

2002 Annual Report UK Cochrane Centre

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Background

The UK Cochrane Centre was established at the end of 1992, by the National Health Service Research and Development Programme, "to facilitate and co-ordinate the preparation and maintenance of systematic reviews of randomized controlled trials of health care". It is now part of The Cochrane Collaboration, which was launched at the 1st Cochrane Colloquium in Oxford in October 1993. The UK Cochrane Centre is one of twelve Cochrane Centres, which provide the infrastructure for co-ordinating the Cochrane Collaboration around the world. The first Director of the Centre, Iain Chalmers, stepped down as Director in September 2002. Iain's unique contribution to establishing the Centre and the Cochrane Collaboration more generally and to helping ensure that both have evolved and grown cannot be underestimated. The UK Cochrane Centre supports contributors to the Cochrane Collaboration in the United Kingdom, Ireland and some other countries. This work is currently focused around six themes, which are discussed in this report. The report begins with a scene-setting introduction to the Cochrane Collaboration as a whole.

The Cochrane Collaboration

The Cochrane Collaboration is probably the largest organisation in the world engaged in the production and maintenance of systematic reviews. The Collaboration aims to help people make well-informed decisions by preparing, maintaining and promoting the accessibility of systematic reviews of the effects of interventions in all areas of health care.

The Cochrane Collaboration is supported by hundreds of organisations from around the world, including health service providers, research funding agencies, departments of health, international organisations, industry and universities. There are currently over 9000 people contributing to the work of the Cochrane Collaboration from over 80 countries, and this involvement continues to grow at a rapid rate. The number of people involved increased by 40% in the 18 months to the beginning of 2002.

There are 49 Cochrane Collaborative Review Groups, responsible for reviews within particular areas of health, and collectively providing a home for reviews in all aspects of health care. These Groups are supported by the regional Cochrane Centres. In addition there are Methods Groups, with expertise in relevant areas of methodology; Fields or Networks, with broad areas of interest and expertise spanning the scope of many Review Groups; and a Consumer Network helping to promote the interests of users of health care.

The Cochrane Collaboration has grown quickly since its formation in October 1993. Although there is a great deal of work that remains to be done, much has been accomplished already. *The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, the main product of the Cochrane Collaboration, now contains the full text of 1600 completed Cochrane reviews, each of which will be kept up-to-date as new evidence accumulates. There are also 1200 protocols for reviews in progress. Several hundred newly completed reviews and protocols are added each year, and several hundred reviews are updated.

The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews is available on CD-ROM and on the Internet in *The Cochrane Library*. The establishment of several subscriptions means that this is now free at the point of use to people in several countries of the world. The first of these subscriptions was negotiated, with considerable input from the UK Cochrane Centre, for the island of Ireland in January 2002.

Over the next few years, the Cochrane Collaboration will strive to ensure that its work is sustainable. A recent estimate is that approximately 10,000 Cochrane reviews are needed to cover all health care interventions that have already been investigated in controlled trials, and these reviews will need to be updated at the rate of 5000 per year. If the growth in the Cochrane Collaboration continues at the pace of the last few years, this target will be reached

during the next decade. However, this will require continuing and evolving partnership and collaboration. The Cochrane Collaboration will need to continue to attract and support the wide variety of people who contribute to its work. It will also need to work together with funders and with providers of health care to ensure that the resources needed for the work grow and the output of the work is accessible to people making decisions about health care.

The UK Cochrane Centre

The current staff of the UK Cochrane Centre are listed in Appendix 1. The programme of work at the Centre, which was approved by the NHS Executive in 1998 focuses on ways of improving the quality of Cochrane reviews. The programme's six themes are:

1. Helping to ensure that reports of all relevant controlled trials are made accessible for inclusion in Cochrane reviews.
2. Promoting registration of unpublished trials and trials in progress.
3. Developing and implementing a programme of methodological research to help improve Cochrane reviews.
4. Training and supporting UK contributors to *The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*.
5. Assessing the work of Cochrane Collaborative Review Groups receiving infrastructure funding through the NHS R&D Programme.
6. Promoting the preparation and maintenance of systematic reviews of controlled trials of social and educational interventions

The overarching aim of the UK Cochrane Centre's programme of work is to improve the quality of Cochrane reviews. The Centre's focus for the coming years will concentrate increasingly on two key aspects of quality improvement: training and support, and methodological research. These themes will be pursued in a coordinated way, to ensure that appropriate and relevant methodological research is undertaken and that the findings of this research are implemented by those preparing and maintaining Cochrane reviews.

