Oxford
8 June 98	Aberdeen
16 Nov 98	Liverpool

Getting a review into RevMan

23 June, 15 Sept 98	Oxford
9 June 98	Aberdeen
17 Nov 98	Liverpool

Other Courses

The Systematic Reviews Training Unit, Institute of Child Health, London, UK

12 month part-time courses and 1 day clinics for systematic reviewers.

Contact Leanne Jones: leanne.jones@ich.ucl.ac.uk
<http://www.ich.ucl.ac.uk/srtu>

Systematic Review Development Program Centre for Statistics in Medicine, Institute of Health Sciences, Oxford, UK

3 and 12 month courses for reviewers.

Contact Rochelle Seifas: r.seifas@icrf.icnet.uk
Tel: +44 1865 226615

Titles, protocols & reviews

The following titles, protocols and reviews are currently registered to the group. If you have any ideas for reviews, please let us know by completing a Title Registration Form (see page 11). If you know of any unpublished or ongoing trials that may be relevant to any of these reviews, please complete a trials registration form.

Registered Titles	Contact reviewer
NEW Acute treatment of HSV epithelial keratitis	Kirk Wilhelmus
Central retinal artery occlusion	Scott Fraser
Community based interventions for trachoma	Denise Mabey
NEW Early treatment of thyroid eye disease	Mike Wearne
Effectiveness of low vision aids	Elizabeth Hawes
Ischaemic optic neuropathy	Kay Dickersin
NEW Medical treatment of Behcets Syndrome	Nelson Sabrosa
Narrow angle glaucoma	Mark Hulbert
Optic neuritis	Roy Beck
Screening for open angle glaucoma	Alexander Foss
NEW Treatment of cytomegalovirus retinitis	Adnan Tufail
Treatment of ocular sarcoidosis	Nelson Sabrosa

Protocols in editorial process	Contact reviewer
Surgical techniques and cataract	Torkel Snellingen

Protocols published on the Cochrane Library	Contact reviewer
Surgical techniques and retinal detachment	Juliet Thompson
Antioxidants and prevention ARMD	Jennifer Evans
Antimetabolites and trabeculectomy	Richard Wormald
NEW Antibiotics and bacterial conjunctivitis*	Aziz Sheikh

Reviews published on the Cochrane Library	Contact reviewer
Antioxidants and progression of ARMD	Jennifer Evans
NEW Visual screening in primary care for the elderly	Liam Smeeth

Reviews for conversion to Cochrane format	Contact reviewer
Hyphema	Luca Rossetti
Prevention of cystoid macular edema	Luca Rossetti
Topical therapy and primary open-angle glaucoma	Luca Rossetti

Reassigned and de-registered titles	Status
Vitamin A and retinitis pigmentosa	De-registered

* We are looking for experts in the field to peer review this review. Please let us know if you would like to get involved.