Cochrane Switzerland

Effectiveness in healthcare

Inform, train, facilitate and disseminate information to improve decision making

Annual Report 2013
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Foreword

The year 2013 was marked by The Cochrane Collaboration’s 20th anniversary, with various activities in Cochrane groups, centres, and branches around the world. Although Cochrane Switzerland is younger, we took the opportunity to celebrate the event on several occasions, including the Cochrane Day held on 28 November. This event involved healthcare professionals, stakeholders as well as the public at large, presenting and discussing the rationale for, and the achievements of the Cochrane Collaboration.

Twenty years of Cochrane also provided an opportunity for reflection on the past. We organised seminars with the theme “Historical roots, birth and implementation of the Cochrane Collaboration. A paradigm of evidence-based healthcare”, in collaboration with the Institute of history of medicine and public health at the University of Lausanne. Speakers included Ulrich Troehler, historian of medicine and knowledgeable about the roots of evidence-based medicine, David Tovey, Editor-in-Chief of the Cochrane Library, and Metin Gülmezoglu from the Reproductive Health Department at the WHO.

During 2013, the Cochrane Collaboration consulted its global network about the new strategic directions it should take. This process led to the development of the Strategy to 2020. We contributed our perspectives to this process, from a country in which multi-lingual access to evidence is crucial for strengthening the use of evidence in health care practice and policy. Together with Cochrane colleagues abroad, we wrote an article describing the current state of Cochrane translation projects and possible ways forward. It was published in PLoS Medicine to coincide with the 21st Cochrane Colloquium, which was held in Quebec City, Canada.

At the national level, we continued providing training workshops for people new to Cochrane as well as for people already engaged in conducting or using systematic reviews. Several trainings were provided in cooperation with the Cochrane centres and branches in France, Germany, or Austria, thus making optimal use of available capacity. We also continued providing summaries of systematic reviews in French, German and Italian to selected medical education journals in Switzerland, with the aim of increasing access to the information and raising awareness of available evidence among Swiss healthcare professionals.

Looking forward to 2014, while aiming to continue our current work, we will also review and adapt Cochrane’s Strategy to 2020 to our needs in Switzerland. We will develop our own strategic plan, which will strengthen us in providing trusted evidence for informed decision making which, in turn, should lead to better health and healthcare.

We look forward to engaging with all our partners in working towards evidence-informed health and healthcare in Switzerland.

Prof. Bernard Burnand & Dr. Erik von Elm
1. Cochrane Switzerland in 2013 – Achievements and key activities

The activities of Cochrane Switzerland are described along the axes of the four main objectives of the Cochrane Collaboration’s *Strategy to 2020*: producing evidence, making evidence available, advocating for evidence and developing the organisation. We align to this strategy while adjusting it to best fit our needs.

1.1. Producing evidence

By July 2013, over 100 systematic reviews published by the Cochrane Collaboration had involved an author based in Switzerland. We aim to expand this pool of authors by providing training workshops at basic level, thus increasing awareness and interest in carrying out systematic reviews. We also provide more advanced level training workshops to strengthen methodological and statistical capacity of current and new authors.

In 2013, we organised courses and workshops in various formats:

- An intermediate course on systematic reviews and meta-analysis.

  This workshop was organised in Lausanne over five days (twice two and a half days) during May/June. It was directed at researchers and authors of systematic reviews and addressed methodological and statistical issues to deepen participants’ knowledge and understanding of systematic reviews analysis and meta-analysis. Eleven participants attended the first part of the workshop – addressing the methodological issues – and nine participants also took part in the second half of the workshop – focusing on statistical methods for meta-analysis and use of the STATA software. Participants included healthcare professionals, researchers and students from the University Hospital in Lausanne, as well as the Haute école spécialisée de Suisse occidentale - HES-SO (University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland).

  The course evaluation illustrated that all participants gained new knowledge; and that for almost all participants this knowledge was directly applicable to the workplace.

- An introductory workshop to the Cochrane Collaboration and its systematic reviews within the framework of the Certificate of Advanced Studies programme (CAS) at the University of Lausanne.

  This half day workshop was held on December 20, and attended by 18 participants. We used the workshop to introduce Cochrane and the principles of a systematic review, and spent time on critically reviewing a systematic review using the PRISMA checklist.
An Introductory course for using and understanding systematic reviews.

Although the course was scheduled for December 2013, we postponed it due to the limited number of subscriptions. This course is meant to focus on the user side, training participants in interpreting and using evidence to inform decision-making.