At the moment, about half of the Cochrane Collaborative Review Groups have editorial bases in the UK. Approximately 40% of the contributors to all 49 Collaborative Review Groups live in the UK. At the beginning of 2002, 1644 of the 4242 Cochrane reviewers in the Cochrane Collaboration, were in the UK.

Brief reports for each of the Centre's current six themes follow:

Theme 1. Helping to ensure that reports of all relevant controlled trials are made accessible for inclusion in Cochrane reviews

During 2002, the Centre's trial identification programme (coordinated by Carol Lefebvre and Anne Eisinga) contributed 12,000 reports of trials to *The Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL)*, compared to 10,000 in 2001.

Nearly 2500 reports of definite or possible randomized or quasi-randomized trials of health care have been identified by handsearching journals published in the UK and Ireland. These are available in *CENTRAL* in *The Cochrane Library*. Nearly 10,000 reports of trials were identified through electronic searching of the bibliographic biomedical database, EMBASE, using a combination of free-text words and indexing terms and covering the years 1980-1998. The titles and abstracts of the retrieved records were read to determine whether they were reports of controlled trials. Again, these are available in *The Cochrane Library*.

One of the Centre's research projects relates to a re-design of the Cochrane Highly Sensitive Search Strategy for identifying reports of trials in MEDLINE. This strategy was designed in 1993 using traditional methods and is being updated using linguistic analysis to identify frequently occurring words and/or phrases in known reports or trials. This should result in

search strategies, which are not only high in sensitivity but also optimised for precision, being available for use within the Cochrane Collaboration and elsewhere in 2003. The results of the project will be submitted for publication at that time. Carol works on this project with Julie Glanville at the Centre for Reviews and Dissemination and Janette Camosso-Stefinovic, a Loughborough University student, whose MSc dissertation based on the project has been awarded the highly regarded MB Line Prize by the Department of Information Science.

Another research project under this theme is a methodology review involving Sally Hopewell, Mike Clarke and Carol. This systematic review compares handsearching versus electronic database searching for identifying reports of trials. The review has been accepted by the Cochrane Methodology Group, for inclusion in *The Cochrane Database of Methodology Reviews*. It shows that comprehensive electronic searching identifies the majority of full reports of trials indexed in journals covered by bibliographic databases but handsearching still has a valuable role to play in attempting to identify as complete and unbiased a set of randomized trials as possible for inclusion in systematic reviews of health care interventions. Handsearching was found to be particularly important in identifying trials reported as conference abstracts, letters and those published in languages other than English, as well, of course, as those published in journals not indexed in the main bibliographic databases.

Theme 2. Promoting registration of unpublished trials and trials in progress

Information about randomized trials in progress and unpublished randomised trials is required by research funding agencies; patients, clinicians and other decision makers; and people using research evidence to guide policies and practice. Iain Chalmers and others have used a variety of strategies to promote and help implement registration of all randomized trials at inception, a now widely accepted principle of good scientific and ethical practice. Importantly, the MRC requires all new trials to be registered as a condition of activating grant awards, and the NHS Research Governance Framework now requires registration of clinical trials. Over the past four years, basic information about registered trials has gradually become available through the meta-Register of Controlled Trials launched by Current Controlled Trials (www.controlled-trials.com), and the International Standard RCT Number (ISRCTN) scheme. Iain chairs the International Advisory Group for the former.

