

# **UK Cochrane Centre Annual Training Report 2008**

**Training and Supporting  
UK and Ireland based Contributors to  
The *Cochrane Database of  
Systematic Reviews***



**THE COCHRANE  
COLLABORATION®**



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# Executive Summary

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2008 was another busy and productive year for the UKCC's Training Team. The year saw the release of new software for the preparation and maintenance of Cochrane reviews and a completely revised *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions*. The new software, RevMan 5, was the Collaboration's first major release of its review software since 1999. By the end of 2008, all Cochrane protocols and reviews had been converted into it - representing the conversion of more than 5500 documents, containing several million words.

The UK Cochrane Centre's training programme in 2008 included a variety of activities and topics. We had a total of 471 participants in our workshops representing an overall total of 550 person days of training events (excluding the Annual Meeting of the UK and Ireland based Contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration and the Cochrane Colloquium). In summary, the programme included:

- Training for review authors
- Eight one-day workshops on 'Developing a Protocol for a Review' (89 participants)
- Two two-day workshops on 'Developing a Protocol for a Review' (23 participants)
- Seven one-day 'Introduction to Analysis' workshops (112 participants)
- A five-day Review Completion Course (6 participants)
- A one-day Updating Reviews Course (11 participants)
- Ongoing development of online learning for review authors through a training course based on the *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions*

In addition, we delivered the following:

- Six workshops at the XVI Cochrane Colloquium in Freiburg, Germany
- Four two-day courses entitled 'An Introduction to Cochrane Systematic Reviews' on the island of Ireland (60 participants)
- 'Train-The-Trainers' programme to train facilitators for our courses (7 participants)
- Workshop on Peer Review training (13 participants)
- Training day on RevMan 5 for Trials Search Co-ordinators (17 participants)
- Training day on RevMan 5 for Review Group Co-ordinators (28 participants)
- Selection of Cochrane Training Fellows on the island of Ireland, mentoring for the Fellows and two dedicated workshops (21 participants)

# Introduction

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Training for UK and Ireland based authors and contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration continues to be in high demand. The UK Cochrane Centre (UKCC) continues to fill this need and organized and delivered a full programme of events in 2008, achieving high levels of satisfaction among the participant's scores. We have also invested considerable effort and resources into developing online learning modules. At the time of preparing this report (February 2009), the pilot phase for this online learning is nearing completion. We hope to launch the website and materials more widely in the second quarter of 2009.

In 2008, we provided over 40 face-to-face training days and continue to have a steady stream of visitors to the Centre as well as answering technical enquiries from authors who require regular support and mentoring by telephone and e-mail. The demand for the more intensive completion and updating courses increased again in 2008. This may be linked to the NHS Cochrane Award scheme, which led to National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) grants to UK-based Cochrane Review Groups (CRGs) for a series of new and updated reviews.

During 2008, the Training Team said farewell to Catherine Francis-Baldesari who returned to the USA at the end of March and to Ian Palmer who left us at the end of the year. We are delighted that Amy Drahota was able to join us on secondment from Portsmouth University on a part-time basis from July. She brings a range of skills to supplement the team. We are also pleased to welcome Joanne Rumney as part of the UKCC Training Team.

We are grateful to the National Institute for Health Research and the Health Research Board for funding the training and support programme offered by the UKCC, to the other members of staff at the UKCC for their commitment to training and support, and to the many experienced facilitators who volunteer to help deliver our extensive workshop programme.

## The Training Team in 2008

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- Phil Wiffen, Training Director
- Catherine Francis-Baldesari, Lecturer in Systematic Reviews, (until April 2008)
- Amy Drahota, Lecturer in Systematic Reviews, part-time (from July 2008)
- Nicola McDowell, Training Co-ordinator, four days per week
- Ian Palmer, Senior Project Training Support Officer, full-time (until December 2008)
- Joanne Rumney, PA and Training Support Co-ordinator, full-time (from November 2008)

# 1 Cochrane Review Author Training

## 1.1 Workshops

The 2008 UKCC workshop programme comprised eight 'Developing a Protocol for a Review' workshops and seven 'Introduction to Analysis' workshops. These were held in Bath, Belfast, Dublin, Glasgow, Liverpool, Oxford and York.

## 1.2 Participants

In 2008, 89 participants attended the 'Developing a Protocol for a Review' workshop, 23 participants attended the two-day 'Developing a Protocol for a Review' workshop, and 112 participants attended the 'Introduction to Analysis' workshop. There were 252 places available on the workshops of which 224 were filled. This is about the same as the number of participants for these workshops in 2007, reflecting the continuing demand for these basic introductions to systematic reviewing.

The proportion of workshop participants who live in the UK continues to be around 90% (Table 1).

**Table 1 Areas of residence of workshop participants**

	2002 n=236	2003 n= 265	2004 n=212	2005 n=235	2006 n=237	2007 n=228	2008 n=224
UK	97%	94%	98%	93%	89%	87%	89%
Rest of Europe	1%	3%	2%	6%	7%	10%	8%
Americas and Caribbean	1%	1%	-	0.5%	2%	-	-
Australasia	-	1%	-	-	-	-	-
Africa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Asia	-	1%	-	0.5%	-	1%	-
Other	-	-	-	-	2%	2%	-
							3%

All participants in the workshops are asked to complete a feedback form and 65% of the 2008 participants did so. The results of this feedback are presented in the following sections.

