

The CSG December '98 flier

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<http://www.psychiatry.ox.ac.uk/csg/intro.html>

A note from Oxford

Thank you to everyone who has helped make 1998 such a productive year for the Cochrane Schizophrenia Group (CSG).

The collection of schizophrenia trials has really gathered momentum in 1998 and there are now thousands in the Cochrane Controlled Trials Register within the Cochrane Library. We hope to make the whole CSG Register freely available on the Internet so reviewers can log in to collect relevant studies. In 1999 the Register should change from being report-based to being study-based. This means that all citations will begin to be related to their trial of origin thus, hopefully, making reviewers' lives considerably easier.

The collection of reviews directly relating to schizophrenia is still small but increasing at a good pace. They now cover a wide spectrum of care. Topics include the effects of the old and new drugs, community care packages, psychotherapies and policy. Also, thanks to your continuing commitment and people coming in and out of the Group, the CSG has not been having a great problem with keeping things up to date...although there is always more to do...☺ Cochrane Schizophrenia Group reviews are already powerful benchmarks for those interested in the effects of mental health care, and will become more so in the next years.

Since the last Newsletter the CSG team has expanded to keep up with the work. Lorna has joined us as Comments editor (see on), and Evandro is helping with the main body of editing, which is now considerable. Each review team works with one contact editor, although the protocol and review are also seen by another editor and sent for additional peer and lay review. We hope, in this way, to keep quality as high as possible. If the system could be improved please tell us.

A letter from Rio... Clive Adams

I am Evandro da Silva Freire Coutinho. I am Brazilian, living in Rio de Janeiro. Since 1985 I have worked at Fundacao Oswaldo Cruz, in the Department of Epidemiology. In 1997 I came to Oxford for eight weeks with Clive at the CSG, working on a review of zuclopenthixol acetate. Since this time I have been collaborating on several projects to help build close institutional links between the CSG editorial base and Fundacao Oswaldo Cruz.

In June 1998 I was pleased to be asked to become an Editor of the CSG. I am really enjoying this experience, and I have been learning a lot from it. I realise there is a lot of responsibility involved in helping other people produce reviews, but my colleagues have been very helpful. I look forward to increasing contact in the next year, and to meeting some of you at the Rome Cochrane Colloquium

POINTS TO PONDER

31 Reviews, 12 protocols, 10 updates

- The first Cochrane Library issue of 1999 has over 30 reviews from the CSG and this is despite two going off to the new Cochrane Psychosocial Developmental and Learning Problems Group.
- There have been 12 new reviews and 10 updates in 1998.
- All abstracts are free on the Internet (<http://cochrane.co.uk/info/abstracts/abidx.htm#G06@>).

The CSG Register

- The Register now contains about 4000 hard copies of trials relevant to schizophrenia - far more than you will find on any database other than the Cochrane Controlled Trials Register.
- Forget MEDLINE for finding schizophrenia trials - we can get every citation you want with a minimum number of false hits.

Database indexing

- Authors, titles and abstracts are now indexed on CINAHL and are to go on to MEDLINE in mid 1999.

The New Oxford Textbook of Psychiatry

- This major textbook is in the process of being written. Oxford University Press has given advice to authors as follows: "Contributors may wish to use the current disc issue of The Cochrane Library (available at all good medical libraries). A search of [this] will yield many systematic reviews and a large database of references".

CSG team

Editors

- Clive Adams (Co-ordinating editor, UK)
- Lorna Duggan (Comments editor, UK)
- Evandro da Silva Freire Coutinho (Brazil)
- Kristian Wahlbeck (Finland)
- Paul White (Australia)

Co-ordinator

Leanne Roberts

Secretary

Elaine Smith

Trials search co-ordinator ...with help from

Claire Joy
Pam Batchelor
Drew Davey

CSG dates for 1999

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|-------------|---|------------------------------------|---------------|
| 24 February | - | Module deadline | Issue 2, 1999 |
| 22-23 March | - | Contributors Meeting, Oxford | |
| 5-7 May | - | STM, Stratford, UK (see on) | |
| 26 May | - | Module deadline | Issue 3, 1999 |
| 14 July | - | Module deadline | Issue 4, 1999 |
| 6-9 October | - | Cochrane Colloquium, Rome, Italy | |
| 27 October | - | Module deadline | Issue 1, 2000 |

Comments and criticisms

I work in a large hospital in Northampton, UK, as a forensic psychiatrist with a special interest in Learning Disabilities. Perhaps it was because of my wit and tact that I was asked, over a year ago, to become Comments editor for the CSG. My job is to agree a summary of the comment with the commentor, give this to the reviewer and contact editor, and agree a response. The comment and reply then appear on the Cochrane Library.