The MRC has supported Cath Rounding to work with Iain to ensure complete registration of MRC randomized trials and this information is now approaching completion (with records of nearly 600 studies). The quality of registration for trials for which the NHS is the sponsor remains unsatisfactory, but useful progress has been made since The Department of Health began supporting Kate Lock in July 2001 to work with Iain and the NHS Trials Adviser (Richard Lilford) to address this. Kate has assembled a register with records of nearly 700 RCTs sponsored by the NHS R&D Programme and/or Department of Health. Basic information about these non-commercially sponsored RCTs is providing important background data to inform the MRC's inquiry into 'Clinical Trials for Tomorrow', which is scheduled to report in the middle of 2003.

Although not all of the Centre's targets within this theme of work will be met by the time this project is due to end at the end of June 2003, Iain and Kate are working with others in an attempt to ensure that, by then, the NHS will have implemented standard operating procedures to achieve compliance with the requirements of the Research Governance Framework.

Theme 3. Developing and implementing a programme of methodological research to help improve Cochrane reviews

Mike and Sally are authors on one Cochrane methodology review and two protocols for such reviews that were first published in *The Cochrane Database of Methodology Reviews* in 2002. The review assesses the extent to which the time to publication of clinical trials is influenced by the statistical significance of their results. It shows that positive trials are published, on average, a few years sooner than trials with null or negative results. The two protocols relate to the Cochrane methodology review noted above of studies comparing handsearching versus electronic searching for reports of randomized trials (Theme 1) and a review of studies assessing the impact of including grey literature in meta-analyses of randomized trials. This review confirms that published trials show, on average, a greater treatment effect than trials

that appear in the grey literature only. The review was published in Issue 1 2003 of *The Cochrane Database of Methodology Reviews*.

Appendix 2 contains references for other research studies that were published by Centre staff during 2002. Among these, a retrospective, comparative study showed the extent to which the content of published Cochrane reviews had changed in comparison to their previously published protocol (Sally). Another study showed how the discussion sections of reports of randomized trials failed to discuss the results of the new trial in the context of the totality of relevant evidence. It highlighted how the situation does not appear to have improved in the years since a similar study in 1997 (Mike, Phil Alderson and Iain). Two other studies published in 2002 showed the benefits of using more than one person to screen records retrieved from bibliographic databases for possible inclusion in systematic reviews (Mike) and the added yield of handsearching over the electronic searching of 22 specialized health care journals (Sally, Mike, Anne, Carol and Maggie Westby).

A number of the research projects described above have also been presented as oral and poster presentations at international conferences. These include presentations at the 4th Symposium on Systematic Reviews in Oxford, UK; the 10th Annual Cochrane Colloquium in Stavanger, Norway; and a presentation by Sally, at the International Clinical Trials Symposium in Sydney, Australia in October for which she won a student scholarship.

As part of the methodology research programme, Sally is doing a D.Phil at the University of Oxford assessing the potential and actual impact of including grey literature in systematic reviews. She successfully transferred from probationary status to full D.Phil status in November 2002.

With funding from the NHS HTA Programme, the Centre has considerably enhanced *The Cochrane Methodology Register* during 2002. This *Register* contains records and abstracts for studies relevant to the methodology of systematic reviews and other health care evaluations. Through systematic searching of relevant journals and bibliographic databases (coordinated by Anne, Sally and Mike), the Centre identified more than a thousand additional records for the *Register* during 2002.

Theme 4. Training and supporting UK contributors to The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews

The appointment of Esther Coren as a Training Lecturer at the Centre in February 2002 enabled expansion in the available training coordinated by Phil, Nicola Thornton and Sarahjayne Sierra. During 2002, there were thirteen 'Protocol' and eleven 'Introduction to Analysis' workshops for Cochrane reviewers in the UK and Ireland, with approximately 400 places filled. Workshops have been held in Belfast, Bristol, Dublin, Edinburgh, Liverpool, London, Oxford and York. The Introduction to Analysis workshops were new this year, and have been well received by participants.

In January, a two day workshop was held to train those who facilitate at Cochrane workshops, both in the subject matter of the new analysis workshop, and in small group teaching skills. This was a success and a similar event is planned for 2003.

A development day was held for editorial staff of Cochrane review groups in March. This covered important quality issues in Cochrane reviews, and will be followed in March 2003 by a much-expanded programme of workshops at the Annual Meeting for UK Contributors to the Cochrane Collaboration.