## 1.3 'Developing a Protocol for a Review' one-day workshops

The aim of the 'Developing a Protocol for a Review' workshop is to assist and support authors in developing or completing the protocol for a Cochrane review. The workshop begins with a PowerPoint presentation on the format of the protocol. Participants then work in small, interactive groups led by experienced facilitators, where components of a protocol are discussed in the context of each participant's review title. Informal presentations are provided, including an introductory demonstration of RevMan, to address particular issues related to developing a protocol. We ran eight of these workshops in 2008, with a total of 89 participants. The workshop programme is available as Appendix I.

Table 2 shows that more than three quarters of the participants attending a workshop in 2008 had little or no prior experience in preparing a protocol for a Cochrane review and most (69%) rated their previous experience of completing a systematic review in the lowest band (1-3) (Table 3). These data show the continuing need for this introductory level workshop for meeting the needs of new authors.

# 1 Cochrane Review Author Training

**Table 2** Participants' rating of their previous experience of preparing a Protocol for a Cochrane review

Rating* of experience	Year (% of Total)						
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1-3	67%	46%	75%	75%	69%	65%	78%
4-7	29%	46%	23%	23%	30%	32%	19%
8-10	3%	8%	2%	2%	1%	3%	3%

\*1 = wondering how to start, 10 = completed several protocols

**Table 3** Participants' rating of their previous experience of completing a Cochrane systematic review

Rating* of experience	Year (% of Total)						
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1-3	76%	72%	79%	73%	76%	68%	69%
4-7	22%	27%	18%	26%	20%	27%	25%
8-10	2%	1%	3%	1%	3%	5%	6%

\* 1 = wondering how to start, 10 = completed several reviews

Table 4 shows that 85% of the 2008 participants rated the workshop in the top band (8-10) in terms of what they learnt. This high rating is consistent with the figure for 2007, which saw a large jump over earlier years, and reflects the sustained improvements arising from the ongoing efforts of the Training Team to maintain and improve on the already high standards, in the preparation of materials and delivery of content in these workshops.

**Table 4** Participants' rating of the 'Developing a Protocol for a review' workshop in terms of what they learnt

Rating* of workshop	Year (% of Total)						
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1-3	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
4-7	32%	29%	26%	19%	35%	16%	15%
8-10	68%	70%	74%	81%	64%	84%	85%

\* 1 = outstandingly unhelpful, 10 = outstandingly helpful

# 1 Cochrane Review Author Training

The main activity within the protocol workshops is the small-group discussion. Two facilitators who are experienced in Cochrane reviews lead these discussion groups of five to eight participants. Table 5 shows that participants' enjoyment of these discussion groups continues to be high. As with the data in Table 4, these findings demonstrate the high quality of training workshops and the contribution of the facilitators.

**Table 5** Participants' rating of their enjoyment of the discussion groups

Rating* of workshop	Year (% of Total)						
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1-3	1%	3%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
4-7	25%	19%	13%	19%	22%	11%	12%
8-10	75%	77%	87%	81%	77%	89%	88%

\*1 = not at all, 10 = very much

## Qualitative comments

The section on the evaluation sheet asking participants to let us know 'What was most helpful' was again dominated by positive feedback on the discussion groups and interactive sessions. Specific elements of group work noted were interaction in a relaxed, informal atmosphere that promoted individualised learning, knowledgeable and approachable facilitators, and opportunities to discuss issues and problems specific to their own protocol with other participants.

## 1.4 'Developing a Protocol for a Review' two-day workshops

The 'Developing a Protocol for a Review' two-day workshop, which we piloted in 2006, was conducted twice in 2008, with a total of 23 participants. This expanded protocol workshop aims to have authors identify the key components of their protocol and start a draft of the protocol in RevMan by the end of the two days. The workshop programme is available as Appendix II.

As with the one-day protocol workshop, the two-day version introduces new review authors to the process of preparing a Cochrane review from the protocol stage. As well as the small-group discussions, the expanded programme includes didactic sessions on searching for studies, the format of a protocol, methods development, and a 90-minute (rather than a 45-minute) demonstration of RevMan with a question and answer period. We ask participants to bring laptops with RevMan pre-loaded for this session, and we provide a laptop during the workshop for those who are unable to do so. This gives each participant hands-on experience of RevMan, using their own review.

The qualitative feedback from participants on the two-day workshop was consistently positive regarding the small-group discussion and interactive sessions. The searching for trials session was generally welcomed as a useful part of the programme.

# 1 Cochrane Review Author Training

## 1.5 'Introduction to Analysis' one-day workshops

The 'Introduction to Analysis' workshop addresses the central concepts and methodological issues of the analysis section in a Cochrane intervention review. We ran seven of these workshops in 2008, with a total of 112 participants. The workshop programme is available as Appendix III. We provide a basic introduction to the use of applied statistics and, through the year, members of the Training Team revised the content of several sessions and replaced the publication bias session with a session on assessing the risk of bias, with positive effect (see Table 8).

Over half (56%) of participants attending the 'Introduction to Analysis' workshops indicated they had very little or no experience of conducting systematic reviews, and about a third (37%) stated they had some experience (Table 6).

