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Foreword

Annual reports published in previous years included general information about The Cochrane Collaboration, The Nordic Cochrane and its branches. This year we report only the achievements of The Nordic Cochrane Centre and its branches for 1999 and give a brief section about the review groups in the Nordic region. The introductory information sections have been moved to the new strategic plan.

On the Centre's home page http://www.cochrane.dk, the reader can find further information about The Cochrane Collaboration, The Nordic Cochrane Centre and its branches. The reader may find it particularly useful to refer to the document 'Report 1998 and Strategic Plan 1999-2001' when reading the report, see http://www.cochrane.dk/ncc/aboutncc.htm.
Results in relation to objectives and targets for 1999

Objective 1. To facilitate the preparation of high quality, up-to-date systematic reviews across a broad range of health care topics.

Target 1.1. Offer at least three workshops a year and other forms of training to support members of registered review groups to develop protocols and use the Review Manager software.
Two protocol and two RevMan workshops held in Copenhagen. One protocol and one RevMan workshop held in Oslo. A RevMan workshop was also held at the 7th Cochrane Colloquium in Rome.

Target 1.2. Offer two training workshops for handsearchers each year. Workshops were offered twice during 1999. Due to lack of participants, only one workshop was held.

Target 1.3. Conduct at least two 4-day courses and two 2-day courses on evidence-based health care each year.
Two 4-day courses held in Copenhagen, one in Oslo. The Finnish Branch has hosted several short courses.

Target 1.4. Identify possible new reviewers and editors, filling the gaps in the current coverage of the scopes of Review Groups. Done.

Target 1.5. Perform or support prospective searches for general and the most important specialist Nordic health care journals. Done. See Appendix 1 for a list of journals searched during 1999.

Target 1.6. Perform or support retrospective searches for the most important specialist Nordic health care journals. Done. See Appendix 1 for a list of journals searched during 1999.

Target 1.7. Translate titles of all trials identified by handsearching which are not on MEDLINE into English. Done.

Target 1.8. Update handsearches on an ongoing basis and send citations for all new trials to the New England Cochrane Center for inclusion in CENTRAL, and by this mechanism also in MEDLINE and in The Cochrane Controlled Trials Register. Ongoing. Of 904 relevant trials identified through handsearching in 1999, 48 were new to MEDLINE.

Target 1.9. Prepare and maintain Cochrane reviews performed by staff members. Done. See list of publications.

Target 1.10. To finish the systematic study of the quality of 53 Cochrane reviews, started in 1998. Done. The results were presented at the 7th Cochrane Colloquium in Rome; manuscript prepared.

Target 1.11. Follow up the outcome of the 16 comments and criticisms on Cochrane reviews sent from the Nordic Cochrane Centre during 1998. Done.

Other achievements

Both the Nordic Cochrane Centre and the Norwegian Branch have translated trials from Danish and Norwegian into English at the request of collaborative review groups.

A section for prospective registration of Russian clinical trials has been created on the Russian Cochrane Web site (www.cochrane.ru).
The Norwegian Branch participated in a project coordinated by Philippa Middleton, Australasian Cochrane Centre, to rewrite structured abstracts for Cochrane reviews to improve the readability before they were indexed on MEDLINE.

The Nordic Cochrane Centre and the Norwegian Branch have checked the statistical results reported in the results sections in all new and updated reviews in issue 4 of The Cochrane Library to ensure that no errors were introduced by the new software, MetaView 4.0.

The Norwegian Branch updated The Reviewers' Handbook with support from The Nordic Cochrane Centre.

The Nordic Cochrane Centre coordinated the planning of training workshops for review group coordinators in Oxford, UK; Lyon, France; San Antonio, Texas; and Adelaide, Australia. Staff from The Nordic Cochrane Centre provided training at the workshops held in Oxford and Lyon.

Objective 2. To promote awareness of, access to and use of Cochrane Reviews.

Target 2.1. Translate the information brochure on The Cochrane Collaboration into Russian during 1999. A Russian Cochrane Web site was launched in October 1999 (www.cochrane.ru). This contains both the Cochrane brochure in Russian and a small leaflet about the Collaboration (the brochure is also accessible through www.cochrane.dk/ncc). All major headings from the international Cochrane site have been translated into Russian and linked to the English language content. The Cochrane Glossary has been translated and posted on the site. A collection of articles from international journals on the methodology of systematic reviews has been translated and posted on the site. All Russian full-text publications mentioning The Cochrane Collaboration (see list of publications in Appendix 2) are also made available on the Russian Web site.

Two additional Russian WWW sites also contain information about The Cochrane Collaboration.

Target 2.2. Prepare a Norwegian version of the Cochrane pamphlet. Done.

Target 2.3. Continue to collaborate with Ugeskrift for Læger, Suomen Lääkärilehti and Läkartidningen in publishing articles on evidence-based medicine which summarise important Cochrane Reviews. Done.

Target 2.4. Continue to promote the introduction of evidence-based medicine in the pre- and postgraduate curriculae of clinicians. Done, guidelines are under development in collaboration with World Federation for Medical Education.

Target 2.5. Continue to respond positively to requests for information from the media. Done.

Objective 3. To provide central coordination and a focus for Cochrane activities within the countries serviced by The Nordic Cochrane Centre.

Target 3.1. Provide accurate and accessible information on Cochrane activities in the region and elsewhere. Done, in particular via our homepage.

