

UK Cochrane Centre

Annual Report 2006



**THE COCHRANE
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Background

The UK Cochrane Centre (UKCC) was established in Oxford, England at the end of 1992 by the NHS Research and Development Programme 'to facilitate and co-ordinate the preparation and maintenance of systematic reviews of randomized controlled trials of healthcare'. The UKCC is now part of The Cochrane Collaboration, which was launched at the first Cochrane Colloquium, hosted by the UKCC, in Oxford in October 1993. In 2006, The UKCC hosted the fourteenth Colloquium, in Dublin, Ireland. The UKCC is still an integral part of the NHS Research and Development Programme, along with the Centre for Reviews and Dissemination in York and the NHS Health Technology Assessment Programme. Following an external review of the UKCC's work in 2003, the NHS R&D Programme decided that we should receive continued funding until at least March 2010. In January 2006, the work of the UKCC and other Cochrane entities in England was praised in the new strategy for the NHS Research and Development Programme, *Best Research for Best Health*, with a commitment to increase the funding for this work.

The UKCC's agreed programme of work focuses on the training and support of Cochrane entities and contributors based in the UK and other countries for which the Centre is responsible. The UKCC continues to carry out some methodological research and other activities intended to help improve the quality of Cochrane reviews within its core funding; seeking additional funds to support large projects as necessary.

The UKCC provides a link between national initiatives in the UK and the international Cochrane Collaboration. It is one of twelve Cochrane Centres, which provide the infrastructure for co-ordinating The Cochrane Collaboration around the world. Within The Cochrane Collaboration, the UKCC is responsible for supporting contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration in the United Kingdom, Ireland and some other countries. A branch of the Centre was established in Bahrain in March 2005. Responsibility for Thailand (including the Thai Cochrane Network) reverted to the Australasian Cochrane Centre in February 2006.

The UK Cochrane Centre

The staff of the UKCC are listed in Appendix 1. All contribute to our Training and Support Programme. During 2006, the UKCC was the reference Cochrane Centre for half of the Cochrane Review Groups (CRGs), with 25 of the 51 CRGs having editorial bases in the UK. The co-ordinating bases of two Fields and seven Methods Groups were also based in the UK in 2006. More than one third of the contributors to the 51 CRGs live in the UK. This represented more than 5000 people by the end of 2006, an increase of 150% since 2000. In early 2006, nearly 3000 of the 9000 authors of Cochrane reviews were in the UK.

The Workplan for the UKCC for 2005-2010 was agreed with the Department of Health in 2005. This reflects the decisions taken following the 2003 external review to make the main focus for the core funding provided to the UKCC by the Department of Health (via the NHS R&D Programme) the training and

support for entities (in particular Cochrane Review Groups) and contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration based in the UK. This includes recognition of the need for our Research/Methodology Programme to help underpin the Training and Support Programme but a requirement that funds be sought from elsewhere for major research projects of the type we proposed to the external review.

The remainder of this report outlines the different aspects of our work. Our achievements against our targets in 2006 are shown in Appendix 2.

Training and Support Programme

The highlight of the year for the UKCC in 2006 was the Cochrane Colloquium which we organized in Dublin in October. This provided numerous opportunities for training and support of Cochrane entities and participants in The Cochrane Collaboration from the UK and further afield. It is described later in this report, and the remainder of this section focuses on other aspects of our Training and Support Programme.

Because of the Colloquium, we did not organize a meeting for contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration based in the UK and Ireland in 2006. However, meetings were arranged for the staff of the editorial bases of Cochrane Review Groups. Carol Lefebvre, senior information scientist at the UKCC, organized and co-chaired the Annual Meeting for UK-based Trials Search Co-ordinators (TSCs), in Oxford. Topics discussed included feedback from the TSC representative on the Steering Group, TSC involvement in the new Diagnostic Test Accuracy Register, how and where to include search strategies in Cochrane reviews, plans for the Dublin Colloquium and the future of the Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL). We also provided support for a meeting of the Review Group Co-ordinators in London and held a half-day meeting for Co-ordinating Editors. Both meetings covered a variety of topics and provided an opportunity for discussion of current issues and the identification of solutions.

Our policy of developing new training modules continued in 2006 with new courses on 'Train The Trainers' and a 'Review Updating Course'. In addition, we consolidated the development of the two-day 'Developing a Protocol for a Review' workshop, which is well received by authors. Catherine Francis-Baldesari joined the Training Team in January 2006 as a full-time member of staff. This has given us scope to provide more training sessions. In 2006 we provided 57 face-to-face training days and continue to have a steady stream of visitors to the Centre, including the Aubrey Sheiham scholar who requires regular on-going support. During the year we discussed web-based training in collaboration with the University of Portsmouth and this will begin in 2007. It should enable us to reach a wider audience and will give us scope to spend more time during the training days on issues such as the use of The Cochrane Collaboration's software for preparing and maintaining systematic reviews, RevMan.

Our traditional workshop programme in 2006 comprised eight 'Developing a Protocol for a Review' workshops and nine 'Introduction to Analysis' workshops. These were held in Aberdeen, Bath, Belfast, Liverpool, London, Oxford and York; and attracted a similar number of participants to the 2005 workshops. We offered 267 places and 237 of these were filled, with 102 people attending the 'Developing a Protocol for a Review' workshop and 135 attending the 'Introduction to Analysis' workshop. After its piloting in 2005, we successfully integrated two two-day workshops on developing a protocol for a review into our workshop programme in 2006, with a total of 24 participants. The two-day workshop introduces new review authors to the process of conducting a Cochrane review from the protocol stage, with the aim that authors will have identified key components of their protocol and started a draft in RevMan by the end of the workshop.