Three-day workshops on systematic reviews were held in Belfast, Cork, Dublin and Galway during the year to stimulate interest in systematic reviews on the island of Ireland. More than 50 people attended these workshops and the feedback has been uniformly positive. This venture is supported by the R&D Office in Northern Ireland and the Health Research Board (HRB) in the Republic of Ireland. The interest in the workshops was overwhelming and because the number of people able to attend the small group sessions had to be limited, there is already a full waiting list for the four similar workshops planned for 2003 on the island

of Ireland. The HRB/R&D Office initiative has also funded five Cochrane fellows from the island of Ireland to work the equivalent of two days per week for a year on Cochrane reviews.

The Centre helped the University of Oxford's Centre for Statistics in Medicine to run its course on systematic reviews during 2002, and will run the course for them during 2003. Phil provided a special training course for NICE Collaborating Centres on systematic reviews in November.

The first edition of the *Cochrane Collaboration's Open Learning Material for Reviewers* was published in November 2002, with Phil as editor. This joint venture between the UK, Australasian and Nordic Cochrane Centres, and members of the Cochrane Statistical Methods Group is available on the World Wide Web, on CD-ROM and on paper.

Phil is now co-convenor of the Cochrane Quality Advisory Group, which co-ordinates projects relating to the quality of reviews and advises the Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group on quality issues.

Theme 5. Assessing the work of Cochrane Collaborative Review Groups receiving infrastructure funding through the NHS R&D Programme

As in previous years, the progress of Collaborative Review Groups receiving infrastructure funding through the NHS R&D Programme has been monitored and summarised by Phil, in a report for Kent Woods.

Phil and Iain completed a project examining the frequency of claims of 'no effect' or 'no difference' in abstracts of Cochrane reviews. A paper summarising the project was published in the BMJ in March 2003. Individualised feedback has been sent to each Cochrane Collaborative Review Group. A project looking at the association between consumer involvement in reviews and the frequency of the use of the term 'subjects' to describe people has also been completed and will be submitted for publication. Phil was also the author of a systematic review of editorial peer review which was published in *JAMA* in 2002, and in *The Cochrane Database of Methodology Reviews* in Issue 1 2003 of *The Cochrane Library*.

Theme 6. Promoting the preparation and maintenance of systematic reviews of controlled trials of social and educational interventions

Since 1998, staff at the Centre have played a key role in promoting the development of infrastructure for preparing and maintaining systematic reviews of evidence about the effects of social and educational interventions. As a result of these initiatives, a sibling international collaboration to the Cochrane Collaboration - the Campbell Collaboration - has been established. It has been registered in the USA as a non-profit organisation (Iain is a member of the Board of Directors) and is chaired by Robert Boruch (Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, USA). Information about the Campbell Collaboration is available at www.campbell.gse.upenn.edu, where papers prepared by UK Cochrane Centre staff and others are available.

As a spin-off and extension of work done for the Cochrane Developmental, Psychosocial and Learning Problems Group, staff at the Centre assembled a register of over 10,000 records of research relevant to the scope envisaged for the Campbell Collaboration, and nearly 500 records relating to reports of systematic reviews of social and educational interventions. A report of this work was published in 2000 and the register has been transferred to the Campbell Collaboration for updating and development.

There are currently three main Campbell Collaborative Review Groups - in Education, in Social Work and Social Welfare, and in Crime and Justice. The Campbell Crime and Justice Group receives important support from the British Home Office. There is also a Campbell Methods Group, which works closely with Mike and Sally and convenors of Cochrane Methods Groups. Iain gave a keynote address at the Campbell Colloquium in Stockholm (February 2003), where his theme was the need for the Cochrane and Campbell Collaborations to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.

Other activities

Staff at the UK Cochrane Centre offer advice and support to members of the Cochrane Collaboration and others interested in the evaluation of health care on a daily basis. Through 2002, Maggie Westby organised a series of monthly seminars in the Centre (Appendix 3). In addition, staff have refereed articles for several Collaborative Review Groups and journals (Appendix 4) and made several presentations about the work of the Centre or the Cochrane Collaboration more generally (Appendix 5).