International workshops

In January, we were invited to run a first systematic review workshop in Bucharest, Romania, together with our colleagues from the Austrian Cochrane Branch. This three-day workshop was an initiative of clinical epidemiologists and public health professionals from Romania, and funded by the Romanian Ministry of Health with a competitive grant. The workshop was attended by Romanian researchers from various clinical specialties coming from across the country. It was a unique opportunity to learn about Cochrane and its review methodology, and to network. The course led to the successful integration of several new authors in ongoing Cochrane review projects.

Team members were also active in trainings delivered by other Cochrane entities or partners active in relevant fields such as evidence-based healthcare or public health. In 2013 this included contributions to:

- The European Master of Sciences in Epidemiology, University of Mainz, Germany (January 2013);
- A Systematic Review Workshop, German Cochrane Centre, Freiburg i.B., Germany (February 2013); and
- The European Summer School in Evidence-based Public Health, University of Liverpool, UK (June 2013).

1.2. Making evidence available

Switzerland is a multi-lingual country. While many healthcare professionals will be able to access the Anglophone literature provided through the Cochrane Collaboration and the Cochrane Library, for other target groups (such as patient and consumer groups; media; health decision makers; certain healthcare professionals) it is important to provide access to information in French, German and Italian. We have developed partnerships with three national medical education journals in Switzerland and one in France to respond to this need.
Collaboration with the Revue Médicale Suisse: Since 2008, we regularly produce summaries in French for this weekly medical education journal, which is published by “Editions Médecine & Hygiène” (Geneva). In 2013, six summaries were published in French. In addition, Revue Médicale Suisse published four articles on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Cochrane Collaboration (see below, section 1.3).

Collaboration with PRAXIS: PRAXIS is a bi-monthly medical education journal for healthcare professionals in German speaking Switzerland and it is published by the Hans Huber Verlag (Bern). In a special column, called „Mini-Review Cochrane for health professionals“ we address a clinical case scenario, using information from systematic reviews to answer a clinical question. In 2013, five scenarios were published in PRAXIS.

Collaboration with the Tribuna Medica Ticinese: This monthly journal publishes summaries of Cochrane reviews for the family physician, targeting healthcare professionals in the Italian speaking part of Switzerland. In 2013, nine summaries were published in this journal.

Collaboration with Médecine & Enfance: In 2013, three summary articles were published in French in Médecine & Enfance, a journal published by Edimark Santé (France) ten times a year, focusing on topics in the area of paediatrics.

In collaboration with a group of Swiss physiotherapists interested in evidence-based methods, a series of short articles, each summarising a systematic review relevant to physiotherapy, was written for “physioactive”, the bi-lingual journal of the professional association physiosuisse.

See Annex 1 for a full list of publications produced.

In addition to targeting these Swiss-based medical education journals, we provide access to information about the Cochrane Collaboration in French, German and Italian through our website, linking it to those of the French, German and Italian Cochrane Centres and cochrane.org, where appropriate.

Cochrane Switzerland co-led a major publication project in 2013, which involved an international group of authors affiliated with Cochrane. This project was entitled “Translating Cochrane reviews to ensure that healthcare decision-making is informed by high-quality research evidence”. It involved describing the current state of Cochrane’s efforts to translate evidence into different languages and possible ways forward to become a multilingual and truly global organisation. The article was published in PLoS Medicine in September 2013 to coincide with the Cochrane Colloquium held in Quebec City, Canada.
1.3. Advocating for evidence

We promote the use of evidence in general and the use of Cochrane systematic reviews in particular, through public presentations at conferences and meetings, as well as by being available to national media for health related issues and themes.

In 2013, we contributed to the Swiss Public Health Conference, which took place on August 15-16 in Zurich. As in the preceding year, we organised a workshop that looked at the contribution of Cochrane reviews in the field chosen as the theme of the conference. We used the example of smoking cessation to illustrate and discuss the available evidence and invited a clinical expert to contribute to the workshop. Three presentations preceded a round table discussion. They focused on how (Cochrane) reviews of the effects of population-level interventions can improve the quality and access to public health evidence for decision-making and knowledge translation. The round table discussion asked why and how the translation of evidence into public health policy poses specific challenges.

The Cochrane Collaboration celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2013. In October we organised a series of two workshops entitled ‘Historical roots, birth and implementation of the Cochrane Collaboration. A paradigm of evidence-based healthcare’. Presentations were given on the history of Cochrane, the development of evidence-based healthcare, Cochrane Switzerland, and the collaboration of Cochrane with the World Health Organisation.