A 'Review Completion Course' was run in February 2006 for seven review authors who had experienced difficulty in completing their reviews. The course provides a week long opportunity for authors to spend dedicated time working on their reviews, with on-site help with RevMan, statistical analyses and searching. This was an intensive but successful week. As of Issue 1 2007, three of the participants had published their previously stalled reviews in the *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*. We also ran a new 'Review Updating' course over two days in Oxford in December. Seven authors took part and some managed to complete the update of their review in this time. Facilitators, including a statistician, were available to offer one-to-one advice and help as required.

We have run workshops for editors of Cochrane Review Groups in previous years, but this was deferred in 2006 after two attempts to run the workshop failed to yield a sufficient number of registrations. It became apparent that although many editors were interested in participating, they were unable to take the time from their paid work to attend the two-day course. In the light of this, and changes to RevMan (including the introduction of a central server to share drafts for Cochrane reviews), we will revise the content and structure of this workshop in 2007, to make it more relevant to the new methods of working for editors.

The Training Team, in conjunction with Sally Hopewell, research scientist at the UKCC, ran a one-day pilot workshop entitled 'Methodology workshop for Cochrane reviews' in February in London. The workshop was run in seminar style with speakers presenting material followed by questions from the 25 participants. The topics for discussion included assessing susceptibility to bias of included studies in Cochrane reviews, common statistical pitfalls in Cochrane reviews, incorporating information on adverse events, and the challenges of non-randomized studies.

The UKCC funded a full day's training for UK-based consumers involved in The Cochrane Collaboration during the Dublin Colloquium in October 2006. This was attended by 24 consumers with a wide range of involvement in the work of The Cochrane Collaboration. The feedback was positive and people

commented that they found the networking opportunities invaluable and had learned things that would help them contribute more effectively.

Carol Lefebvre conducted five half-day Cochrane Library training courses in association with Su Golder, an Information Officer from the Centre for Reviews and Dissemination at the University of York. There were approximately 100 attendees. The courses covered the range of databases within *The Cochrane Library*, their content and potential use, and how best to search *The Cochrane Library*. Two of the courses (for librarians – in Bristol and York) were funded through the National Library for Health. The other three (for librarians and public health specialists in Cardiff, Swansea and Wrexham) were funded locally.

The UKCC has continued to work with the Health Research Board in Dublin and the Research and Development Office in Belfast to develop training workshops on the island of Ireland. This programme seeks to expand involvement in the activities of The Cochrane Collaboration on the island of Ireland, to foster participation in Cochrane reviews, to heighten awareness and use of *The Cochrane Library*, and to promote the use of findings of Cochrane reviews in practice, research, and policy-making. We launched a new project, 'Train the Trainer', in 2006, with the goal of developing a pool of workshop facilitators from the island of Ireland. This included a two-day 'Train the Trainer' workshop at the UKCC, with ten participants. We will support the 'Train the Trainer' group to determine priorities, develop a programme and training materials, gain experience in leading workshops, and prepare for the eventual transfer of responsibility for Cochrane review training activities to the island of Ireland. Members of the 'Train the Trainer' group have facilitated with UK Cochrane Centre Training Team members at each workshop since the project began. During 2006, we ran six two-day workshops on systematic reviews in Belfast, Cork, Dublin and Limerick. A total of 90 people took part in these courses and 63 attended two half-day workshops in Belfast during the year. We also ran a three-day workshop in Belfast, attended by 15 people.

We are also seeking to meet the demand for training in the UK by producing Open Learning Material. We have started working with the University of Portsmouth to enhance this greatly. In the meantime, the previously developed modules continue to be freely available on CD-ROM from the UK Cochrane Centre and at www.cochrane-net.org/openlearning/. The modules have been revised in line with new terminology and to ensure that they are compatible with advice in the *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions*.

For the fifth year, the Health Research Board in Dublin, Ireland and the Research and Development Office in Belfast, Northern Ireland have awarded Cochrane Fellowships for people on the island of Ireland to work on Cochrane reviews. These Fellowships are for people resident in Northern Ireland or Ireland, who are working in health or social care. Fellows are provided with protected time on an indicative part-time basis of two days per week for up to two years, to conduct a Cochrane review. The UKCC oversees the selection process for these Fellowships and five were awarded in 2006. The UKCC also

provides ongoing support for all the Cochrane Fellows. In June 2006, we held a Fellows' training day, which five Fellows attended. This provides the Fellows with time to work on their reviews, and to obtain support and have their questions answered by a range of experienced facilitators on-site.

The UKCC also oversees the Aubrey Sheiham Cochrane Collaboration Public Health and Primary Care Scholarship, which allows a Cochrane author from a low- or middle-income country to spend a few months at the UKCC receiving training in systematic reviews and working on one or more Cochrane reviews. Belen Dofitas from the Philippines visited the UK Cochrane Centre from May to July 2006, to work on her review: "Personal protective measures for the prevention of mosquito bites". We also provided a base for several other visiting researchers during 2006, including Lisa Askie, Jon Deeks, Davina Ghersi, David Henderson-Smart, Joseph Okebe, Nandi Siegfried, Xin Sun and Lize van der Merwe.

We also provide regular support on a one-to-one basis to Cochrane entities and contributors in the UK. This is a daily task for some members of staff at the UKCC and is probably at least weekly for all. The support includes advice on interactions with the Department of Health, help with conflict resolution between editorial teams and authors, and methodological advice on the conduct of systematic reviews. Further information on the general support provided by the UKCC is given below (under 'Other activities').

As in previous years, we have monitored the output of participants in our workshop programme by searching the *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR)* to see how many of them have gone on to publish protocols and reviews. Overall, the 1758 participants (from 1998-2006) have contributed 1312 full Cochrane reviews and 707 protocols for reviews that are ongoing, giving a total contribution of 2019. This gives an average of more than one publication per participant, with a range from 0 to 39. The majority of publications are in the last three years, which is in line with the vision of The Cochrane Collaboration to provide up-to-date evidence of the effects of healthcare interventions.