The following CSG reviews have received comments: antiliberals, atypicals vs. clozapine, clozapine, CMHT, family interventions, prayer, quetiapine, risperidone and two of the tardive dyskinesia reviews. I have the same 3-monthly deadline as the rest of the editorial team, so please excuse my rudeness as deadline day approaches...

Often reviewers feel hacked off when comments are made (similar to being told that you have an ugly, untalented baby). However, comments should be viewed and dealt with positively, in order to improve the quality and accessibility of reviews.



Besides being Comments editor I am also a reviewer. If you have any queries regarding the above process, please contact me via email (106650.3245@compuserve.com) and I'll be happy to help.

Lorna

Free from the CSG

CSG Guide Review - updated

Powerpoint presentations - on the CSG, on searching, on the quality of schizophrenia trials

Advertisement sanctioned by CSG

Improvements: 1999 - a year of change

- **RevMan 4.0, a new version is being tested, for release next year - this will further help the reviewing process but it will need a bit of getting used to. We hope to be able to supply you with RevMan 4.0 on CD along with your review/s imported onto a floppy.**
- **Studies should be even more accessible to reviewers, and, hopefully, supplied in a more orderly fashion.**
- **All reviews are currently being proof-read by a professional copy editor. This may well necessitate some changes - first in abstracts, and in the body of text thereafter ... but not too much.**

Training

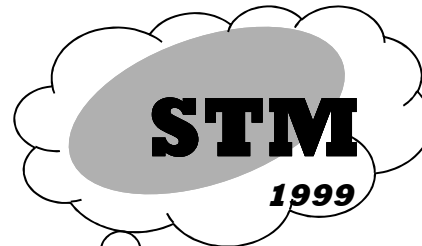
For details of dates and locations of all free protocol and RevMan training workshops please go to <http://www.update-software.com/ccweb.cochrane/workshop.htm> or contact Leanne.

From hassle-desk, HQ

Thanks so much to all of you who have contributed to our work in the past year, and put up with a steady stream of harassment from me about deadlines, workshops and other things essential to the smooth running of the Group. The CSG continues to go from strength to strength, and this would not be possible without your (mainly voluntary) efforts. Our next module deadline is 1st February 1999... if you have work that you wish to submit then, please let me know as far in advance as possible.

Our new-and-improved Guide Review will be winging its way to reviewers shortly. Do take some time to look at this carefully, as it gives a very clear example of the CSG 'style'. Please make special note of the reference section, as correct citations save a lot of time at this end.

I hope this finds you all well and happy. Keep in touch. Leanne



Schizophrenia Trials Meeting 5th- 7th May 1999, Stratford-upon-Avon, UK.

The CSG, in collaboration with NHS R&D and Powis (a charity), address the issue of why the majority of little clinical trials, many of which are too small, to which randomised outcomes are not used in everyday practice.¹ Large, simple trials are needed to begin to address the needs of those with schizophrenia, and their families, and clinicians. If you are interested in a stimulating, pleasant two days focusing on the quality of trials past, the clinical use of trials today, and planning for trials of the future, this meeting is for you.

Places are limited, brochure available from Leanne Roberts (CSG Editorial Base), or through the Internet site (<http://www.psych.ox.ac.uk/csg/intro.html>).

1. <http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/317/7167/1181>
As you see 1999 is going to be a busy year for everyone in the CSG. If, at any time, you are able to get to Oxford, please call in - it would be lovely to see you. If you want to come and work on a review or other research relevant to the CSG, you are most welcome. There is always a computer space for you. The Editorial base may even have a little funding to help with travel costs. Clive

ARE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS CORRECT?
If not, please contact Leanne Roberts, Co-ordinator,
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