In addition to these workshops, we organised a half day symposium on the use of routinely collected health data. The Symposium showcased how research groups from the UK, USA, Canada and Switzerland address topical questions, from epidemiology to quality of care and patient safety, using routinely collected health data. This half-day provided a unique opportunity to interact with experts who have opened the ‘treasure troves’ guarded by hospital administrations, statistics offices and other collectors of routine health data.

In November, we organised a ‘Cochrane day’ to further celebrate the 20th anniversary of Cochrane. Held at the Musée de la Main in Lausanne, the event was attended by over 70 healthcare professionals (in the afternoon) and around 60 participants from the general public (in the evening). Invitees included healthcare professionals, researchers, politicians and policy makers, as well as people representing civil society organisations operating in the healthcare field. Examples of systematic reviews that changed healthcare practices were shared and debated by panellists with professional and lay audiences.
In 2013, Cochrane Switzerland had several interactions with the national media. Articles in the TagesAnzeiger and Der Bund focused on the deleterious effects of not publishing studies with negative results. On the occasion of the 20th Cochrane anniversary an article was published in the Schweizer Klub für Wissenschaftsjournalismus (skwj) and the Radio Télévision Suisse (RTS) featured the event.

Our team members were invited to present and participated in the following events, thus further advocating work of Cochrane Switzerland:

- Swiss Clinical Trial Organisation, Bern, January 2013;
- Congress of the Réseau International Francophone de la Recherche Qualitative (RIFReQ), Fribourg, Switzerland, June 2013;
- 21st Cochrane Colloquium in Quebec City, Canada, September 2013;
- 7th International Congress on Peer-Review and Biomedical Publication, Chicago, USA, September 2013;

1.4. Developing Cochrane Switzerland

We developed our corporate identity in 2013. To facilitate communication about the Cochrane activities, we shortened our name to ‘Cochrane Switzerland’, and developed our own logo with the help of a professional graphic designer. Using this new name and logo, we produced a brochure in German, French, Italian and English. The images below on the next page illustrate its four pages, each in a different language.

In addition to the logo and brochures, 2013 was also the first year for which we produced an annual report. This additional communication tool will help us connect to existing and new partners and keep them abreast of our activities.

Within the Cochrane Collaboration, our team also continued contributing to the following Cochrane Review Groups as authors, editors or referees:

- Tobacco Addiction Group;
- Drugs and Alcohol Group;
- Effective Practice and Organisation of Care group;
- Injuries Group;
- Methodology Review Group;
- Occupational Safety and Health Group;
- Upper Gastrointestinal and Pancreatic Diseases Group;
- Consumers and Communication Group;
- Oral Health Group.

As members we were involved in the:

- Prognosis Methods Group;
- Trainer’s Network.
2. Partners and partnerships

Cochrane Switzerland is hosted by the Institute for social and preventive medicine (IUMSP) at the Lausanne University Medical Centre (CHUV and UNIL). It is through this set up that Cochrane Switzerland has a sustainable human resource base as well as infrastructure.

External partnerships are crucial for us in order to achieve our goals. Team members are active in a range of external networks, advisory bodies, and professional associations, which facilitates the development of these partnerships. Examples include membership and involvement in:

- Coordination pour l’Evaluation des Pratiques Professionnelles en Santé en Rhône-Alpes (CEPPRAL);
- Collaborative Group of the Appraisal of Guidelines, Research, and Evaluation in Europe (AGREE-Trust);
- Commission fédérale des prestations générales et des principes, Federal Office of Public Health;
- Enhancing the QUAliity and Transparency Of health Research (EQUATOR Network);
- Federal Quality Strategy for the Swiss Health Care System, Federal Office for Public Health;
- German Network for Evidence-based Medicine (DNEbM);
- Guidelines International Network (G-I-N);
- International Epidemiological Association (IEA);
- International Methodology Consortium on Coded Health Information (IMECCHI);
- International Society for Quality in Healthcare (ISQUA);
- Public Health Switzerland;
- Réseau d’Epidémiologie Clinique International Francophone (RECF);
- STrengthening the Reporting of OBservational studies in Epidemiology (STROBE Initiative);
- Swiss Health Technology Assessment Network (SNHTA);
- Topic Advisory Group ’Quality and Safety’, WHO;
- Working group ’Versorgungsforschung in der Schweiz’, Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences.
3. Our team

In 2013, our core team consisted of five people based in Lausanne, as well as two team members based in Bellinzona, who volunteer time for Cochrane Switzerland. The team members are listed in alphabetic order below.