Further information on the Training and Support Programme is available in its separate Annual Report for 2006, which is available at www.cochrane.co.uk/en/docs/AnnualTrainingReport2006.pdf. This includes full details of the workshops offered and the participants' evaluations.

Cochrane Colloquium

The UKCC hosted the XIV Cochrane Colloquium in Dublin on 23-26 October 2006. This is the annual gathering of The Cochrane Collaboration and a great deal of planning and effort was put into its organization by staff at the UKCC since the Steering Group of the Collaboration accepted our offer to host it, in October 2003. When we hosted the first Cochrane Colloquium in Oxford in October 1993, 77 people from 19 countries gathered together and established The Cochrane Collaboration. Since then the Colloquium has moved around the world and grown into a major international conference. The XIV Cochrane

Colloquium was the first time that we had hosted a 'modern' full Colloquium and because of the lack of a sufficiently large venue in Oxford, we had to hold it elsewhere and agreed that this should be Dublin, Ireland.

We were still restricted in regard to the number of potential participants, because of the size of the venue in Dublin, the Burlington Hotel, and we decided that the Colloquium would be an 'internally focused' Colloquium. It proved to be a great success with more than 800 delegates from nearly 30 countries. There were four main plenary sessions, two parallel sessions with a total of 48 oral presentations, 160 posters and more than 100 meetings. The Training Team took the lead in organizing the workshop programme. There were 91 proposals to run workshops, of which we accepted 53. These were offered in three separate sessions and there were a total of nearly 1400 registrations to attend a workshop, with each delegate registering for an average of just under two workshops.

We have prepared a full and detailed report of the XIV Cochrane Colloquium and this has been given to The Cochrane Collaboration's Colloquium Policy Advisory Group and the hosts of the next two Colloquia: the Brazilian Cochrane Centre: São Paulo (2007) and the German Cochrane Centre, Freiburg (2008).

Research/Methodology Programme

The UKCC has continued to engage in a limited programme of research of direct relevance to our Training and Support Programme. For example, during 2006, this included research into publication bias, methods for identifying randomized trials and studies of diagnostic test accuracy, the quality of abstracts reporting the results of trials at conferences, and the reporting of adverse effects in systematic reviews. We published several articles and made presentations at international conferences relating to this work during 2006 (see Appendix 3).

The UKCC continues to be responsible for the production of the annual Cochrane Collaboration Methods Groups Newsletter. This contains articles about the methodology of healthcare evaluations, structured abstracts and commentaries on published research, details of empirical research within The Cochrane Collaboration, and reports from the Methods Groups. More than 750 copies of the 2006 edition were distributed to Cochrane entities in the UK and worldwide, as well as to other people and organizations inside and outside the UK and The Cochrane Collaboration. The newsletter is available at www.cochrane.org/newslett/index.htm.

With funding from the Methodology Programme within the NHS Health Technology Assessment Programme, the Centre continued to enhance the Cochrane Methodology Register during 2006. This Register is a unique resource, containing thousands of records and abstracts for studies relevant to the methodology of systematic reviews and other healthcare evaluations. Through systematic searching of relevant journals, bibliographic databases and the checking of references in HTA monographs, we identified, indexed

and included more than 1400 additional records in the Register during 2006, bringing its total content to more than 9000 records. We have also worked with the Director of the Methodology Programme, Professor Richard Lilford, to highlight topics that might be suitable for calls for proposals for future research.

Identification of studies

Although there has been a substantial decrease in the amount of work done by the UKCC in the identification of studies for possible inclusion in Cochrane reviews over the last few years, in keeping with the guidance from the Department of Health, we remain active in some specific aspects of this task. These focus on those areas where maximum efficiency can be achieved through work done centrally by the UKCC. During 2006, our trial identification programme contributed 6000 reports of trials to the Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL), from a combination of handsearching journals and our ongoing project to develop a search strategy for EMBASE.

Other activities

Every day, staff at the UK Cochrane Centre provide advice and support to members of The Cochrane Collaboration and others interested in the evaluation of health care. This is usually by email or telephone. This has included support to emerging Cochrane entities and initiatives, including Evidence Aid, the working group on Diagnostic Test Accuracy Reviews, the Information Retrieval Methods Group, and the possible Forensic Medicine Review Group and Adverse Events Methods Group. We hosted several meetings relating to The Cochrane Collaboration's Information Management System and the new version of RevMan during 2006.

The Training Team and the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) reinitiated a project for collaborative training workshops. Phil Wiffen, Training Director at the UKCC and Phil Alderson, Associate Centre Director of Methodology at NICE, developed a programme based on input from NICE reviewers. Subsequently, a one-day workshop was conducted at NICE's London offices, with 30 participants. There have been further discussions since then and NICE will make use of the web-based learning modules that we are developing with the University of Portsmouth and we will organize some half-day seminars on specialist topics.

During the year, we helped to establish new partnerships between organizations within the NHS and Cochrane Review Groups in the UK and beyond. For example, we worked with the National Co-ordinating Centre for Health Technology Assessment to provide Cochrane editorial input to 13 draft vignettes for possible research calls. We also provide regular support to Cochrane Review Groups in their links with the NHS R&D Programme and Department of Health (England) in relation to, for example, their annual reports, the incentive scheme for new and updated Cochrane reviews, and the new NHS Award Scheme for Cochrane Reviews announced at the end of 2006.

We have refereed more than 30 articles for journals, as well as protocols and reviews for several Cochrane Review Groups, and grant applications. We have addressed more than two dozen meetings, nationally and internationally, describing the work of the UK Cochrane Centre, The Cochrane Collaboration, systematic reviews and evidence-based health care. We have also participated in a variety of committees within the UK and internationally. We continued to provide a service to the UK Medical Research Council by suggesting referees for outline proposals for clinical trials (37 applications in 2006).