Conclusion

Over the coming years, the development of methodological research and training and support as the major themes for the Centre should lead to substantial benefits to the NHS R&D Programme, the NHS as a whole, and national and international health care more generally. These benefits will arise through the continued improvement of the quality of systematic reviews, an increased understanding of these reviews, and the provision of reliable evidence on the importance of various elements of the conduct and interpretation of systematic reviews.

In addition, the work of the UK Cochrane Centre and the Cochrane Collaboration more widely should continue to provide an example to others engaged in scientific research of how the primary research (i.e. Cochrane reviews) can be continually improved through a high quality training and support programme, backed up by a methodological research programme informed by the results of high-quality, systematic reviews of empirical methodological studies.

Appendix 1. Staff list of the UK Cochrane Centre (as of 12 March 2003).

Director (80%): Mike Clarke
Administrator (100%): Caroline Rouse

Training Programme

Associate Director (Training) (100%): Phil Alderson
Workshops/Meetings Coordinator (80%): Nicola Thornton
Lecturer in Systematic Reviews (80%): Esther Coren
Personal Assistant/Secretary (100%): Sarah Jayne Sierra

Research and Trial Identification Programme

Research Assistant (100%): Sally Hopewell
Information Specialist (100%): Carol Lefebvre
Information Specialist (80%): Anne Eisinga
Personal Assistant/Secretary (100%): Sarah White

Associated Staff

Co-ordinator, UKRCT Registration Project (100%): Iain Chalmers
Co-ordinator, Prospective Registration of Trials (50%): Cath Rounding
Co-ordinator, Prospective Registration of Randomized Controlled Trials (100%): Kate Lock
Daphne Jackson Fellow (50%): Maggie Westby

Appendix 2. Publications by UK Cochrane Centre staff during 2002.

Alderson P, Green S. Open learning for Cochrane reviewers. 10th Cochrane Colloquium; 2002 Jul 31-Aug 3; Stavanger, Norway. Abstract no. P15, pp26-27.

Alderson P, Green S, editors. Cochrane Collaboration open learning material for reviewers [Online]. Version 1.1. Oxford, UK: The Cochrane Collaboration, November 2002. www.cochrane-net.org/openlearning/ (accessed 1 December 2002).

Allen C, Clarke M, Gliddon L. International activity within Collaborative Review Groups. 10th Cochrane Colloquium; 2002 Jul 31-Aug 3; Stavanger, Norway. Abstract no. P67, pp60-61.

Barlow J, Coren E, Stewart-Brown S. Meta-analysis of the effectiveness of parenting programmes in improving maternal psychosocial health. *British Journal of General Practice* 2002;52:223-232.

Chalmers I. Commentary on Villar et al. *Statistics in Medicine* 2001;20:3635-3647. *Cochrane Collaboration Methods Group Newsletter* 2002;6:13. www.cochrane.org/newslett/MGnews6_2002.pdf (accessed 1 December 2002).

Chalmers I. Evaluating the effects of healthcare interventions. *BMJ* 2002;324:483.

Chalmers I. Lessons for research ethics committees. *Lancet* 2002;359:174.

Chalmers I. The progress of experiment, by Harry M Marks. *Endeavour* 2002;26:119-120.

Chalmers I. Why we need to know whether prophylactic antibiotics can reduce measles-related morbidity. *Pediatrics* 2002;109:312-315.

Chalmers I, Hedges LV, Cooper H. A brief history of research synthesis. *Evaluation and the Health Professions* 2002;25:12-37.

Clarke M. Collaboration and methodology research. *Cochrane Collaboration Methods Group Newsletter* 2002;6:3-4. www.cochrane.org/newslett/MGnews6_2002.pdf (accessed 1 December 2002).

Clarke M. Searching for trials for systematic reviews: what difference does it make? *International Journal of Epidemiology* 2002;31:123-124.

Clarke M. The Cochrane Collaboration: Providing, and obtaining, the best evidence about the effects of health care. *Evaluation and the Health Professions* 2002;25:8-11.

