

## 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.

### **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

### **Update review?**

The author team is asked to assess whether the review needs updating on an ongoing basis. When this is deemed necessary searches are updated and the results incorporated

### **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

Trusted evidence.  
Informed decisions.  
Better health.