Funding

We are grateful to our funders (in particular the NHS Research and Development Programme, Department of Health, England; Scottish Executive Health and Community Care Department; the NHS Wales Office of Research and Development; the Department of Health and Social Services, Northern Ireland; and the Health Research Board, Ireland); and to the Milton Keynes Primary Care Trust with whom the contract for the UK Cochrane Centre is held.

Appendix 1. Staff list of the UK Cochrane Centre (at January 2007)

Director: Mike Clarke (80%)

Training Director: Phil Wiffen (80%)

Administrator: Caroline Rouse

Personal Assistant/Secretary: Lisa Horwill

Personal Assistant/Secretary: Sarah Moore

Training Co-ordinator: Nicola Thornton (81%)

Lecturer in Systematic Reviews: Catherine Francis-Baldesari

Facilitator for Cochrane Review Group staff: Nancy Owens (20%)

Lecturer in Systematic Reviews: Jayne Rees (20%)

Research Scientist: Sally Hopewell

Senior Information Specialist: Carol Lefebvre

Information Specialist: Anne Eisinga

Appendix 2. Status of Objectives and Targets (at April 2007)

<p>Objective 1: To provide training and support to UK-based Cochrane entities, contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration and others engaged in the preparation of systematic reviews.</p>
<p><i>Objective 1.1: To provide UK-based authors of Cochrane reviews with a range of free options for training in preparing and maintaining Cochrane reviews.</i></p>
<p>1.1.1: Year on year, to continue to provide 'Developing a Protocol' and 'Introduction to Analysis' workshops. Achieved: Eight 'Developing a Protocol' workshops with 102 attendees. Two two-day 'Developing a protocol workshops' with 24 attendees. Nine 'Introduction to Analysis' workshops with 135 attendees.</p>
<p>1.1.2: By the end of 2005, to have investigated the provision of familiarization sessions for RevMan 5 and The Cochrane Collaboration's new Information Management System (being rolled out through 2005 and 2006) Not Achieved: RevMan 5 development has been delayed and will be made available in 2007.</p>
<p>1.1.3: Year on year, to continue to provide week-long Review Completion Courses. Achieved: Seven attendees in February 2006.</p>
<p><i>Objective 1.2: To contribute to ensuring that editorial teams of Collaborative Review Groups (CRGs) are supported in the production of high quality reviews.</i></p>
<p>1.2.1: By mid 2006, to have identified priorities for training of UK-based editorial teams through consultation with members of CRG editorial teams. Achieved: A survey was carried out and the results of this are being used in planning the UKCC's training programme.</p>
<p>1.2.2: Year on year, to contribute to organizing and delivering training workshops for members of editorial teams at the Annual Meetings of UK and Irish Contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration, Cochrane Colloquia, and other times and places as appropriate. Achieved: A programme of 53 workshops and three clinic sessions was held at the Cochrane Colloquium organized by the UKCC in October 2006. The Annual Meeting of UK and Irish Contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration was not held in 2006.</p>
<p>1.2.3: Year on year, to continue to provide a workshop for UK-based editors. Deferred: Feedback from the Cochrane Review Groups showed that current editors had received sufficient training.</p>
<p>1.2.4: By the end of 2006, to have facilitated the introduction of The Cochrane Collaboration's new Information Management System (IMS). Achieved: The editorial bases of all Cochrane Review Groups now use the new IMS.</p>
<p>1.2.5: Year on year, to continue to work with the UKCC's Research/Methodology Team to provide a workshop on methodological issues relevant to editorial teams. Achieved: 25 attendees in February 2006.</p>
<p>1.2.6: Year on year, to work with other Cochrane Centres to facilitate the provision of training to non-UK-based editors of UK-based CRGs. Achieved: Details of our training programme were shared with the Australasian, Chinese and South African Cochrane Centres.</p>
<p>1.2.7: Year on year, to provide workshops on peer reviewing. Achieved: 18 attendees in January 2007.</p>
<p><i>Objective 1.3: To support the introduction of Cochrane reviews of diagnostic test accuracy</i></p>
<p>1.3.1: By the end of 2006, to have worked with The Cochrane Collaboration's working party on reviews of diagnostic test accuracy to have identified the training needs relevant to the introduction of this new type of Cochrane review. Achieved in part: Liaison with The Cochrane Collaboration's working party on reviews of diagnostic test accuracy is ongoing, pending the release of the relevant software.</p>
<p><i>Objective 1.4: To train and support UK-based Cochrane entities and authors to ensure that reports of randomized trials and other eligible studies are made accessible for inclusion in Cochrane reviews.</i></p>