Clarke M, Alderson P, Chalmers I. Discussion sections in reports of controlled trials published in general medical journals. *JAMA* 2002;287:2799-2801.

Clarke M, Fischer M, Higgins J, Moore T, Wiffen P. Cochrane Software Needs Assessment Survey. 10th Cochrane Colloquium; 2002 Jul 31-Aug 3; Stavanger, Norway. Abstract no. P59, pp55-56.

Coren E, Patterson J, Abbott J. Home-based support for socially disadvantaged mothers (Protocol for a Cochrane Review). In: *The Cochrane Library*, Issue 3, 2002. Oxford: Update Software.

Dickersin K, Manheimer E, Wieland S, Robinson KA, Lefebvre C, McDonald S, The CENTRAL Development Group. Development of The Cochrane Collaboration's CENTRAL register of controlled clinical trials. *Evaluation and the Health Professions* 2002;25:38-64.

Early Breast Cancer Trialists' Collaborative Group (includes Clarke M). Radiotherapy for early breast cancer (Cochrane Review). In: *The Cochrane Library*, Issue 2, 2002. Oxford: Update Software.

Edwards P, Clarke M, DiGuseppi C, Pratap S, Roberts I, Wentz R. Identification of randomized controlled trials in systematic reviews: accuracy and reliability of screening records. *Statistics in Medicine* 2002;21:1635-1640.

Edwards P, Roberts I, Clarke M, DiGuseppi C, Pratap S, Wentz R, Kwan I. Increasing response rates to postal questionnaires: systematic review. *BMJ* 2002;324:1183.

Hopewell S. Commentary on Reidpath DD et al. *Bioethics* 2001;15:125-134. *Cochrane Collaboration Methods Group Newsletter* 2002;6:12. www.cochrane.org/newslett/MGnews6_2002.pdf (accessed 1 December 2002).

Hopewell S, Clarke M. How important is the size of a reprint order? 4th Symposium on Systematic Reviews: pushing the boundaries; 2002 Jul 2-4; Oxford, UK. Poster 7, pp45.

Hopewell S, Clarke M. How important is the size of a reprint order? 10th Cochrane Colloquium; 2002 Jul 31-Aug 3; Stavanger, Norway. Abstract no. P2, pp18.

Hopewell S, Clarke M, editors. *The Cochrane Collaboration Methods Group Newsletter* 2002;5:1-36. www.cochrane.org/newslett/MGnews6_2002.pdf (accessed 1 December 2002).

Hopewell S, Clarke M, Loudon Olsen K, Oxman A. A register of methodological research. 10th Cochrane Colloquium; 2002 Jul 31-Aug 3; Stavanger, Norway. Abstract no. P3, pp18-19.

Hopewell S, Clarke M, Lusher A, Lefebvre C, Westby M. A comparison of handsearching versus MEDLINE searching to identify reports of randomized controlled trials. *Statistics in Medicine* 2002;21:1625-1634.

Hopewell S, Clarke M, Stewart L, Tierney J. Time lag bias in publishing the results of clinical trials - a systematic review. *International Clinical Trials Symposium*; 2002 Oct 21-23; Sydney, Australia. Abstract no. 25, pp67.

Hopewell S, Clarke M, Stewart L, Tierney J. Time to publication for results of clinical trials (Cochrane Methodology Review). In: *The Cochrane Library*, Issue 2, 2002. Oxford: Update Software.

Hopewell S, McDonald S, Clarke M, Egger M. Grey literature in meta-analyses of randomized trials (Protocol for a Cochrane Methodology Review). In: *The Cochrane Library*, Issue 2, 2002. Oxford: Update Software.

Hopewell S, McDonald S, Clarke M, Egger M. Impact of grey literature on meta-analyses of randomized trials - a systematic review. *4th Symposium on Systematic Reviews: pushing the boundaries*; 2002 Jul 2-4; Oxford, UK. Poster 6, pp44.

