
The Cochrane Collaboration 20th Anniversary

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Abstract

In 2013 the Cochrane Collaboration is celebrating its 20th anniversary. The Collaboration has become a leading global producer of systematic reviews that guide health care practice, primarily through its network of volunteers. Cochrane Reviews have an international appeal for advanced practice nurses and midwives, through coverage of issues affecting people in all countries and circumstances. Cochrane recognize that it is vital to ensure that independent practitioners are supported using the best available evidence.

A Cochrane Review is a scientific investigation in itself, with a methods section and an assembly of original studies (predominantly randomized controlled trials and clinical controlled trials) as the review 'subjects'. The results of these investigations are synthesized using strategies to limit bias and error. These strategies include a search of all potentially relevant studies and the use of explicit criteria in the selection of studies for review. Primary research designs and study characteristics are appraised, data is synthesized, and results interpreted. Each review is prepared by an 'author team' with support from specialist librarians, methodologists, copy and content editors, and peer reviewers, taking hundreds of hours of work from start to finish. Without Cochrane Reviews, many nurses and midwives cannot make health care decisions based on the most up-to-date best evidence.

Many Cochrane Reviews are directly relevant to advanced practice nurses and midwives, and demonstrate the value of the care offered by this group. Examples include 'Interventions to improve the use of systematic reviews in decision-making by health system managers, policy makers and clinicians'.¹ 'Nurse versus physician-led care for the management of asthma'² and 'Specialist home-based nursing services for children with acute and chronic illnesses'.³

The Collaboration has also furthered its commitment to

nursing by establishing the Cochrane Nursing Care Field (CNCF) in 2009. The mission of the CNCF is to improve health outcomes through increasing the use of the Cochrane Library by nurses and others involved in nursing care, engaging those with the Cochrane Collaboration and supporting the Collaboration and its role in providing an evidence base for nursing care.

Nurses and midwives often need questions answered that are not straightforward 'cause and effect' questions but relate to the user or care experience (qualitative research). This is an area in which the Cochrane Collaboration is also becoming involved in. The Cochrane Collaboration Qualitative and Implementation Methods Group has been established and focuses on methods and processes involved in the synthesis of qualitative evidence and the integration of qualitative evidence with Cochrane intervention reviews of effects.

As a new member of the CNCF I find this development exciting and recognize that moving in this direction into the next 20 years is essential. Regardless of the types of clinical questions that need answering, we need to ensure that the best quality research led by experts in the field is shared amongst the global community of health care professionals.

As part of a series of events to mark the 20th Anniversary in 2013, 24 videos - the Cochrane20 Video Series - were created focusing on the ideas, achievements, and people that have contributed to its growth since 1993. The complete playlist can be found on the 20th Anniversary website and YouTube (Cochrane Collaboration 2013).

Cochrane Collaboration 20th Anniversary Website.
Cochrane Collaboration.

<http://www.cochrane.org/cochrane-reviews> Accessed: 12/09/2013.

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