<p>1.4.1: Year on year, to advise and support Cochrane entities, in particular Trials Search Co-ordinators, in developing appropriate search strategies for regular use in <i>The Cochrane Library</i>, MEDLINE, EMBASE and other electronic sources for identifying studies to include in their Specialized Registers. Achieved.</p>
<p>1.4.2: Year on year, to advise and support all UK-based CRGs in having an efficient process in place (e.g. use of a specialized register of eligible studies) for informing Cochrane authors of studies likely to be relevant for inclusion in their review(s). Achieved.</p>
<p>1.4.3: Year on year, to support all UK-based CRGs and Fields/Networks in maintaining their search strategies for their specialized registers and in developing specific search strategies for Cochrane reviews, where appropriate. Achieved.</p>
<p>1.4.4: By mid 2006, to have developed and implemented a formal induction programme for newly appointed Trials Search Co-ordinators (TSCs). Achieved: An induction programme for newly appointed TSCs has been piloted and is in use.</p>
<p>1.4.5: Year on year, to develop and conduct an ongoing training programme for Trials Search Co-ordinators focussing on their key responsibilities in study identification and author support. Achieved.</p>
<p><i>Objective 1.5: To provide training to people working on systematic reviews within NICE.</i></p>
<p>1.5.1: Year on year, to liaise with the groups responsible for producing Technology Assessment Reports (TARs) for NICE about their training needs. Achieved: Phil Wiffen met with Phil Alderson (NICE) to discuss training needs. Further discussions have followed, leading to plans for a workshop with 30 attendees.</p>
<p>1.5.2: To continue to provide special training workshops for NICE. Achieved: See Target 1.5.1.</p>
<p><i>Objective 1.6: To contribute to increasing capacity on the island of Ireland to prepare and understand systematic reviews of healthcare interventions.</i></p>
<p>1.6.1: Year on year, to liaise with the Health Research Board, Dublin, and the R&D Office, Belfast in stimulating interest and providing training opportunities on the island of Ireland. Achieved: Members of the UKCC training team attended meetings to devise suitable training opportunities in the island of Ireland.</p>
<p>1.6.2: Year on year, to work with the Health Research Board and the R&D Office to provide workshops and courses on the island of Ireland. Achieved: One three-day course with 15 attendees. Two half-day courses with 63 attendees. Six two-day courses with 90 attendees. See also Target 1.2.2.</p>
<p><i>Objective 1.7: To organize and host the XIV Cochrane Colloquium in Dublin in October 2006.</i></p>
<p>1.7.1: By October 2006, to have organized and staged the XIV Cochrane Colloquium, including a full programme of training workshops. Achieved: As of April 2007, we are finalising the full report of the XIV Cochrane Colloquium.</p>
<p><i>Objective 1.8: To ensure that training materials used by the UKCC keep step with both methodological developments and changes in the processes of review production, and to respond to new training needs as these arise.</i></p>
<p>1.8.1: Year on year, to work together with the UKCC's Research/Methodology Team to keep abreast of relevant developments. Achieved: Continual liaison with Sally Hopewell (UKCC Research Scientist) and the Cochrane Methods Groups.</p>
<p>1.8.2: Year on year, to liaise with other Cochrane Centres providing similar training around the world, to share resources and reduce duplication of effort. Achieved: The UKCC training materials have been put on The Cochrane Collaboration's Training Resources Website developed by the Australasian Cochrane Centre. We have shared training materials with the Australasian, Chinese and South African Cochrane Centres and many visitors to the UKCC.</p>

1.8.3: Year on year, to work with other Cochrane Centres and others within The Cochrane Collaboration to develop distance learning materials for authors and editorial teams.

Achieved: We have developed relationships with The University of Portsmouth, which will lead to the creation of online training materials. These will be made available first to authors of Cochrane reviews based in the UK, and eventually for use worldwide.

1.8.4: Year on year, to keep under review and provide training as appropriate for those willing to teach on workshops and courses organized by the UKCC.

Achieved: We continue to help those wishing to facilitate courses to observe and begin to undertake training as necessary. We ran a 'Train the Trainer' course for trainers based in Ireland and Northern Ireland in February 2006.

1.8.5: By the end of 2006, to have investigated the provision of training for journalists in understanding systematic reviews and evidence in health care.

Not achieved, but preliminary discussions have taken place.

Objective 1.9: To ensure that The Cochrane Collaboration Aubrey Sheiham Public Health and Primary Care Scholarship is awarded annually.

1.9.1: Year on year, to advertise the scholarship, administer the selection process on behalf of the selection committee, and ensure the scholar is provided with the award as detailed in the advertisement.

Achieved: Belen Dofitas was the Sheiham scholar in 2006 and attended the UKCC from May to July.

Objective 2: To maintain a research programme of international standing on the control of bias in systematic reviewing and to support advances in methodology, in collaboration with others inside and outside The Cochrane Collaboration (see also targets 1.2.5 and 1.8.1 above)

2.1: By the end of 2007, to have secured additional external funding to support a major methodological research project to improve the quality of systematic reviews.

Ongoing. Grant applications were submitted to the Medical Research Council and the Health Technology Assessment Methodology Programme in 2006 but, unfortunately, both of these applications were unsuccessful.

2.2: By mid 2006, to have included details of the new Cochrane Highly Sensitive Search Strategy to identify reports of randomized trials for MEDLINE in the *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions*.

Ongoing: Research into the development of a revised version (2005) of the Cochrane Highly Sensitive Search Strategy to identify reports of randomized trials in MEDLINE was published in April 2006 (reference below). However, since this research was submitted for publication in 2005, changes in indexing policies by the US National Library of Medicine, producers of MEDLINE, have necessitated a reworking of the proposed search strategy before it can be published in the *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions*. By mid 2007, a new revised version will be included in the *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions* and will be submitted as a brief communication or letter for publication in the *Journal of the Medical Library Association* or elsewhere.

Glanville J, Lefebvre C, Miles JNV, Camosso-Stefinovic J. How to identify randomized controlled trials in MEDLINE: 10 years on. *J Med Libr Assoc* 2006;94:130-6. Erratum published in *J Med Libr Assoc* 2006;94:354.

2.3: By mid-2007, to have developed a Highly Sensitive Search Strategy to identify reports of randomized trials for prospective searching of EMBASE using an objective analysis of the frequency of terms used to describe reports of trials that have been identified in the UKCC's retrospective search of EMBASE, compared with their frequency across the entire EMBASE database, to determine their sensitivity and precision in identifying reports of randomized trials.

Ongoing: The dataset of 80,000 reports of definite or possible randomized or quasi-randomized controlled trials identified by the UKCC's systematic search of EMBASE (covering the publication years 1974 to 2005) will be used to develop a highly sensitive search strategy to identify reports of randomized trials in EMBASE using an objective method of search strategy design. Negotiations with Ovid are being conducted to obtain access to a full dataset of EMBASE on CDs to enable the proposed strategy to be tested and validated against the full EMBASE dataset at a particular point in time. Access has not yet been granted but we anticipate that a draft strategy will be in place by early 2008.

2.4: By early 2006, to have prepared a report for publication of the work done by the UKCC in identifying reports of randomized trials in EMBASE and to have integrated the findings from this into study identification training as part of the UKCC's Training and Support Programme.