**Table 6** Participants' rating of their previous experience in doing Cochrane systematic reviews

Rating* of experience	Year (% of Total)				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1-3	70%	62%	65%	60%	56%
4-7	27%	35%	31%	33%	37%
8-10	3%	3%	4%	7%	7%

\* 1 = wondering how to start, 10 = completed several reviews

Table 7 shows 72% of participants rated the 'Introduction to Analysis' workshop in the top band (8-10) in terms of what they learnt. This improvement over 2007 may reflect revisions to the content of the programme to align with the new Cochrane Handbook, and to target better the materials to the participants' prior knowledge.

**Table 7** Participants' rating of the overall helpfulness of the workshop in terms of what they learnt

Rating* of experience	Year (% of Total)				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1-3	0%	0%	3%	3%	0%
4-7	30%	32%	34%	36%	28%
8-10	70%	68%	63%	61%	72%

\* 1 = outstandingly unhelpful, 10 = outstandingly helpful

# 1 Cochrane Review Author Training

**Table 8** Participants' rating of the helpfulness of individual sessions

Rating* of session	Introduction to meta-analysis					Rating* of session	Study eligibility				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1-3	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1-3	0%	1%	2%	4%	1%
4-7	37%	34%	38%	32%	30%	4-7	34%	37%	36%	32%	34%
8-10	63%	65%	61%	68%	70%	8-10	66%	62%	62%	64%	65%

Rating* of session	Binary data					Rating* of session	Data extraction				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1-3	0%	1%	0%	3%	0%	1-3	1%	0%	2%	3%	3%
4-7	34%	26%	33%	34%	27%	4-7	38%	43%	43%	35%	36%
8-10	66%	73%	67%	63%	73%	8-10	61%	57%	55%	62%	61%

Rating* of session	Continuous data					Rating* of session	Heterogeneity				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1-3	2%	2%	3%	1%	0%	1-3	2%	0%	2%	1%	1%
4-7	50%	40%	46%	54%	30%	4-7	38%	33%	40%	35%	19%
8-10	48%	58%	51%	45%	70%	8-10	60%	67%	58%	64%	80%

Rating* of session	Publication bias (<2008) / Risk of bias (2008)				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1-3	3%	2%	4%	0%	0%
4-7	33%	41%	53%	46%	30%
8-10	64%	57%	43%	54%	70%

\*1 = *outstandingly unhelpful*  
10 = *outstandingly helpful*

Table 8 shows participants' rating of helpfulness of individual sessions in the analysis workshop. The average proportion for a rating in top band (8-10) is 70%, which is an improvement over 2007 (60%), reflecting improvement in satisfaction with all the sessions.

The range for the proportion of participants who placed a session in the top band (8-10) is 61% to 80%, compared to 45% to 68% in 2007. We were particularly disappointed with the sessions on continuous data and publication bias in 2007 and changed the emphasis for the latter in

# 1 Cochrane Review Author Training

2008 to risk of bias (instead of publication bias), to align with developments in version 5 of the Cochrane Handbook. This was well received (with the proportion giving the session a top band rating rising from 54% to 70%). Revisions to the presentation of the content on Continuous Data content was also well received with the proportion of participants rating the session in the top band rising from 45% to 70%.

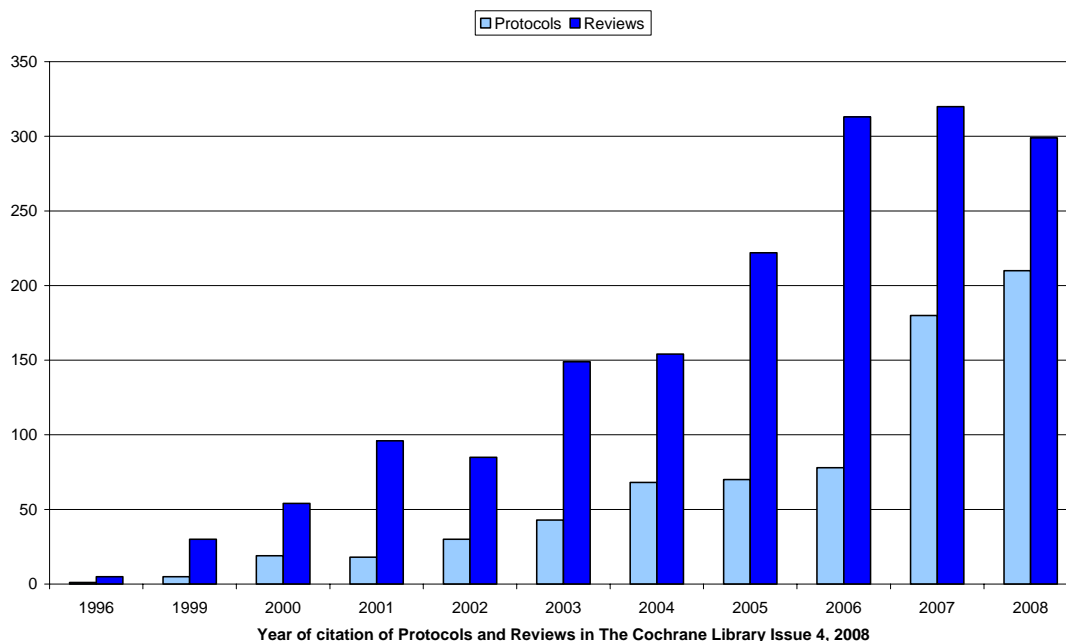
## Qualitative comments

In general, feedback in the 'Additional Comments' section of the evaluation form was very positive. Participants felt the practical and group exercises were helpful and beneficial. The opportunities to ask questions and have facilitators available during the day were welcomed, and presentations were praised for being delivered in a clear and informative manner.