Hopewell S, McDonald S, Clarke M, Egger M. Impact of grey literature on meta-analyses of randomized trials - a systematic review. *10th Cochrane Colloquium*; 2002 Jul 31-Aug 3; Stavanger, Norway. Abstract no. P20, pp29.

International Subarachnoid Aneurysm Trial (ISAT) Collaborative Group (includes Clarke M). International Subarachnoid Aneurysm Trial (ISAT) of neurosurgical clipping versus endovascular coiling in 2143 patients with ruptured intracranial aneurysms. *Lancet* 2002;360:1267-1274.

Jefferson T, Alderson P, Wager E, Davidoff F. Effects of editorial peer review. A systematic review. *JAMA* 2002;287:2784-2786.

Lefebvre C. Searching for trials for systematic reviews: where, how and why? *4th Symposium on Systematic Reviews: pushing the boundaries*; 2002 Jul 2-4; Oxford, UK. Oral presentation, pp35.

Mallett S, Clarke M. A typical Cochrane Review: how many more are needed to cover existing evidence? *10th Cochrane Colloquium*; 2002 Jul 31-Aug 3; Stavanger, Norway. Abstract no. P18, pp28.

Mallett S, Clarke M. The 'average' Cochrane systematic review: How many trials? How many participants? *International Journal of Technology Assessment in Health Care* 2002;18:820-823.

Mallett S, Hopewell S, Clarke M. Grey literature in systematic reviews: the first 1000 Cochrane systematic reviews. *Cochrane Collaboration Methods Group Newsletter* 2002;6:16. www.cochrane.org/newslett/MGnews6_2002.pdf (accessed 1 December 2002).

Mallett S, Hopewell S, Clarke M. The use of grey literature in the first 1000 Cochrane reviews. *4th Symposium on Systematic Reviews: pushing the boundaries*; 2002 Jul 2-4; Oxford, UK. Poster 5, pp43.

Manheimer E, Lefebvre C, Timimi H, Rutks I, Ghersi D. Lessons learned and ongoing challenges in developing an international collaborative register of controlled trials with many contributors. *10th Cochrane Colloquium*; 2002 Jul 31-Aug 3; Stavanger, Norway. Abstract no. P14, pp26.

McDonald S, Lefebvre C, Antes G, Galandi D, Gotzsche P, Hammarquist C, Haugh M, Jensen KL, Kleijnen J, Loep M, Pistotti V, Ruther A. The contribution of handsearching European general health care journals to The Cochrane Controlled Trials Register. *Evaluation and the Health Professions* 2002;25:65-75.

McDonald S, Westby M, Clarke M. Reporting of the generation and concealment of the allocation schedule in randomised trials in the BMJ (1948-1997). *4th Symposium on Systematic Reviews: pushing the boundaries*; 2002 Jul 2-4; Oxford, UK. Oral presentation, pp32.

McDonald S, Westby M, Clarke M, Lefebvre C. The Cochrane Centres' Working Group On 50 Years Of Randomized Trials. Number and size of randomized trials in general health care journals from 1948 to 1997. *International Journal of Epidemiology* 2002;31:125-127.

Milne I, Chalmers I. A controlled clinical trial in 1809? *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 2002;56:1.

Schulz KF, Chalmers I, Altman D. The landscape and lexicon of blinding. *Annals of Internal Medicine* 2002;136:254-259.

Sheth S, Chalmers I. Magnesium for preventing and treating eclampsia: time for international action. *Lancet* 2002;359:1872-1873.

Shey Wiysonge CU, Brocklehurst P, Sterne JAC. Vaginal disinfection during labour for reducing the risk of mother-to-child transmission of HIV infection (Protocol for a Cochrane Review). In: *The Cochrane Library*, Issue 2, 2002. Oxford: Update Software.

Shey Wiysonge CU, Brocklehurst P, Sterne JAC. Vaginal disinfection during labour for reducing the risk of mother-to-child transmission of HIV infection (Cochrane Review). In: *The Cochrane Library*, Issue 3, 2002. Oxford: Update Software.