Ongoing: A draft manuscript has been prepared and is currently being finalized by the authors before being submitted for peer review and publication (April 2007). The final version of the strategy will be developed according to the methods described in Target 2.3 and, on completion (by end of 2008), will be published in the *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions*. In the meantime, the search terms in the UKCC's annual systematic search of EMBASE have been included as background information in study identification training as part of the UKCC's Training and Support Programme and in the draft of the new *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions* (due for publication in July 2007).

2.5: By the end of 2008, to have conducted, reported and integrated, into the UKCC's Training and Support Programme, research on when to update Cochrane reviews.

Ongoing. A funding application was submitted to the Medical Research Council in 2006 to support this work but was unsuccessful. An application has been submitted to The Cochrane Collaboration's Opportunities Fund (decision due in May 2007).

2.6: By the end of 2008, to have conducted, reported and integrated, into the UKCC's Training and Support Programme, research on how information about adverse events is currently being included in Cochrane reviews.

Ongoing. We have conducted a research project assessing the quantity and quality of adverse events information in a sample of systematic reviews published in 2004 and 2005. This project was presented in 2006 (reference below) and has been submitted for publication.

Hopewell S, Wolfenden L, Clarke M. Reporting of adverse events in systematic reviews [abstract]. XIV Cochrane Colloquium; 2006 Oct 23-26; Dublin, Ireland:O15.

2.7: Subject to securing additional funding, in collaboration with CRD and others, to develop, evaluate and publish details of a highly sensitive search strategy to identify studies with information about adverse effects.

Ongoing.

2.8: By the end of 2006, to have conducted and reported research on the methodology and reporting of systematic reviews of diagnostic test accuracy.

Ongoing. We are participating in research projects on the methodology and reporting of systematic reviews of diagnostic test accuracy in collaboration with the Centre for Statistics in Medicine (Oxford) and the Department of Public Health and Epidemiology (Birmingham). This includes a study reviewing the methods and reporting of systematic reviews of diagnostic tests and another study assessing the impact of different methods of meta-analysis for diagnostic test accuracy studies including the effects of heterogeneity. One of these studies has been published (reference below) and the other is ongoing.

Mallett S, Deeks JJ, Halligan S, Hopewell S, Cornelius V, Altman DG. Systematic reviews of diagnostic tests in cancer: review of methods and reporting. *BMJ* 2006;333:413-416.

2.9: Subject to securing additional funding, in collaboration with CRD and others, to develop, evaluate and publish details of a highly sensitive search strategy to identify studies for Cochrane reviews of diagnostic test accuracy.

Ongoing. No funding has yet been secured but some progress has been made towards this target. A relevant manuscript has been accepted for publication (reference below).

Ritchie G, Glanville J, Lefebvre C. Do published search filters to identify diagnostic test accuracy studies perform adequately? *Health Information and Libraries Journal* 2007; in press.

<p>2.10: As and when it becomes necessary, to work with others in The Cochrane Collaboration to provide advice and assistance in developing formats, infrastructure and materials for the development of Cochrane reviews of diagnostic test accuracy. Ongoing.</p>
<p>2.11: By the end of 2006, to have conducted and published research on improving the quality of trials reported in conference proceedings. Ongoing. We have presented and published relevant research (reference below). The findings of this research will result in an extension of the CONSORT Statement specifically for the reporting of randomized trials presented in conference and journal abstracts. We are taking the lead on this extension.</p> <p>Hopewell S, Clarke M, Askie L. Reporting of trials presented in conference abstracts needs to be improved. <i>Journal of Clinical Epidemiology</i> 2006;59(7):681-684.</p>
<p>2.12: By the end of 2007, to have conducted, reported and integrated, into the UKCC's Training and Support programme, research on common methodological problems within Cochrane reviews. Ongoing.</p>
<p>2.13: By the end of 2008 to have prepared and kept up to date at least eight Cochrane methodology reviews. Ongoing. Seven Cochrane methodology reviews are already published or underway. Two reviews were updated in 2006:</p> <p>Hopewell S, McDonald S, Clarke M, Egger M. Grey literature in meta-analyses of randomized trials of health care interventions [Update]. <i>The Cochrane Database of Methodology Reviews</i> 2006, Issue 2. Art. No.: MR000010. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.MR000010.pub2.</p> <p>Hopewell S, Clarke M, Stewart L, Tierney J. Time to publication for results of clinical trials [Minor Update]. <i>Cochrane Database of Methodology Reviews</i> 2001, Issue 3. Art. No.: MR000011. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.MR000011.</p>
<p>2.14: Year on year, to continue to support methodologists within The Cochrane Collaboration as well as support visiting fellows on work related to the UKCC's research programme. Achieved.</p>
<p>2.15: Year on year, in association with the Oslo Branch of the Nordic Cochrane Centre and the Methodology Group of the NHS R&D Programme, to continue to develop <i>The Cochrane Methodology Register</i> as a source of information on closed, ongoing and planned empirical studies of methodology. Achieved. Through systematic searching of relevant journals and bibliographic databases, we identified, indexed and included more than 1400 additional records in the Cochrane Methodology Register during 2006 bringing its total content to more than 9000 records.</p>
<p>Objective 3: To provide a focal point, in the countries for which the UKCC is the reference Centre, in relation to The Cochrane Collaboration, systematic reviews, the evaluation of health and social care, and the control of bias in such evaluations; and to contribute to healthcare research more generally.</p>
<p>3.1: Year on year, to work with others in the National Health Service (NHS) to improve the accessibility, understanding, and usefulness of the findings of Cochrane reviews to the NHS. Achieved. For example, we are working with the National Co-ordinating Centre for Health Technology Assessment, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, the National Library for Health and the National Knowledge Summaries service.</p>
<p>3.2: Year on year, to answer general queries received by the UKCC, either directly or by referring the enquirer to the relevant Cochrane entity, other organization or individual. Achieved, we continue to answer queries by email, telephone and post, and have revised our website extensively to make it a more useful resource.</p>
<p>3.3: Year on year, to maintain an up-to-date module for the UKCC for publication in <i>The Cochrane Library</i> and elsewhere as appropriate. Achieved, our module was updated for each of the four issues of <i>The Cochrane Library</i> in 2006.</p>
<p>3.4: Year on year, to maintain the Cochrane Contact database. Achieved.</p>

3.5: Year on year, to play an active role in the scientific arena by, for example, refereeing journal articles, conference abstracts and grant applications.