## 1.6 Output

As in previous years, we have searched *The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR)* to see how many participants in UK Cochrane Centre training events from 1998 to 2008 have published protocols and reviews. Overall, the 1911 participants were authors on 1727 full reviews and 722 protocols in Issue 4 2008 of *The Cochrane Library* giving a total contribution of 2449 of the documents in *CDSR* (approximately 45% of its content). This gives an average of over one publication per participant (range from 0 to 58). The median is one. Since the 2007 Training Report, the number of full reviews by participants in UKCC training events has increased by 154.

Number of Cochrane Protocols and Reviews in The Cochrane Library Issue 4, 2008 by participants of UK Cochrane Centre training events 1998-2008



# 1 Cochrane Review Author Training

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## 1.7 Review Completion Course

Another successful 'Review Completion Course' was run in February 2008 for six authors who were experiencing difficulty in completing a Cochrane review. The five-day course provides an opportunity for authors to spend dedicated time working on their reviews and have access to help with RevMan, statistical analyses and searching. This is an intensive week but it has been successful in helping authors make progress. Three of the reviews had been published by Issue 4, 2008 of The Cochrane Library. The course programme is available as Appendix IV.

## 1.8 Updating Reviews Course

This year we also ran a two-day course for people wishing to update a review. This took place in January 2008, and provided the 11 participants with one-on-one guidance as well as a focussed taught session on issues specific to updating reviews. The course provided time for participants to work on their review, and obtain hands-on help with RevMan 5, statistical analyses, and searching. *Ad hoc* presentations and demonstrations were carried out as required, to target the specific needs of attendees.

## 1.9 Online Learning

In 2006, the UKCC Training Team obtained funding from the 2006 Cochrane Collaboration Opportunities Fund to develop an online training course for Cochrane review authors and this money was put to good use starting in 2007.

The UKCC and a group at the University of Portsmouth led by Tara Dean initiated a collaborative project to enhance learning opportunities for authors of Cochrane reviews. The project involves developing an online resource that complements the *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions* and the UKCC's face-to-face training workshops. The learning material uses a Victory software platform, which is designed specifically for developing and delivering online teaching and learning courses.

The objectives of the project are to:

- provide an online learning environment for Cochrane review authors through web-based resources incorporating interactive learning modules, exercises, and self-assessment tests.
- improve equality of access to and availability of learning resources for authors of Cochrane reviews.
- complement face-to-face training workshops for authors of Cochrane reviews.
- implement a validated assessment of knowledge, skills, and confidence in the methods of Cochrane reviews in an online environment.

By the end of 2008, the Victory learning platform was in place, the structural design of the course was complete, six learning modules had been uploaded, usability testing had been conducted and adjustments made, and the piloting phase had started. The six modules in the piloting phase are:

- Introduction to Systematic Reviews
- Introduction to Meta-analysis
- Introduction to Heterogeneity
- Writing a Protocol
- Searching for Studies for a Cochrane Review
- Collecting Data for a Review

Initial feedback has been positive and constructive. Feedback from the piloting phase will be compiled for presentation at the UK and Ireland based Contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration meeting in March 2009.

## 2 Other Training

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### 2.1 Peer Review Skills Training

This course was developed by the Training Team during 2006 and was held for the second time in April 2008. Thirteen participants attended the day in Oxford. We intend to offer this course annually, whilst there is demand. A programme of the day is available as Appendix V.

### 2.2 'Train-the-Trainers' Training

We ran one Train-the-Trainers session in Oxford in September 2008 (7 participants) but a further session in Glasgow (October 2008) was cancelled due to insufficient uptake. The one-day workshop aims to increase capacity for trainers in the UK. It introduces the participants to the learning resources we use in training and includes discussion of the learning needs of participants in the UKCC Training programme. Since the Train-the-Trainers session, three participants have been facilitators on workshops for review authors, and two more will assist with a workshop planned for Bath in 2009.

### 2.3 Annual Meeting of UK and Ireland based Contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration

In 2008, the two-day Annual Meeting of UK and Ireland based Contributors took place in York. The UKCC worked with a Local Organizing Committee to stage this event, which had a total of nearly 200 participants. The Meeting included two plenary sessions and 35 workshops. Details of the workshops offered are available as Appendix VI, with sessions involving UKCC staff shaded for identification

### 2.4 Training Workshops at the XVI Cochrane Colloquium

The XVI Cochrane Colloquium was held in Freiburg, Germany from 3-7 October 2008. Staff from the UKCC organized and taught six workshops:

- Advanced workshop for Cochrane Trials Search Co-ordinators. (Carol Lefebvre)
- Cochrane podcasting. (Mike Clarke)
- How to search for studies for inclusion in Cochrane diagnostic test accuracy reviews. (Anne Eisinga)
- Introductory / intermediate workshop for Cochrane Trials Search Co-ordinators. (Carol Lefebvre)
- Searching for Studies. (Carol Lefebvre)
- Train the Trainers of evidence-based healthcare workshops. (Phil Wiffen)

UKCC staff were also responsible for a poster presentation on the provision of additional training resources on the websites of Cochrane Review Groups and on international activity within Cochrane Review Groups (which showed that the proportion of contributors to these Groups from the UK and Ireland continues to be around 36%).

