



The 2002 CSG flier

Settling in Leeds

OK, OK, we haven't got our web site shifted – but everything else is here - the files, the offices, the work and the buzz. **Gill Rizzello** (Co-ordinator) has been just great and as Cochrane-watchers will testify, our output continues to increase and improve. **Mark Fenton**, working from home remains part-time Trial Search Co-ordinator (TSC) and full-time cornerstone of this work. Now along with **Judy Wright** who's joined us as part time TSC, Mark produces one of the most up-to-date, neat, sophisticated and labour-saving registers in the Collaboration.



John Rathbone's also joined us this year. Along with **Claire Joy** he helps with the maintenance of our reviews. **Shazia Akhtar** spent some time with us helping with our register but has now moved on to start a PhD - thank you and good luck, Shazia. The invaluable **Drew Davey** continues to work with us from his home in Oxford, finding hard-copies of relevant work. **CEA**

Ken Warren Prize X 2

For the second year in a row CSG won the Ken Warren Prize for best review from an author based in a low income country. In 2001 **Manit Srisurapanont** (Thailand) won it for his review on quetiapine and this year it's been awarded to **Prathap Tharyan** (India) for his review on ECT. **GR**

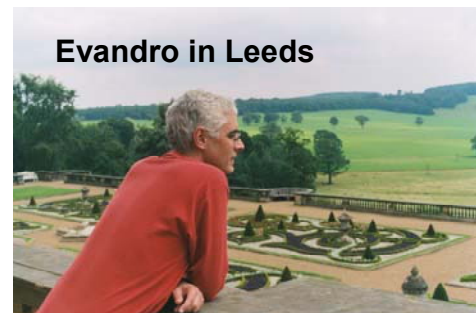
Editors

We've increased the number our editors. **Clive Adams** is the Co-ordinating Editor and **Evandro Coutinho**, **Lorna Duggan**, **Simon Gilbody** and **Stefan Leucht** continue as before but **Kristian Wahlbeck** has moved on. We were all sorry to see him go. Kristian had been with the group since 1996 and we owe him a tremendous debt. I'm sure that CSG and Kristian will continue to collaborate on many projects. We now have three new editors. Our two Ken Warren Prize winners Manit and Prathap have kindly agreed to join us. In addition, **John Davis** (USA) has also joined the team. John has a wealth of experience in meta-analyses and has always been supportive of Cochrane work. **CEA**

CSG factfile for 2002	
Protocols	20
Reviews	72
Updates in 2002	9
Studies in register	5554
Reports of studies in register	6500
Studies used in reviews	2057
Studies used in reviews this year	425
RCT reports identified in addition to our register supplied to CENTRAL for the Cochrane Library	2076
Reviewers	169
Countries from which active participants come	27

Visitors

We've had a stream of overseas visitors over the year. The list's too long for this letter but amongst others were **Wendel Abel** (Jamaica), **Evandro Coutinho** (Brazil),



Suwanna Arunpongpaisal (Thailand), **Christian Gold** (Austria) as well as **Martin Wurm**, **Magnus Nastoll**, **Kristin Canzler** and **Alex Mayer** from the University of Ulm, Germany.

We've also had visits from lots of reviewers from within the UK who came to work at our editorial base. Leeds has its own international airport (Leeds Bradford) and is an easy journey from London and Manchester. Thank you for your visits – it is a great way of getting your reviews done and fostering collaboration. **CEA**

Travel funds

CSG has some limited funds for reviewers who would like to come to the editorial base to work. If you are over 1000 km from our CSG base, and would like to see if there are any funds left, contact Gill. We can't promise anything but may be able to help. **GR**

CSG reviews - maintaining and improving

There are always new reviews to do, hundreds of titles out there, waiting to be registered but we're also working to ensure that the quality and clarity of existing reviews is maintained and improved. We need to test the methods we use, challenge the remaining sources of bias and report findings ever more clearly. **CEA**

CSG register in MeerKat

MeerKat, the MS Access-based programme designed by Update Software and the Collaboration for the Collaboration, is now the sole store for our study based register. It ensures the smooth running of all the supply-of-data-to-reviewers functions and goes from strength to strength. Clive and I have been helping other Cochrane groups switch to this programme from old systems and now Cochrane groups such as Drugs and Alcohol, Eyes and Vision, and Pregnancy and Childbirth are reaping the considerable benefits. There is now a MeerKat web-site (<http://www.update-software.com/meerkat/>) and a discussion list (<http://www.cochrane.de/mailman/listinfo/meerkat>). **MF**

The EU ψ Project

This EU-funded project is drawing to a close. The five Cochrane groups working in the areas of mental health/behavioural or learning problems have produced a single product – the Mental Health Library. Do try the pilot database online (<http://www.update-software.com/clibng/mhlogon.htm> username: MentalHealth password: Evaluation). It contains all the Cochrane reviews relevant to mental health, a database of quality-rated national guidelines and a study-based register of trials (not just the usual salami slices you see in standard databases, but also a record of the study - the sausage from which the slices are taken). Update Software will start distribution of this product in 2003. **CEA**



Trials

Members of CSG have also been helping people undertake the randomised studies that should ensure that care for people with schizophrenia is based on good evidence. **TREC-Rio** (Tranquilização Rápida-Ensaio Clínico = Rapid Tranquillisation Clinical Trial) in Rio-de-Janeiro is now finished. This trial compared a haloperidol-promethazine mix with midazolam for the rapid tranquillisation of overtly violent psychotic people (see protocol <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-244X/2/11/>). Three hundred and one people were randomised with a 99% follow up. The results were clear and have now been written up and are out for the lottery of publication. **TREC-India** (200 randomised, haloperidol-promethazine mix vs lorazepam) is close behind. These trials are the largest studies of their kind and we are keen on fostering more. **CEA**



As the TREC methodology is generic, it can be applied to any situation in which people are unsure of the value of the treatments given in psychiatric emergency. Ghana is interested in a new version of this study and may well be next.

The **PROMPTS** trial is just beginning here in Leeds. This study will simply evaluate the effect of sending out a reminder letter to people due to attend psychiatric outpatient clinic. The results of the Cochrane review on this topic were equivocal – but after this super-simple study, things will hopefully be clearer. Centres in Spain may join and any more would be welcome. In the UK we have 30-50% non attendance rate, what's yours? **CEA**

Leeds crash-course on systematic reviews

In November we experimented with a four-day course primarily for people who wanted to spend an intensive few days on their reviews. The course covered protocol development, searching, reference management, data extraction, basic statistics, and use of RevMan. It was a resounding success and we will repeat it twice next year, in May and November (contact Gill for details). **CEA**

Colloquia

One of the highlights of the Stavanger Colloquium for us was the song contest. Our new reserved, gentle, South Indian editor Prathap took the place by storm. Future funding of the CSG may be from a record deal. What next year's Colloquium in Barcelona holds no one knows, but do put 26th-31st October 2003 in your diary.



Style

We've always been keen on a clear style for reviews and have developed our own Guide Review which is freely available to anyone who'd like it. It's written in RevMan and provides examples and reasons for the particular format of every section of a review. **GR**

Davos 2002

The 2002 Winter Workshop on Schizophrenia went well. CSG had a strong presence. I did not get much skiing in, what with a CSG editors meeting and a TREC get-together, but it was a good time and allowed us to keep some presence in the research world. **CEA**

In conclusion

Another uncertain year is ahead with the powerful sabre-rattling across continents. The CSG editorial base wishes you and your families peace, rest and happiness this season.