**Lucienne Boujon**
Secretary

**Prof. Bernard Burnand**, MD, MPH
Director of Cochrane Switzerland

**Erik von Elm**, MD, MSc
Co-director of Cochrane Switzerland

**Prof. Isabelle Peytreman Bridevaux**, MD, MPH, DSc
Contributor

**Myriam Rège Walther**, MSc Biology, MSc Economics
Co-director Cochrane Switzerland

**Fabrizio Barazzoni**, MD, MPH (based in Bellinzona)
Contributor

**Stefania Pelli**, MBA (based in Bellinzona)
Contributor
4. Key financial data

The figure below indicates Cochrane Switzerland’s income (in CHF) since its establishment, and also provides an indication of projected income for 2014.
Annex 1: Publications of Cochrane Switzerland

We work with a number of national medical education journals to publish Cochrane summaries in French, German and Italian. Some summaries are published in more than one journal, i.e. in German and French.

Articles published in Revue Médicale Suisse, under the title ‘Revue Cochrane pour le practicien’:


Articles published in Revue Médicale Suisse at the occasion of Cochrane 20th anniversary:


Articles published in PRAXIS under the heading ‘Mini-review Cochrane für die Praxis’:


Articles published in Médecine et Enfance:

Articles published in Tribuna Medica Ticinese under the title ‘Revisione Cochrane per il medico di famiglia’:

Article in PLoS Medicine:
Annex 2: Other publications by our team


- **Burnand B.** Independent drug bulletins to promote the prescription of appropriate drugs: a necessary but difficult task. *Bull World Health Organ.* 2013;91(6):391-391A.


Annex 3: Systematic reviews published/updated in 2013 involving Swiss based authors

This annex provides an overview of new and updated systematic reviews first published in 2013 that included an author based in Switzerland. The table below provides the title of the review as well as the Cochrane Review Group that was involved in the review. Further details about each of the reviews listed can be found in the Cochrane Library (see: http://www.thecochranelibrary.com).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review Title</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>New/updated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abdominal surgical incisions for caesarean section</td>
<td>Pregnancy and Childbirth Group</td>
<td>Updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antibiotics for preterm rupture of membranes</td>
<td>Pregnancy and Childbirth Group</td>
<td>Updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antiretroviral therapy for prevention of HIV transmission in HIV-discordant</td>
<td>HIV/AIDS Group</td>
<td>Updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artemisinin-based combination therapy for treating uncomplicated Plasmodium</td>
<td>Infectious Diseases Group</td>
<td>Updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computerized advice on drug dosage to improve prescribing practice</td>
<td>Effective Practice and Organisation of Care Group</td>
<td>Updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decentralising HIV treatment in lower- and middle-income countries</td>
<td>HIV/AIDS Group</td>
<td>New</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs for treating Schistosoma mansoni infection</td>
<td>Infectious Diseases Group</td>
<td>Updated and conclusions changed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydration for treatment of preterm labour</td>
<td>Pregnancy and Childbirth Group</td>
<td>Updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interventions for the management of mandibular fractures</td>
<td>Oral Health Group</td>
<td>Updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micronutrient supplementation for children with HIV infection</td>
<td>HIV/AIDS Group</td>
<td>New</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimal time for initiating antiretroviral therapy (ART) in HIV-infected,</td>
<td>HIV/AIDS Group</td>
<td>New</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>treatment-naive children aged 2 to 5 years old</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Paracetamol/acetaminophen (single administration) for perineal pain in the</td>
<td>Pregnancy and Childbirth Group</td>
<td>Updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>early postpartum period</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plasma transfusion strategies for critically ill patients</td>
<td>Injuries Group</td>
<td>New</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postpartum misoprostol for preventing maternal mortality and morbidity</td>
<td>Pregnancy and Childbirth Group</td>
<td>New</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quetiapine versus other atypical antipsychotics for schizophrenia</td>
<td>Schizophrenia Group</td>
<td>Updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation following surgery for lumbar spinal stenosis</td>
<td>Back Group</td>
<td>New</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies for partner notification for sexually transmitted infections,</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Infections Group</td>
<td>Updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titrated oral misoprostol for augmenting labour to improve maternal and</td>
<td>Pregnancy and Childbirth Group</td>
<td>New</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xpert® MTB/RIF assay for pulmonary tuberculosis and rifampicin resistance in</td>
<td>Infectious Diseases Group</td>
<td>New</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adults</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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