### 2.5 Introduction to Systematic Review Courses on the island of Ireland

The UKCC continues to develop training workshops in conjunction with the Health Research Board in Dublin and the Research and Development Office in Belfast. Initiated in 2000, this island of Ireland programme seeks to provide support for activities related to The Cochrane Collaboration, to expand these activities, to foster participation in conducting Cochrane reviews, to heighten awareness and use of *The Cochrane Library*, and to promote the use of Cochrane reviews in practice, research, and policy-making.

The Train-the-Trainer (TTT) programme, launched in 2006, established a group of facilitators based on the island of Ireland and members of the group helped to organize a variety of training events during 2008. The UKCC delivered four two-day workshops during the year in Belfast (18 participants), Cork (13), Dublin (15) and Limerick (14).

## **2 Other Training**

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### **2.6 Cochrane Review Author Training Fellowships on the island of Ireland**

For the sixth year, the Health Research Board in Dublin, Ireland and the Research and Development Office in Belfast, Northern Ireland, awarded Cochrane Training Fellowships. These Fellowships are perhaps the most comprehensive available anywhere in the world for work on Cochrane reviews and provide for both the conduct of a Cochrane review and the building of reviewing capacity on the island of Ireland. The Fellowships are for residents of 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 up to two days per week for up to two years, to prepare a Cochrane review. As previously, the UKCC organized assessment of the applications and made recommendations to the two funding organizations. Details of the 2008 Fellows are given in Appendix VII.

The UKCC provides ongoing support for all the Cochrane Training Fellows. We organized two Fellows' Days in 2008, one in May in Belfast (9 participants), and a second in Dublin in November (12 participants). These days provide Fellows with time to work on their reviews, gain support and discuss areas of difficulty or uncertainty with experienced facilitators.

We ran a 'Developing a Protocol for a Review' workshop in Dublin specifically for the new, 2008 Fellows. This workshop was followed by a Fellows' Day, and the 2007 Fellows attended the 'Introduction to Analysis' workshop the day after.

### **2.7 The Aubrey Sheiham Cochrane Collaboration Public Health and Primary Care Scholarship**

This scholarship provides the funds needed for an author of a Cochrane review from a developing country to spend up to four months at the UKCC being trained in the production of systematic reviews, while working on one or more Cochrane reviews. The UKCC oversees the advertising and selection process for this Scholarship. In 2008, although a prospective Scholar was chosen, she was unable to take up the Scholarship because of difficulties in getting permission to leave her post in China. We have revised the application procedure so that applicants must now demonstrate support from their Head of Department before being offered a scholarship. We have appointed a Scholar for 2009.

### **2.8 Cochrane UK Consumer Training**

Some of the workshops at the Annual Meeting of UK and Ireland based Contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration were focussed on the needs of consumers (see Appendix VI), but no standalone training events specific to consumers were held in 2008. We are in discussion with members of the Cochrane Consumer Network about how best to support and expand the work of consumers within The Cochrane Collaboration.

### **2.9 Training for staff at the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)**

We have continued to offer support on a one-to-one basis to staff at NICE and to provide places on our advanced training courses.

## 2 Other Training

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### 2.10 Trials Search Co-ordinators' Training Day

In November 2008, a training day on RevMan 5 from the Trials Search Co-ordinator (TSC) perspective was organized by the UK Cochrane Centre, facilitated by a member of staff from the Collaboration's Information Management System (IMS) Support Team, the TSC member of the RevMan Advisory Group and UKCC staff. The agenda covered 'what is new (or different) in RevMan 5?' and also the most important aspects of RevMan 5 for TSCs, including importing references, reporting search strategies, and the new date fields. The day was also an opportunity for TSCs to learn more about Archie (the Collaboration's system for managing documents and contact details), other IMS issues and to discuss a proposed checklist for TSCs when signing-off a Cochrane review for inclusion, which might be included in the next update of the 'Searching for Studies' chapter of the *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions*. Seventeen UK-based TSCs attended the event and the evaluation forms indicated that it was a success.

### 2.11 Trials Search Co-ordinators' Annual Meeting

Staff from the UKCC organized and co-chaired the Annual Meeting of UK-based Trials Search Co-ordinators (TSCs), which was held during the UK and Ireland based Contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration meeting in March 2008. TSCs from nearly all the UK-based CRGs attended (24 TSCs in total). Topics included feedback from TSC representatives on Cochrane Collaboration Advisory and Working Groups, issues arising from the TSCs' meeting at the Cochrane Colloquium in Brazil in October 2007, which many of the TSCs had not been able to attend, plans for a TSC Executive Group, the new *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions*, training and lines of responsibility.

### 2.12 Review Group Co-ordinators' Training Day

In January 2008, the UKCC helped to organize a RevMan 5 Conversion Workshop for UK-based Review Group Co-ordinators, in collaboration with the RevMan Advisory Group and the IMS Support Team. This workshop was attended by 28 participants and the day involved an introduction to RevMan 5, learning how to convert reviews from RevMan 4, interim feedback from the RevMan 5 piloting, a hands-on session and group discussion of the implications the implementation of change will have for CRGs.

