



# CSzG Flier 2010

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## 2010

**A**gain a whirlwind year. When can we expect it to calm down? Perhaps never. It has been a year of really mixed feelings. We gained many things - but lost **Janey**. We would rather not have had her leave us (see page 4).

January saw the fantastic meeting in Vellore, India where **Prathap** organized one of the best meetings on evaluation of care I have ever been to. Later on that month I went to the **COMET** meeting discussing core outcomes that we would expect to see in trials. This is a really important initiative and CSzG should be having a strong presence in it - in the hope

of improving trial conduct and reporting.

Later in the year I was able to work for some time with the ever productive TREC group in Rio de Janeiro. **Gisele Huf** is leading on a really important trial (see page 3) and developing teaching on systematic reviews. A little later I was able to co-lead a teaching workshop in Damascus with **Adib**. What a fantastic, enthusiastic and bright group. A real treat for a teacher.

Most of the time I have been trying to help produce reviews and even better reviews. There really is so much more we could be doing. Have a look at the ongoing projects we are experimenting with (Map of Medicine, Journal Club).



We have had to change too.

Our reviews will look different (formatting - see below) and processing of them also should feel a little different. Also, we hope to change the focus of each

review/comparison within reviews to be ever-more clinical. We hope this will not cause problems and will only be apparent for new or updated reviews.

Thank you for your support this year and look forward to yet more important and interesting and innovative working.

*Clive*

## Claire

**H**ello from chilly Scotland.

It has been quite a year. I was really pleased to take over as Managing Editor of the group early in the year after **Beth** left. Many of you will know me now by e-mail correspondence and I look forward to meeting you if you are across in the UK or at any of the Cochrane meetings. I know working at a distance from the Editorial base in Nottingham is not ideal but we seem to be making it work OK. There is such a lot to do. We have coming on for 200 reviews and each needs maintained and processing. Managing Editors now have a workflow system that should help things run smoother. However, I am not that long started and the workflow is in its infancy so do forgive the inevitable teething troubles that will occur.

At one level we have to go more industrial - on the other we have to take into consideration the volunteer workforce that do CSzG reviews.

Our Editors meeting was really useful late in 2010. We did make some important decisions that will effect us all. We decided to use the full formatting of the RevMan - each numbered subheading will remain in the same style - but will also be formatted with the next level of header available to it in order of importance. For example if under 'Implications for Practice' [header style 2] you add the CSzG header '1. For people with schizophrenia' the latter should be in the next header style down [header style 3]. Also we have decided to work with the Wiley copy editing service and **Nancy Owens** is taking good care of your reviews for us there. This is a really nice link to Nancy - Managing Editor of old.

2011 will have new challenges - and lots centre round maintaining reviews. We need more efficient systems to help you update, to split large reviews into serviceable sizes, and to create healthy turnover of reviews and reviewers. Also we should be disseminating your results in lots of ways - always keeping Cochrane reviews informative but accessible.

I look forward to the new year and to working with you to make sure our reviews are the best that they can be - and, along the way - reasonably good fun to do.

*Claire Irving*

## Forthcoming events in 2011

### February

Systematic Review

Protocol

Development Workshop, South Asian Cochrane Network & Centre, Christian Medical College, Vellore, India -

Introduction to Evidence-Informed Healthcare - Vellore, India - 8-12th

### March

UK & Ireland Contributors Meeting, Northern Ireland, Belfast 15-16th

### April

Systematic Review Course, Shanghai, China - exact dates to be set

### June

Nottingham systematic review course 7-10 th

### September

The CSzG Editors meeting early in the month??

### October

Cochrane Colloquium

19-22nd - Madrid, Spain

Systematic Review Course, Shanghai, China - exact dates to be set

**QUESTION.....Would you be interested in a 'Finishing your review' workshop focusing on getting your review though to completion ?**

