

What is a Cochrane Review?

- Cochrane reviews are systematic literature reviews, which also meta-analyse data if possible
- Systematic reviews gather all evidence that fits the criteria (usually trial results) to answer a specific research question, e.g. *Do nicotine patches help people to stop smoking?*
- Systematic reviews aim to minimise bias by using clear, systematic methods
- Cochrane prepares, maintains and promotes systematic reviews to inform healthcare decisions
- Cochrane reviews are published online in The Cochrane Library:
<http://www.cochranelibrary.com/>

The Process

Title registration

An author or author team contact the group to propose a research question they would like to investigate

Write & publish protocol

The author team discuss, decide on and document methods that will be used to carry out the review, including the strategy that will be used to search the literature. This protocol is published in the Cochrane Library

Search the literature

Medical literature databases are searched using terms which will find papers to help answer the research question. For TAG reviews we usually only search for randomised controlled trials

Decide which studies to include

Judge the studies found against the review eligibility criteria and decide which should be included/excluded

Extract data

Two authors extract and compare key characteristics, quality information and data from the studies

Write-up

The review is written up and conclusions drawn based on the findings & quality of included studies

Data analysis

If possible, pool data from included studies using meta-analysis

Update review

The review is kept up to date and any new studies added every 2 years approx