### 2.13 Two-day Workshop on Conducting Systematic Reviews of Complex Interventions Using Experimental Treatments and Quasi-Experimental Designs

The first of these two-day workshops was held in Oxford in April 2007. Although it was not repeated in 2008, a second workshop was organized during the year and this took place in February 2009 in Newcastle, with facilitation from Martin Eccles, Sasha Shepperd and Craig Ramsay.

### 2.14 Additional Training and Support in Study Identification

In addition to the training events listed above, Carol Lefebvre, Senior Information Specialist at the UK Cochrane Centre, provided training and support as follows:

- Recruitment, induction and ongoing training and support for Trials Search Co-ordinators
- Identifying the evidence for systematic reviews: training day for UK healthcare librarians conducted with information staff from the Centre for Reviews and Dissemination at the University of York.

## 2 Other Training

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### 2.15 Other Training and Support

Staff at the UKCC have been involved in a wide variety of other training events, which are not described in detail here, but which should have a positive impact on the quality of the work of The Cochrane Collaboration. Although several of these events take place outside the UK and Ireland, they have direct and indirect benefits to activities in the UK (for example, through improved understanding among people who will work with the UK-based CRGs). Examples include workshops during the Evidence Based Medicine Symposium in Antalya, Turkey in March (Mike Clarke), a seminar on searching The Cochrane Library for healthcare librarians at the US Medical Library Association annual meeting in June (Carol Lefebvre), workshops as a part of the 'Reviews for Africa Programme' at the South African Cochrane Centre in September (Sally Hopewell) and a lecture on the continuing growth and rising impact of The Cochrane Collaboration at the Cochrane Reflection Day organized by Cardiff University in November (Phil Wiffen). Staff at the UKCC are also involved in the supervision of students at both the MSc and PhD level, and in mentoring people who are working on Cochrane reviews.

### **3 Cambridge Training Working Group Meeting**

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A Cochrane Collaboration-wide training meeting was held in Cambridge in July 2008 and staff from the UKCC helped to organize this and attended. The meeting brought together trainers from a number of countries to discuss their local training resources. The meeting included wide-ranging discussions on training needs arising from RevMan 5 and the new *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions*. It led to the development of a Training Working Group, which will be co-convened by Phil Wiffen (UKCC) and Steve McDonald (Australasian Cochrane Centre and Cochrane Collaboration Steering Group). The Group's terms of reference include the identification of training needs, development of strategies to meet these needs, development of core resources and fostering communication on training issues within the Collaboration.

## 4 Future Plans

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We have scheduled a full programme of courses again for 2009 and these are filling quickly. We hope to run a training event in Cardiff for the first time in the second half of the year, for authors in Wales and the Severn Valley. RevMan 5 has slipped smoothly into use and we have incorporated it fully into the protocol days, and added relevant advice at other training events. We continue to keep the need for training events dedicated to the software under review, but these do not seem to be needed given the intuitive nature of RevMan 5 and its inbuilt help systems.

We will push forward with the online learning project once the pilot is complete and any problems identified are resolved. We have already identified a number of areas for further development, which will lead to new modules once we have obtained the additional resources needed.

We are running a one-day workshop as a satellite to the UK and Ireland based Contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration meeting in Edinburgh (March 2009) dedicated to the new Summary of Findings tables and GradePro software. This is aimed at the needs of editorial bases and will be led by Andy Oxman. We are waiting to see how this extension to the content of Cochrane reviews develops before preparing formal author training.

Although a large demand remains for the basic, introductory workshops, we are experiencing an increased demand for one-on-one support by telephone and e-mail, at study days, and have identified a need for more review completion courses. We will be revising our Training programme to meet these needs and we will seek to replace some of the current formal taught sessions with appropriate online modules, in order to allow greater interaction during the workshops particularly those focused on analysis.

Training for diagnostic test accuracy reviews is currently delivered by Jon Deeks and his team, based at the University of Birmingham, and we met with them during 2008 to discuss how the UKCC might help organize that training.

# Acknowledgements

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Our main source of funding remains the NHS Research and Development Programme through the National Institute for Health Research, with funding also coming from the Health Research Board for activities on the island of Ireland.

We could not deliver our training without the help of many volunteers, to whom we are very grateful. The UKCC covers travel expenses and offers a small honorarium.

Anne-Marie Bagnall, Catherine Baldesari, Genevieve Becker, Sally Bell-Syer, Kate Cahill, Mike Clarke, Therese Dowswell, Anne Eisinga, Ruth Foxlee, Jo Garcia, Gill Gyte, Sonja Henderson, Sally Hopewell, Karen Hovhannisyanyan, Clare Jess, Toby Lasserson, Carol Lefebvre, Suzanne Martin, Zena Moore, Andrea Nelson, Rafael Perera, Gail Quinn and Jessica Thomas.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Wiffen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Phil Wiffen  
Training Director  
March 2009

# Appendix I

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## Developing a Protocol for a Review Workshop Programme

- 09.30 Coffee and Registration
- 09.40 Welcome and Introduction
- 09.50 Format of a Cochrane review
- 10.25 Small group discussion on developing a Protocol for a review
- 12.30 Lunch  
(*The Cochrane Library* will be available during the lunch break)
- 13.15 Demonstration of a completed Protocol on RevMan
- 14:00 Small group discussion on developing a Protocol for a review - continued
- 16.00 Close of workshop (approximate time)

## Appendix II

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### Developing a Protocol for a Review – Two-day Workshop Programme