**3 days, away from it all in order to get it done??**

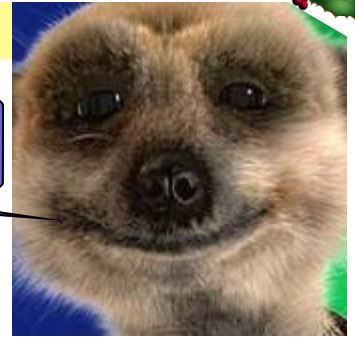
**(contact Claire)**



## Meerkat vs. Cochrane Register of Studies

The Collaboration have commissioned [Metaxis](#) to create software for the Cochrane Register of Studies (CRS). Is this then the demise of Meerkat? My furry access friend will not go down without a fight and the CRS has a lot to live up too. The positive side is that the CRS is custom made so will incorporate many of Meerkat-compatible features. My personal favourites are the direct import of records from [clinicaltrials.gov](#) and being able to drop references straight into classification pending in reviews. However Meerkat's charm is that it have been developed over years of heavy use and has impressive style which I wait with baited breathe to see if CRS can match. Still, some centralisation of the process should help .....er....has anyone searched on the word "copyright" on CENTRAL lately? Perhaps CRS can help this!

Rumours of my demise are greatly exaggerated!



Meerkat, however, will survive until its functionality is matched by the CRS - even if that means running two systems at our editorial base. For now the new CRS software is in testing and [thanks to [Lois Sims](#)] we have Meerkat v1.6 to see us through.....and a rather fine furry creature it is too.

*Sam Roberts*

## The Nottingham Systematic Review Course 2011

**Where:** The University of Nottingham **When:** 7th – 10th June 2011

**What:** This course will appeal to all interested in completing Cochrane-style reviews. Experienced tutors give practical and individual advice. After attending participants should be able to understand search strategies, extract data, manage the results of systematic searches, understand data syntheses, apply methods and conduct reviews.

**Who:** All people wishing to undertake reviews of randomised studies.

**How:** Small group teaching, workshops, library-based interactive tutorials with hands on practical work at computer stations and group work.

**How much:** £849. All learning materials, lunch and refreshments are included.

**Contact:** Lindsey Air on [Lindsey.Air@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:Lindsey.Air@nottingham.ac.uk)

Read the opinions of a former delegate on the Nottingham Systematic Review Course published in August 2009 - [BMJ Careers](#).



## John's departure

Many of you will have worked with John on your reviews across these last years.



John's funding was not so sure to continue so he had to look around for another post. He was snapped up by [SchARR](#) (Sheffield University's prestigious School of Health and Related Research). This unit produces systematic reviews of the highest quality and we are really pleased that John is settled there.

We miss John and his steady approach to even the most daunting review but know that this new adventure will bring him lots of new skills and interests - and we will look forward to learning from him on his visits to us in the future. Once CSzG - always CSzG.

## Chalthanya's arrival

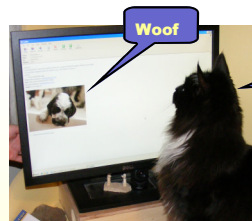
Hello, I am Chalthanya Kumar. I joined the South Asian Cochrane Network and Centre in September this year as an Assistant Trial Search Coordinator for the Cochrane Schizophrenia Group's satellite that is based here in Vellore, India. I have been getting acquainted with the work of the Cochrane Collaboration, and am really amazed to become aware of such a network of people from around the world who put so much effort to generate the best available evidence for the healthcare needs of society. Being a part of the CSzG makes me happy for the role that I play in the treatment and rehabilitation of people with psychotic illnesses.



I am slowly getting to understand this role that involves coding reports of trials of interventions for people with schizophrenia, getting them into Meerkat, and helping Sam maintain the specialised trials register, and even helping out with searching the various clinical trial registries for ongoing trials. I am basically a fun-loving person and have not changed this worldview, as yet! I am grateful for this opportunity to contribute to the work of this amazing organization and wish you all a happy festive season and a fulfilling year ahead!

## Dispatches from Oxford

My efforts (and those of Skippy RumPuss - my cat) for the CSzG this year have seen a shift from on-site work fetching of trial references. In addition to fetching refs, I have searching database lists for relevant RCTs. Granted, I have 3000 items in a search list, particularly when certain conventions. I believe that our register of trials has been researchers and reviewers have noted how extensive our collection is. Again working with Sam, I have tried to improve the accuracy and quality of reference details, and enhance the quality of our archived scans. In some cases, ostensibly useful journal initiatives have proved problematic; for example, the ahead of print posting of articles online has lead to duplication in searching as the articles are posted on journal websites twice, once ahead of print, then again when the print issue appears. The difference in dates and page numbers tends to slip the duplicate refs past our checking and provide me with a housekeeping task. All told, my role in the CSzG is unchanged, but the methods (and my skills) are constantly under review.



