

1. Welcome and introductions (48 contributors present: See attendance list on p.)

Kay Dickersin introduced herself as the director of “Cochrane United States” then passed the microphone around the room so each contributor could introduce themselves and the group/center they represent.

2. What’s happening in the US (All)

2.1. Cochrane Steering Group (Kay Dickersin)

Steering Committee members Roberta Scherer and Mark Helfand provided a summary of the Annual General Meeting. Mark Helfand noted that during the Annual General Meeting, some representatives of centers from different countries discussed adding more organizational levels to centers located in larger countries (e.g., United States, China, Brazil), the justification being that more levels would lead to improved structure. For example, the “center” could be the top level, with “branches” below it, and “affiliates” below that. Roberta Scherer noted that this would allow more universities and researchers to get involved as well. Kay Dickersin encouraged everyone to read the Annual General Meeting minutes.

2.2. Cochrane United States (USCC Staff)

2.2.1. Website and resources (Reva Datar)

Reva Datar, Project Coordinator at Cochrane United States, discussed the rebranding of the website with the new “Cochrane United States” logo and format. She also directed contributors to the CLEO (Conversations-Learning-Evidence-Opportunities) resources section on the Cochrane United States website. CLEO was recently redesigned to provide easy access to a variety of free online resources. CLEO particularly targets consumer advocates, but can be useful to all stakeholders in evidence-based healthcare.

Consumers United for Evidence-based Healthcare, the consumer network within Cochrane United States, is seeking new ways to diversify the organization and expand membership. Ms. Datar informed contributors that Cochrane United States will develop new resources in the coming months which address the needs of consumer advocates in the United States.

2.2.2. North American training opportunities (Kristina Lindsley)

Kristina Lindsley, Project Director of Cochrane Eyes and Vision, provided an update on training courses that Cochrane United States offers. The most recent course, “Introduction to Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis” introduces methods to perform systematic reviews and meta-analyses of clinical trials. The 6-week course covers how to formulate an answerable research question, define inclusion and exclusion criteria, search for the evidence, extract data, assess the risk of bias in clinical trials, and perform meta-analysis. The course can be accessed on Coursera at <https://www.coursera.org/learn/systematic-review>.

Ms. Lindsley reviewed Cochrane United States' other online training courses as well. The "[Translating Critical Appraisal of a Manuscript into Meaningful Peer Review](#)" course is a free of charge online course on journal peer review that serves as a resource for health professionals who are serving or wish to serve as peer reviewers of the biomedical literature. "[Handsearching: Identifying and Classifying Controlled Trial Reports](#)" prepares participants for the process of handsearching peer-reviewed biomedical journals, conference proceedings and other publications for the best available evidence.

Cochrane United States' Cochrane Eyes and Vision Group also offers several in-person workshops. These workshops are on "Developing a Cochrane Systematic Review" and are usually limited to review authors.

2.2.3. Cochrane West – New Branch of the USCC (Mark Helfand)

Mark Helfand noted that many people attending the US Contributors Meeting in Vienna were from the Cochrane West Branch. Cochrane West has an interest in guidelines and would like to get more involved. Mr. Helfand noted that the big changes that were discussed at the Annual General Meeting regarding structure and pathways (see section 2.1) are very important to the Cochrane United States Center because all contributors want to move faster.

2.2.4. Caribbean Branch of the USCC (Roberta Scherer)

Roberta Scherer reviewed the recent launch (2013) of the Caribbean Branch of Cochrane United States. The University of the West Indies through partnership with the Cochrane Collaboration, has facilitated the training of a cadre of researchers in knowledge synthesis and knowledge translation methodologies. The creation of the Cochrane Center Branch arose to maximize the interaction between the countries of the region and allow for a more intense level of Cochrane dissemination.

In 2015, The Caribbean Branch hosted a workshop in partnership with Cochrane United States on "Developing a Cochrane Systematic Review". The conference was a success and had participants from Jamaica, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados. Ms. Scherer noted that the Caribbean Branch is working on plans for the next training meeting.

2.3 Review Groups

2.3.1. HIV/AIDS Review Group (George Rutherford)

In a written report, George Rutherford noted that the HIV/AIDS Group has been transferred to the management of the Infectious Diseases Group in Liverpool. This is a temporary state while the new HIV/AIDS Group headquarters is set up at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg under the direction of Dr. François Venter.

Dr. Rutherford has remained an associate editor for the Infectious Disease Group assisting with the few ongoing HIV reviews that are still being finalized. His group has

been very active in the new WHO antiretroviral treatment guidelines.

2.3.2 Neonatal Review Group (Colleen Ovelman)

Ms. Ovelman notified contributors that the Neonatal Review Group produces 3 webinars per year. The group is trying to have one of the 3 webinars focus on methodology rather than summarizing the evidence. This month's will be called "GRADE-ing the Evidence: Understanding GRADE recommendations for neonatal medicine". The hosts will be Maria Rojas and Dr. Roger Soll. The objectives of the webinar are to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the available clinical evidence, understand the GRADE classification scheme, and to apply the GRADE classification to clinical situations in neonatal medicine.

2.3.3. Urology Group (Gretchen Kuntz)

In a written report, Gretchen Kuntz noted that there had been a change in the name from Cochrane Prostatic Diseases and Urologic Cancers Group to Cochrane Urology. The expanded scope includes stone disease (e.g., medical expulsive therapy for ureteral stones) and external male genitalia (e.g., circumcision). Twelve reviews and 6 protocols from the Renal Group will be transferred to the Urology Group.

Ms. Kuntz also informed the contributors that the Urology Group has expanded their pool of Trials Search Coordinators (TSCs)/Assistant TSCs to 13 based at 7 institutions (University of Florida, Gainesville and Jacksonville, FL; Cardiff University, Wales, UK; Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD; University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN; and Stony Brook University, New York). Ms Kuntz will be presenting a poster on this at the 2015 Colloquium.

The Urology Group collaborated with US GRADE Network to provide training on GRADE methods for systematic review authors and guideline developers. The next workshop will take place in Orlando, FL from November 2-4, 2015.

2.4 Review Group Satellites

2.4.2 Eyes and Vision Review Group (CEVG@US) Satellite (Kristina Lindsley)

Kristina Lindsley summarized the CEVG@US's ongoing "Priority Projects" plan, in which staff and health professionals find evidence gaps using clinical practice guidelines. These gaps are used to determine which areas need systematic reviews and how they need to be prioritized.

Ms. Lindsley also discussed the methodological hubs that CEVG@US uses. The Group has shown that these hubs work and they are now being taken up centrally. One of the contributors noted that it might be better to

2.4.3 Heart Satellite

2.4.4 Musculoskeletal Satellite

2.5 Fields

2.5.2 Complementary Medicine (CAM)

2.5.3 Justice Health

2.5.4 Cochrane Consumer Network (CCNet)

2.6 Methods

2.6.2 Comparing Multiple Interventions Methods (CMIM) Group

2.7

2.8 G-I-N (Guideline International Network) North America (G-I-N NA)

2.9 American Academy of Ophthalmology

2.10 Diabetic Retinopathy Clinical Research Network

3 Funding: Successes, challenges & future plans (All)

3.3 International funders

3.4 Federal funding (NIH, CDC, AHRQ, PCORI)

3.5 Foundations.

4 Other business

5 Group photo