#### Programme Day One

09.30	Coffee and Registration
10.00	Welcome and Introduction
10.10	Format of a Cochrane review
10.45	Small group discussion on developing a Protocol for a review
12.30	Lunch ( <i>The Cochrane Library</i> will be available during lunch break)
13.30	Small group discussion on developing a Protocol for a review – continued
15.00	Break
15.15	Small group discussion on developing a Protocol for a review – continued Begin to write up ideas
16.00	End of Day One

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#### Programme Day Two

8.45	Coffee and Registration
9.00	RevMan session and opportunity to work on Protocol
10.30	Coffee
10.45	Searching for Trials 1 – an overview
12.00	Searching for Trials 2 – sources of support
12.30	Lunch
13.15	Developing your methods section
14.15	Individual discussion and continuing RevMan work
15.15	Evaluation and close

# Appendix III

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## Introduction to Analysis Workshop Programme

09.00	Welcome and refreshments
09.15	Introduction to meta-analysis
10.00	Applying eligibility criteria (practical)
11.00	Break
11.15	Binary data: summary statistics and choosing an effect measure
12.00	Continuous data
13.00	Lunch
13.45	Extracting data (practical)
14.45	Break
15.00	Heterogeneity – causes and investigation
15.45	Risk of bias (with activity)
16.30	Close of workshop

## Appendix IV

### Review Completion Course Programme

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9.00		Welcome – outline of the day	Welcome – statistics and analysis day	Welcome – outline of the day	Welcome – outline of the day
9.15		Optional tutorial RevMan	Own work – Statistician available all day	Own work – facilitators available	Participants feed back to whole group on their progress - plan to ensure completion of their review
10.00		Own work – facilitators available			Optional tutorial Adverse effects
11.00		COFFEE/TEA BREAK	COFFEE/TEA BREAK	COFFEE/TEA BREAK	COFFEE/TEA BREAK
11.30		Own work – facilitators available	Own work – Statistician available all day	Own work – facilitators available	Own work – facilitators available
12.00					
12.30	LUNCH/ARRIVAL				
1.00	Welcome/Introductions. Housekeeping etc Aim/structure of programme.	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	Action plans / summary CLOSE OF COURSE
1.30					
2.00		Optional tutorial Reviews with no data for quantitative analysis	Own work – Statistician available all day	Own work – facilitators available	
2.30	Optional tutorial Data extraction				
3.00	Own work – facilitators available	Own work – facilitators available			
5.00					

## Appendix V

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*UK Cochrane Centre - Training and Development  
Programme*

### ***Peer Review Skills Training***

*23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2008 – UK Cochrane Centre, Oxford*

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### *Programme*

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09.30	Coffee & Registration
09.50	Welcome and introductions
	Aim/structure of programme
10.00	Introduction to the Cochrane process
10.45	What an Editor wants from peer review
11.30	Statistical review
12.30	Lunch break
13.30	Critical appraisal of a systematic review (workshop)

# Appendix VI

## 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of UK and Ireland based Contributors to The Cochrane Collaboration Tuesday 11 and Wednesday 12 March 2008

Tuesday 11 March		Henley Suite	North Ridings	West Ridings	Castle Suite	Howard Suite	Wharfe	Loxley	Esk and Swale	Derwent	Foss	Regatta Suite
0945 - 1200		Refreshments										
1000 - 1200		Registration on the First Floor Foyer										
0900 - 1200					0900 - 1200 Trials Search Co-ordinators Meeting					0900 – 1200 Review Group Co- ordinators		
1200 - 1300		Lunch in the Courtyard Restaurant										
1300 - 1400	Plenary 1	<b>Henley Suite</b> <b>Chair: Nicky Cullum</b> <b>Quality of Reviews</b> Paula Williamson, Centre for Medical Statistics and Health Evaluation, University of Liverpool. <b>Assessing risk of bias in included studies</b> Julian Higgins, MRC Biostatistics Unit, Cambridge.										
1400 - 1415		Break										
1415 - 1545	Workshop Session A	RevMan 5 <b>Mike Clarke</b>	Web-based training for Cochrane authors: developments in the UK Diane Gal	Extracting data for a systematic review of non-randomised studies (NRS) of a public health intervention Barney Reeves	Introduction to Meta-analysis: the basics Sally Hopewell and Deborah Caldwell	The role of meta-regression in Cochrane reviews Judith Anzures-Cabrera		Making sense of scientific evidence: a workshop for consumers Gill Gyte	Introduction to EndNote for authors Julie Glanville	CENTRAL: an update and future plans for Trials Search Co-ordinators (closed) Ruth Foxlee and <b>Carol Lefebvre</b>		Informal meetings
1545 - 1615		Refreshments and Posters in the Riverside Suite										
1615 - 1745	Workshop Session B	Risk-of-bias tables in Cochrane reviews: the new tool for assessing methodological quality of included studies Julian Higgins	The role of indirect comparisons and mixed treatment comparisons meta-analysis in Cochrane reviews Deborah Caldwell	Systematic reviews of qualitative research <b>Catherine Francis Baldesari</b>	Cluster randomization Rebecca Turner	Plagiarism Martin Burton and <b>Phil Wiffen</b>	When are RCTs of the effects of an intervention unnecessary? Barney Reeves	Introductory/intermediate workshop for Cochrane Trials Search Co-ordinators <b>Carol Lefebvre</b>	RevMan 5 (hands-on) <b>Mike Clarke</b>	Challenges for Trials Search Co-ordinators in supporting authors of Cochrane reviews of diagnostic test accuracy (closed) <b>Anne Eisinga</b>	Writing plain language summaries Liz Wager	Informal meetings
1930		Conference dinner in the Henley Regatta Suite										