Ugh! Where is the 'delete' button when you need it?

in Oxford and London libraries to online worked closely with Sam this year in hand learned to dread the arrival of a wodge of databases tend to ignore bibliographic improved by these archival searches; in Oxford and London libraries to online worked closely with Sam this year in hand learned to dread the arrival of a wodge of databases tend to ignore bibliographic improved by these archival searches; in Oxford and London libraries to online worked closely with Sam this year in hand learned to dread the arrival of a wodge of databases tend to ignore bibliographic improved by these archival searches;

*Drew Davey*

[www.srs-org.com](http://www.srs-org.com)

Now about one third of trials come out of China. If even only 10% are of good quality (there has been a real issue with quality control) this still means a substantial number could hold important information for Cochrane Reviewers. SRS has been working with CSzG to run training courses in China, provide a support service for those wishing to do reviews in China, and also data selection and - if required - a data extraction service for those who have found Chinese studies that may be relevant to their review. This means if any reviewer finds a trial that is inaccessible SRS will see if the study meets inclusion criteria, and if it does, will extract the data so it can be used for a Cochrane review. We have been doing this for years for the CSzG but are now able to provide a wider and more general service.



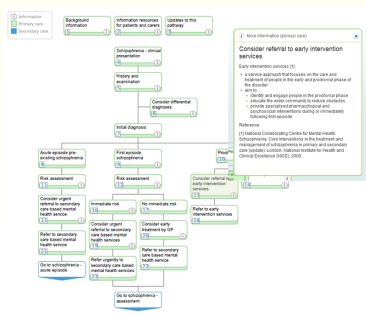
**Jun Xia**

## Map of Medicine

The Map of Medicine is an online service linking pathways to care to the needs of health care commissioners. These malleable pathways are also linked to some evidence but this is where working with CSzG could help.



Though collaboration with Rethink, Enhance Reviews, Better Value Healthcare and the Map of Medicine we are piloting a means of linking your reviews to pathways of care. We are not sure how this will turn out - but will keep you informed.



## Journal club

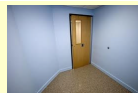
**W**e have nearly finished interactive journal club documentation for 40 reviews - these should be fully finished early in 2011.

We have pilot tested the format and methodology. Have a go with one.

They are all on our website.

<http://szg.cochrane.org/journal-club>

## Trials



vs



**C**SzG has continued pushing the boundaries of trials forward.

In Rio de Janeiro, as in many parts of the world, seclusion rooms or restraints are used for very disturbed people with serious mental illness. The services in Rio want to improve matters and have recognised that this really should be done on the back of good, fair, evidence. (Have a look at CSzG's review - there are no trial-derived data.) Rio is helping produce some - for people for whom there is doubt, Instituto Philippe Pinel, in Rio, randomises to either seclusion or restraint procedures. Total is now nearly 100 people. Outcomes are time in restriction, satisfaction with care, other episode.



Colleagues in Finland who are interested in telemedicine are gearing up to randomise short messaging (SMS) on mobile phones for people who need to take antipsychotic medication. This should be really large and good study and CSzG has had some input. This should reach across nearly all parts of the country - even Lapland.



## Letter from Damascus (Adib, one of CSzG's new editors)



**I** am pleased to join the editors of the CSzG and to be recognized by my peers for doing a job that I love so much is a great privilege. However, let me disclose that I never envisioned an editor position during the course of my membership in this group, despite being one of its founders back in 1994. I am just as satisfied today as I was when I first became an author in a group full of talent and devotion; a group that has reshaped schizophrenia research and management.

In reflection, one could argue that I have been using the resources of the CSzG in other, not irrelevant, ways. Schizophrenia is an awful illness, particularly when it affects a person as close as a brother. However, improving the management of schizophrenia in Syria, and making it evidence-based, was difficult without spreading the word about evidence-based medicine in general. It is worth noting that the CSzG has been a great source of support for my efforts over the past two decades in lecturing, running workshops and arranging local and international conferences on evidence-based practice. This support was most evident in 2005 during an international conference that was held in Damascus under the theme of "Improving Clinical Practice". Some attendees were attracted to the Cochrane work, and, with the help of Clive, the Damascus Systematic Review course has become a regular event. Many titles have been registered with the CSzG and other Cochrane groups, and a number of protocols and reviews have been published already.