Shey Wiysonge CU, Brocklehurst P, Sterne JAC. Vitamin A supplementation for reducing the risk of mother-to-child transmission of HIV infection (Protocol for a Cochrane Review). In: The Cochrane Library, Issue 2, 2002. Oxford: Update Software.

Shey Wiysonge CU, Brocklehurst P, Sterne JAC. Vitamin A supplementation for reducing the risk of mother-to-child transmission of HIV infection (Cochrane Review). In: The Cochrane Library, Issue 3, 2002. Oxford: Update Software.

Silagy C, Middleton P, Hopewell S. Publishing protocols of systematic reviews: comparing what was done to what was planned. JAMA 2002;287:2831-2834.

The Magpie Trial Collaborative Group (includes Clarke M). Do women with pre-eclampsia, and their babies, benefit from magnesium sulphate? The Magpie Trial: a randomised placebo-controlled trial. Lancet 2002;359:1877-1890.

Wallace S, Clarke M. Dual publication. Cochrane Incontinence Review Group Newsletter 2002;5:8-9. www.cochrane.de/newslett/Incontinence_April_2002.pdf (accessed 1 December 2002).

Westby M. Metoclopramide for chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting (Protocol for a Cochrane Review). In: The Cochrane Library, Issue 1, 2002. Oxford: Update Software.

Appendix 3. UKCC internal seminars.

Charles Shey Wiysonge. Interventions for HIV/AIDS in developing countries.
Maggie Westby. Golden daffodils. A systematic review with many many trials - you call that a problem?
Phil Alderson, Esther Coren. The UKCC Training Programme.
Deirdre Price. Systematic reviews of safety.
Sally Hopewell. Grey Literature in meta-analyses of randomized trials.
Davina Gherzi. Systematic Reviews in Healthcare Policy - an Australian perspective.
Kate Lock, Cath Rounding, Iain Chalmers. Registration of UK Non-commercial Trials.
Jini Hetherington. What the Cochrane Collaboration Secretariat does.
Mike Clarke. Looking to - and beyond - the horizon for the Cochrane Collaboration.
Karin Schioler. Dengue in Grenada- as we wait for the vaccine.

Appendix 4. Collaborative Review Groups and journals for which articles have been refereed by UKCC staff.

BioMed Central
BioMed Central Pediatrics
Cochrane Developmental, Psychosocial and Learning Problems Group
Cochrane Drugs and Alcohol Group
Cochrane Gynaecological Cancer Group
Cochrane HIV/AIDS Group
Effectiveness Matters
European Journal of Cancer
Evidence Based Oncology
Health Information and Libraries Journal
JAMA
Journal of Clinical Oncology
NHS HTA monographs

Appendix 5. Presentations made by UKCC staff.

4th Systematic Reviews Symposium, Oxford, UK
10th anniversary of the Cochrane Pregnancy and Childbirth Group in Liverpool
10th Cochrane Colloquium, Stavanger, Norway
Annual conference of the National Institute of Clinical Effectiveness, Birmingham, UK
Australasian Contributors to the Cochrane Collaboration, Melbourne, Australia
Beating biases in therapeutic research: historical perspectives, Oxford, UK
Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin Seminar, London, UK
European Science Foundation meeting of RCT registration, Frankfurt, Germany
Institute of Health Sciences, Oxford
International Symposium on Clinical Trials, Sydney, Australia
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London, UK
Master's course on methodology of systematic reviews, Milan, Italy
Monash Institute of Health Services Research, Melbourne, Australia
NHS Centre for Reviews and Dissemination, York, UK
NHS Research and Development Forum, Nottingham, UK
Parent-Child 2002 Conference, London, UK
Prince Mahidol Foundation, Thailand
Quantification in medical sciences and health, St Julien-en-Beaujolais, France
Randomized Trials in the Social Sciences, Oxford, UK
Social Care Institute for Excellence, London, UK
Socialist Health Association meeting on Involving Patients and the Public in the NHS, London
Symposium on 'Getting research evidence into practice', Auckland, New Zealand
Systematic reviews in dentistry course, London, UK
Thai Cochrane Network, Chiang Mai University, Thailand
UK Cochrane Contributors' meeting, Oxford, UK