



UK COCHRANE CENTRE

# Impact of Cochrane reviews – informing evidence-based clinical guidelines

**August 2013**

One method we are using to monitor the impact of Cochrane reviews in healthcare decision-making is to identify whether they have been used to inform evidence-based clinical guidelines. At the UKCC, we started a systematic search of national and international clinical guidelines beginning with those designated as current by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN). At this time (up to and including July 2013), we also have data from the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines.

We found the reviews had been used in a variety of ways, mostly for data analyses needed to address the clinical questions within the guidelines but sometimes to inform the background sections to set the research in context.

At the UKCC, we have set up and now maintain a database linking Cochrane reviews to the guidelines they have informed, which enables us to generate tailored information for each Cochrane review group. Earlier this year we provided individual reports to the CRGs on the use of their reviews to inform NICE and SIGN guidelines to assist them in completing reports for funders and The Cochrane Collaboration.

As we continue our systematic search of national clinical guidelines from other countries, we send periodic reports to the CRGs, as each source or time period are completed. At other times, report updates are issued on request to support CRGs in editorial decision-making, promotional activities, and in seeking programme grants or other funding opportunities. Please contact Anne Eisinga ([anne.eisinga@cochrane.nhs.uk](mailto:anne.eisinga@cochrane.nhs.uk)) for this service. We also monitor guideline developers' websites concurrently to capture newly published guidelines to maintain the currency of the data. We are liaising with the Cochrane Editorial Unit to determine how best to populate and maintain this growing data set for linking reviews to guidelines in the longer term.

In an allied project, Phil Alderson ([Philip.alderson@cochrane.nhs.uk](mailto:Philip.alderson@cochrane.nhs.uk)) is working with CRGs to identify opportunities to work with guideline developers in the UK. All CRGs have been provided with a list of NICE's current and planned clinical guidelines. He is exploring specific projects with several CRGs to feed reviews directly into guideline development. He is also piloting some work with guideline developers to make better use of CRGs' knowledge when starting a guideline.

# Data report on impact of Cochrane reviews informing evidence-based clinical guidelines

Use of Cochrane reviews to inform clinical guidelines and other evidence-based recommendations (SIGN, NICE, WHO)

Overall, currently 1158 Cochrane reviews from 47 Cochrane Review Groups have been used to inform 238 clinical guidelines and other evidence-based recommendations designated as current up to and including July 2013 (24 SIGN; 115 NICE; 99 WHO) (<http://www.sign.ac.uk/guidelines/published/numlist.html> ; <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG/Published>; <http://www.who.int/publications/guidelines/year/en/index.html> – last checked 5 August 2013):

- maximum number of reviews used from any one CRG was 202 (Pregnancy & Childbirth Group)
- maximum number of reviews used to inform any one guideline was 49 (British Guideline on the management of asthma – SIGN publication no. 101)
- maximum number of reviews from any one CRG to inform any one guideline was 44 (Airways Group)
- 252 reviews have been used in more than one guideline:
  - 199 in 2
  - 36 in 3
  - 11 in 4
  - 4 in 5
  - 1 in 6
  - 1 in 12
- The top 6 most frequently used reviews were:
  - Decision aids for people facing health treatment or screening decisions (CD001431 – Consumers & Communication) (12 guidelines: 11 NICE; 1 SIGN)
  - Vocational rehabilitation for people with severe mental illness (CD003080 – Schizophrenia) (6 guidelines: 5 NICE; 1 WHO)
  - Antibiotic prophylaxis for cesarean section (CD000933\* – Pregnancy & Childbirth) (5 guidelines: 3 NICE; 2 WHO)
  - Anticoagulants for acute ischaemic stroke (CD000024 – Stroke) (5 guidelines: 2 NICE; 3 SIGN)
  - Exercise for depression (CD004366 – Depression, Anxiety & Neurosis) (5 guidelines: 2 NICE; 2 SIGN; 1 WHO)
  - Psychosocial and pharmacological treatments for deliberate self harm (CD001764 – Depression, Anxiety & Neurosis) (5 guidelines: 2 NICE; 3 WHO)

\*This review has since been withdrawn, updated and replaced by: Antibiotic prophylaxis versus no prophylaxis for preventing infection after cesarean section (CD007482 – Pregnancy & Childbirth)