I have been informally editing protocols and reviews, and I hope to continue doing that on a formal basis from now on. In accepting this honor, I take immense pride representing Syrian contributors who are the most important part of anything that I have done. I also share the honor of becoming an editor with many people. I had the pleasure of meeting Clive back in the 1980s and he has become a close friend of my wife and children ever since. I have not met all members of the CSzG, but many have been extremely helpful. For instance, I would have had to attend Chinese classes without the help of Chunbo Li! The input of the editorial base has had a profound impact on my work in Damascus. Thank you Claire, Lindsay, Samantha, Jun and John.



With my best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2011. **Adib Essali**



## Janey died this year

Janey had worked with us - seconded from **RETHINK** (the UK's leading national mental health membership charity) - producing the Plan Language Summaries of reviews. Many of you will know her from meetings or correspondence regarding your review. She was a real asset to our group and the world. Janey fell ill again this year and died by her own hand.



This tragedy casts a deep shadow on 2010. We will really miss her - personally as well as professionally.



## Editors list

**C**SzG has an editor near you! Call them to do a review or other related project.

Clive E Adams (UK)  
Evandro da Silva Freire Coutinho (Brazil)  
John M Davis (USA)  
Lorna Duggan (UK)  
Adib Essali (Syria)  
Mark Fenton (UK)  
Mahesh B Jayaram (UK)  
Stefan Leucht (Germany)  
Chunbo Li (China)  
Ichiro M Omori (Japan)  
Prathap Tharyan (India)

## CSzG Editor Lorna welcomes new reviewer



## Colloquium & UK meeting

**T**hose of you who have been to a Cochrane Colloquium will be aware of the benefits of attending Cochrane Collaboration events. As well as the valuable and varied programme of workshops, oral presentations and poster sessions, they present a great opportunity for networking with other review authors, editors and editorial base staff and for picking the brains of experienced statisticians and methodologists. The 19th Cochrane Colloquium will be held in Madrid, Spain from 19-22 October 2011. Before that there is an opportunity to meet up even sooner at the 16th Annual Meeting of UK and Ireland-based Contributors to the Cochrane Collaboration which is being held in Belfast, Northern Ireland on March 15-16th 2011. Visit [www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org) for more details.

## Group contacts

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**Managing Editor:** **Claire Irving**  
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**Trial Search Co-ordinator:** **Sam Roberts**  
Samantha.roberts@nottingham.ac.uk

## Carbon reduction

How can we do our work with less threat to the environment? We travel distances, avoid video conferencing even when available and are not as paper-free as we could be. Carbon saving will be an increasingly important consideration for our future work. Carbon addicts click [here](#).



## Welcome to Mark



**H**ello. Just a short note of introduction. For some of you I will be a familiar face, having worked with the Cochrane Schizophrenia Group in various guises since 1996, such as a systematic reviewer and later as Trial Search Co-ordinator. I am now based in the National Institute of Health and Clinical Practice, NHS Evidence as Editor of the UK Database of Uncertainties about the Effects of Treatments (UK DUETs). My professional background is as a psychiatric nurse. Following several trainings and working in psychodynamic therapy in acute in-patient units in the UK, I undertook a degree in medical sociology. I eventually ended up discovering that numbers do have a meaning in giving answers to questions of 'Does this treatment work?' through the Cochrane Schizophrenia Group.

Having been an author on over 20 Cochrane Systematic Reviews, it feels a bit like poacher turned game keeper becoming an editor. However, all the experience of reviews does not stop a feeling of trepidation I have about receiving my first review as an editor. I look forward to being in contact with review authors, and perhaps even meeting a few of you. Best wishes for a productive new year. **Mark Fenton**

## Baby



**Lindsey** is going to have a baby early in 2011.

As CSzG editorial base will really miss Lindsey for 6 months but consider her only to be on loan to New Baby Air for that time. We are counting the days 'til she returns. **Jun Xia** will be covering for Lindsey for this time (Jun.xia@nottingham.ac.uk).



A peaceful and happy end to 2010  
and a new year full of good things.

*From CSzG Editorial base.*