Achieved, we acted as referees on more than 30 journal articles and two grant applications. We also conducted the abstracts selection process for the XIV Cochrane Colloquium.

3.6: Year on year, to work with the Medical Research Council and others as appropriate to identify referees from within The Cochrane Collaboration for proposals for new research.

Achieved, suggestions for referees were provided to the MRC for 37 outline applications for clinical trials, and we worked with the National Co-ordinating Centre for Health Technology Assessment to provide Cochrane editorial input to 13 draft vignettes for possible research calls.

3.7: Year on year, to provide office space for up to five colleagues working on training materials, Cochrane reviews and methodology research.

Achieved (Lisa Askie, Jon Deeks, Belen Dofitas, Davina Gherzi, David Henderson-Smart, Nandi Siegfried, Xin Sun, Lize van der Merwe).

3.8: Year on year, to encourage UKCC staff to prepare and maintain Cochrane reviews.

Achieved, almost all UKCC staff are currently working on Cochrane reviews. We were authors on a total of four new protocols or new or substantively updated reviews published in 2006:

Billio A, Clarke M, Morello E. Comparison of clinical efficacy of serotonin receptor antagonists in highly emetogenic chemotherapy. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2006, Issue 4. Art. No.: CD006272. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD006272.

Clarke M, Hopewell S, Juszczak E, Eisinga A, Kjeldstrøm M. Compression stockings for preventing deep vein thrombosis in airline passengers. *The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2006, Issue 2. Art. No.: CD004002. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD004002.pub2.

Hopewell S, McDonald S, Clarke M, Egger M. Grey literature in meta-analyses of randomized trials of health care interventions. *The Cochrane Database of Methodology Reviews* 2006, Issue 2. Art. No.: MR000010. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.MR000010.pub2

Wiffen PJ, McQuay HJ, Moore RA. Lamotrigine for acute and chronic pain. (Protocol) *The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2006, Issue 2. Art. No.: CD006044. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD006044.

Objective 4: To support consumer involvement in The Cochrane Collaboration.

4.1: Year on year, to provide stipends to enable a small number of UK-based Cochrane consumers to attend the meeting of UK and Irish Contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration and the international Cochrane Colloquium.

Achieved for the Colloquium (two stipends). The Annual Meeting of UK and Irish Contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration was not held in 2006.

4.2: By the end of 2006, to have arranged a meeting with Harry Cayton, National Director for Patients and the Public; Sarah Buckland, Director or Nick Partridge, Chair from INVOLVE; and Gill Gyte, Consumer Co-ordinator from The Cochrane Collaboration to discuss the role of the UKCC in relation to consumers in The Cochrane Collaboration and the NHS more widely.

Not achieved.

4.3: Year on year, to encourage UKCC staff to work as consumers with CRGs.

Achieved, three members of staff worked on reviews in this capacity in 2006.

Objective 5: To identify reports of randomized trials of healthcare interventions in non-electronic sources and to make this information available to those involved in preparing and maintaining Cochrane reviews.

5.1: By mid 2006, to have determined what role, if any, the UKCC should have in the prospective searching of general healthcare journals and conference proceedings in the reference area of the UKCC, based on the yield of reports of randomized trials in addition to those already identified through electronic sources, in order to identify which journals it might no longer be necessary to search.
Achieved in part. Of the 16 general healthcare journals searched by the UKCC team of handsearchers, nine, including the *BMJ* and the *Lancet*, need no longer be handsearched as the reports identified are indexed in MEDLINE with the appropriate publication types with very few exceptions. Five journals will continue to be handsearched prospectively, as an electronic search of MEDLINE did not identify an adequately high proportion of the reports found by the handsearch. Two journals are still being handsearched and will be assessed on completion (by mid 2007). We have also worked with colleagues at the Bahrain Branch of the UKCC on research indicating the added value of handsearching healthcare journals in the Arabic-speaking region (references below).

Al Hajeri A, Al Sayyad J, Eisinga A. Handsearching the *EMHJ* for reports of randomized controlled trials by UK Cochrane Centre (Bahrain). *Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal* 2006;12(Suppl 2):S253-S257.

Al-Hajeri A, Fedorowicz Z, Amin F, Eisinga A. The handsearching of 2 medical journals of Bahrain for reports of randomized controlled trials. *Saudi Medical Journal* 2006;27:526-530.

Cathey J, Al Hajeri AA, Fedorowicz Z. A comparison of handsearching versus EMBASE searching of the *Annals of Saudi Medicine* to identify reports of randomized controlled trials. *Annals of Saudi Medicine* 2006;26(1):49-51.

5.2: By the end of 2006, to have ensured that efficient arrangements are in place for prospective identification of new reports of randomized trials in general healthcare journals and conference proceedings within the reference area of the UKCC, where appropriate.

Achieved for the activities generated by the UKCC. Arrangements were made to host and train a member of the Bahrain Branch to take over the co-ordination of handsearching activities in the Arabic-speaking region in November 2006. However, the person concerned was unable to attend at that time and alternative arrangements are under consideration.

Objective 6: To provide non-training support to UK-based Cochrane entities.

6.1: Year on year, to provide advice and support to UK-based Cochrane entities, as appropriate.
Achieved and ongoing, we had personal contact with all UK-based Cochrane entities in 2006.

6.2: Year on year, to help UK-based Cochrane entities to raise the profile of their work.
Achieved and ongoing. For example, we provided extensive input to the Cooksey Consultation.