# Appendix VI

Wednesday 12 March		Henley Suite	North Ridings	West Ridings	Castle Suite	Howard Suite	Wharfe	Loxley	Esk and Swale	Derwent	Foss	Regatta Suite
0700 - 0830		Breakfast in the Courtyard Restaurant										
0900 - 1030	Workshop Session C	Dealing with heterogeneity Julian Higgins	Systematic reviews of diagnostic test accuracy studies: Constructing a clinically relevant question Chris Hyde and Jon Deeks	Sharing Good Cochrane Editorial Processes Nicky Cullum and Sally Bell-Syer		Missing data James Carpenter		Advanced workshop for Cochrane Trials Search Co-ordinators <b>Carol Lefebvre</b>	Information Management System (IMS) training for Cochrane Review Group (CRG) Editors Sonja Henderson		Consumer workshop Gill Gyte	Informal meetings
1030 - 1100		Refreshments and Posters in the Riverside Suite										
1100 - 1230	Workshop Session D	Summary of Findings tables Andy Oxman	Introduction to EPOC methods for non-EPOC authors Sasha Shepperd and Martin Eccles	Taking systematic reviews of diagnostic test accuracy through the editorial process Tess Moore and <b>Anne Eisinga</b>	EndNote for Trials Search Co-ordinators (closed) Julie Glanville	Cross-over trials Andy Vail	Including non-standard studies and non-standard data in a meta-analysis Judith Anzures-Cabrera	Retrieving data for systematic reviews incorporating adverse effects Yoon Loke and Su Golder	Navigating <i>The Cochrane Library</i> Nigel Thompson	Extracting and managing data from published papers Clive Adams	Systematic reviews of diagnostic test accuracy studies: Assessment of methodological quality Penny Whiting and Jon Deeks	Informal meetings
1230 - 1330		Lunch in the Courtyard Restaurant										
1330 - 1500	Plenary 2	<p><b>Henley suite</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Lesley Stewart</b></p> <p><b>The National Institute for Health Research and The Cochrane Collaboration</b> Tom Walley, National Institute for Health Research Health Technology Assessment Programme.</p> <p><b>Systematic reviews and public health: applying an equity lens</b> Mark Petticrew, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London.</p> <p><b>Summary of Findings Tables</b> Andrew Oxman, Norwegian Branch of the Nordic Cochrane Centre.</p>										
1500 - 1530		Refreshments in the Riverside Suite										
1500 - 1700	Meetings		Wounds Group		Neuromuscular Disease Group Editors							

## Appendix VII

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### Cochrane Review Author Training Fellowships on the island of Ireland awarded in 2008

NAME	TOPIC	COCHRANE REVIEW GROUP
Christine Bleakley	Cold weather immersion (Cryotherapy) for treating and preventing muscle soreness after exercise	Bone, Joint and Muscle Trauma Group
Emma Borthwick	High volume haemofiltration as a treatment for sepsis	Anaesthesia Group
Janice Christie	Workplace based organisational interventions for preventing and reducing adult obesity	Public Health Group
Imelda Coyne	Interventions for promoting shared decision-making for children with cancer	Childhood Cancer Group
Eugene Dempsey	Formal resuscitation training for reduction of morbidity and mortality in the newborn infant	Neonatal Group
Mairead Furlong	Behavioural group-based parent training interventions for children aged 3-8 with early onset conduct problems	Developmental, Psychosocial and Learning Problems Group
Brenda Nugent	Enteral feeding methods used in the nutrition management of patients with head and neck cancers being treated with radical radiotherapy	Ear, Nose and Throat Disorders Group
Kader Parahoo	Psychological interventions for men with prostate cancer	Prostatic Diseases and Urologic Cancers Group
Cathy Payne	Overview of interventions for managing fatigue and weight loss in adults with advanced progressive illness	Pain, Palliative and Supportive Care Group
Sharon Sheehan	Treatments for minimising blood loss during caesarean section	Pregnancy and Childbirth Group
Margaret Walshe	Treatments for drooling in children with cerebral palsy	Movement Disorders Group
Helga Sneddon	Currently on maternity leave; will start Fellowship on her return.	

**Training and supporting UK and Ireland based Contributors to  
*The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews***

**Phil Wiffen  
Training Director**

**Catherine Francis-Baldesari  
Lecturer in Systematic Reviews**

**Amy Drahota  
Lecturer in Systematic Reviews**

**Nicola McDowell  
Co-ordinator**

**Nancy Owens  
Facilitator for Cochrane Review Groups**

**Ian Palmer  
Senior Project Training Support Officer**

**Joanne Rumney  
PA/Training Support Co-ordinator**



UK Cochrane Centre  
National Institute for Health Research  
Summertown Pavilion  
Middle Way  
Oxford OX2 7LG, UK

Tel: +44 (0)1865 516300  
Fax: +44 (0)1865 516311

E-mail: [trainingteam@cochrane.co.uk](mailto:trainingteam@cochrane.co.uk)