6.3: Year on year, to work with UK-based CRGs to help make them a key component within the NHS.
Achieved and ongoing. For example, we linked the National Co-ordinating Centre for Health Technology Assessment with eight UK-based CRGs to provide Cochrane editorial input to draft vignettes for possible research calls.

6.4: Year on year, to work with UK-based Cochrane Fields/Networks and Methods Groups to help ensure that The Cochrane Collaboration and the NHS benefit from their work.
Achieved and ongoing.

6.5: Year on year, to work with The Cochrane Collaboration in providing advice to UK-based Cochrane entities in relation to applications for funding.
Achieved and ongoing.

6.6: By 2008, to have worked with the UK-based CRGs to ensure that the Groups and the UKCC are regarded as such a key component of the NHS that the UKCC and the Groups will be provided with adequate core funding to allow them to continue into the next decade.
Ongoing. In 2006 the new NHS Research and Development strategy, *Best Research for Best Health*, commended the work of the UKCC and the CRGs. Following the Cooksey report in December 2006, increased funding was announced for Cochrane Collaboration activity in England.

Appendix 3. Publications by UKCC staff during 2006

(This includes Nandi Siegfried who worked full-time at the UKCC on her D.Phil and Jon Deeks who was a member of staff at the start at 2006)

Al Hajeri A, Al Sayyad J, **Eisinga A**. Handsearching the *EMHJ* for reports of randomized controlled trials by UK Cochrane Centre (Bahrain). *Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal* 2006;12(Suppl 2):S253-S257.

Al-Hajeri A, Fedorowicz Z, Amin F, **Eisinga A**. The handsearching of 2 medical journals of Bahrain for reports of randomized controlled trials. *Saudi Medical Journal* 2006;27:526-530.

Allen C, **Clarke M**. International activity in Cochrane Review Groups with particular reference to China. *Chinese Journal of Evidence-based Medicine* 2006;6(8):541-545.

Allen C, **Clarke M**. [International activity in Cochrane Review Groups with particular reference to China]. *Chinese Journal of Evidence-based Medicine* 2006;6(8):546-549.

Allen C, **Clarke M**, Wyatt D. International activity within Cochrane Review Groups [abstract]. *XIV Cochrane Colloquium*; 2006 Oct 23-26; Dublin, Ireland:122.

Attal N, Cruccu G, Haanpaa M, Hansson P, Jensen TS, Nurmikko T, Sampaio C, Sindrup S, **Wiffen P**. EFNS guidelines on pharmacological treatment of neuropathic pain. *European Journal of Neurology* 2006;13(11):1153-1169.

Bickley S, **Lefebvre C**. Providing access to specialised registers on websites? *Cochrane News* 2006;38:8-9.

Billio A, **Clarke M**, Morello E. Comparison of clinical efficacy of serotonin receptor antagonists in highly emetogenic chemotherapy [Protocol]. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2006, Issue 4. Art. No.: CD006272. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD006272.

Boluyt N, Tjosvold L, Klassen T, **Lefebvre C**, Ofringa M. Locating systematic reviews of healthcare interventions in children: an efficient PubMed search strategy [abstract]. *XIV Cochrane Colloquium*; 2006 Oct 23-26; Dublin, Ireland:45.

Brown P, Brunnhuber K, Chalkidou K, Chalmers I, **Clarke M**, Fenton M, Forbes C, Glanville J, Hicks NJ, Moody J, Twaddle S, Timimi H, Young P. How to formulate research recommendations. *BMJ* 2006;333:804-806.

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Clarke M. The Cochrane Collaboration. In: Machin D, Day S, Green S, editors. *Textbook of Clinical Trials*. 2nd edition. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2006:39-46.

Clarke M. Meta-analyses of adjuvant therapies for women with early breast cancer: the Early Breast Cancer Trialists' Collaborative Group overview. *Annals of Oncology* 2006;17(Suppl 10):x59-x62.

- Clarke M.** Should systematic reviews be seen as original research? *Journal of Health Services Research and Policy* 2006;11(3):192.
- Clarke M.** Systematic reviews: new challenges relating to non-randomised studies and diagnostic test accuracy. *Chinese Journal of Evidence-Based Medicine* 2006;6(4):236-239.
- Clarke M.** [Systematic reviews: new challenges relating to non-randomised studies and diagnostic accuracy]. *Chinese Journal of Evidence-based Medicine* 2006;6(4):240-242.
- Clarke M, Hopewell S, Juszczak E, Eisinga A, Kjeldstrom M.** Compression stockings for preventing deep vein thrombosis in airline passengers. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2006, Issue 2. Art. No.: CD004002. DOI:10.1002/14651858.CD004002.pub2.
- Clarke M, Hopewell S, Juszczak E, Eisinga A, Kjeldstrom M.** Compression stockings to prevent deep vein thrombosis in long-haul airline passengers [Cochrane Column, edited by Taryn Young]. *International Journal of Epidemiology* 2006;35:1410-1411.
- Cleary M, Freeman A, Hunt GE, **Siegfried N.** The trials and tribulations of performing within the research arena. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing* 2006;13(2):247-249.
- Davey P, Brown E, Fenelon L, Finch R, Gould I, Holmes A, Ramsay C, Taylor E, **Wiffen P, Wilcox M.** Systematic review of antimicrobial drug prescribing in hospitals. *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 2006;12(2):211-216.
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- Eisinga A, Siegfried N, Clarke M.** Sensitivity and precision of terms in Phases I, II and III of the Cochrane Highly Sensitive Search Strategy (HSSS) for identifying reports of randomized trials in Africa in HIV/AIDS in MEDLINE [abstract]. *XIV Cochrane Colloquium*; 2006 Oct 23-26; Dublin, Ireland:151.
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- Hopewell S, Clarke M,** editors. *The Cochrane Collaboration Methods Groups Newsletter Supplement* 2006;10:1-38.
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