Target 3.2. Maintain an up-to-date directory of names, contact details and areas of interest and expertise of people in the region who have expressed interest in contributing to The Cochrane Collaboration. Done.
Objective 5. To contribute to research relevant to systematic reviews, especially on bias and on non-specific (placebo) effects of health care.

Target 5.1. Provide support for the Methods Groups by maintaining discussion lists and provide methodological support to RevMan users. 
Done. In addition to methodological support, a hotline has been established to provide technical support to RevMan users.

Target 5.2. Get approval from the Steering Group for establishing a methods group on non-randomised data. 
Done.

Target 5.3. Convene a workshop on non-randomised data in 1999. 
Done.

Target 5.4. Convene a workshop on placebo in 1999. 
Done.

Target 5.5. Produce draft guidelines on when, how and with which precautions non-randomised data may be included in Cochrane Reviews. 
Done.

Target 5.6. Update and improve the Cochrane Review Methodology Database. 
Done.

Target 5.7. Produce the newsletter for the Methods Groups. 
Done.

Target 5.8. Coordinate the development of the Empirical Methodological Studies Group and register the group as a Cochrane Review Group with the aim of producing systematic reviews on methodological questions. 
Done.

Objective 4. To continue to provide central coordination for software development within The Cochrane Collaboration.

Target 4.1. In collaboration with the Software Development Group, Review Manager Advisory Group and Update Software release version 4.0 of Review Manager in 1999. 
Done. In addition to releasing the software through the Internet, 1600 CD-ROMs were shipped from The Nordic Cochrane Centre. Two subsequent updates were released to address problems identified in the software.

Target 4.2. Maintain the change control system for The Cochrane Collaboration Information Management System (Review Manager, Module Manager and the Parent Database) and for MetaView (in collaboration with Update Software). 
Done.

Other achievements

The Nordic Cochrane Centre hosted the meeting 'Evidence Based Medicine: How do we implement research results effectively?' in Copenhagen.

The Nordic Cochrane Centre has published Nordic Cochrane News Issue 4, which was distributed to all registered individuals in the Nordic region.

Objective 3.3. Maintain our web site, www.cochrane.dk, and improve the linkages to other Nordic material. 
Done. The site was redesigned.

Target 3.3. Maintain our web site, www.cochrane.dk, and improve the linkages to other Nordic material. 
Done. The site was redesigned.
Target 5.9. Continue collaborative research projects to elucidate how best to use data from crossover trials, data on ranking scales and continuous data in meta-analyses, since there is insufficient guidance in the meta-analytic literature on these important subjects. Done.

Target 5.10. To finish the investigation of trials which have been left out of three Cochrane reviews because of suspected misconduct. Ongoing.

**Objective 6. To contribute to the efficient operation and sustainable growth of The Cochrane Collaboration.**

Target 6.1. Co-ordinate the review of the Review Groups’ modules in the new format and provide feedback to them and to the Steering Group in 1999. Done.

Target 6.2. Review the methods used in Cochrane Reviews. Not done.

Target 6.3. Evaluate the performance of the registered Review Groups in the Nordic area and the branches of the Nordic Cochrane Centre annually. Done.

**Objective 7. To achieve financial sustainability for Nordic Cochrane activities.**

Target 7.1. To have achieved core funding for The Nordic Cochrane Centre by the end of 1999 from the Danish government. Funding achieved for 2000.

Target 7.2. To provide help and support in order to obtain core funding for the Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group, the Cochrane Colorectal Cancer Group, the potential Cochrane Anaesthesia Group, and the branches of the Nordic Cochrane Centre. Done.
Review groups in the Nordic region

The Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group (CHBG) with Christian Gluud, Denmark, as coordinating editor, was registered with the Collaboration on 29 March 1996. Three systematic reviews and 19 protocols from the Group appeared in the fourth issue of The Cochrane Library 1999. Handsearching of specialist journals is rapidly progressing; ten journals have been searched and 15 are in progress. The Group's specialised register contains 10,118 citations, 6,011 of which report on randomised or controlled clinical trials. Additional 3,000 copies of articles of possible interest are in the process of being evaluated. For further information, see the latest issue of The Cochrane Library as well as the Group's Annual Report, incorporated in the Annual Report of the Copenhagen Trial Unit, available from:

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Copenhagen Trial Unit, Centre for Clinical Intervention Research, Institute of Preventive Medicine
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Copenhagen K, Denmark
Telephone: +45 3338 3743, or +45 3338 3883
Fax: +45 3332 4410
E-mail: chbg@ipm.hosp.dk
Web site: http://inet.uni2.dk/~ctucph/chbg/

The Cochrane Colorectal Cancer Group with Peer Wille-Jørgensen, Denmark, as coordinating editor was registered on 26 January 1998. At present, the Group has two approved reviews (one published in The Cochrane Library) and 16 approved protocols (thirteen published in The Cochrane Library). The specialised register of topic related literature is established and contains more than 3,800 trials. A list of relevant journals to handsearch has been prioritised; 31 journals are being handsearched, 5 of which are finished and currently searched prospectively. For further information, see The Cochrane Library or obtain the Group's Annual Report from:

Henning K Andersen, Review Group Coordinator
Department of Surgical Gastroenterology
K H:S Bispebjerg Hospital, 23 Bispebjerg Bakke, DK-2400 Copenhagen NV, Denmark
Telephone: +45 3531 2704
Fax: +45 3586 1831
E-mail: cccg@cccg.dk
Web site: www.cccg.dk

The Cochrane Anaesthesia Group with Tom Pedersen and Ann Møller, Denmark, as coordinating editors was officially registered with the Collaboration in February 2000. The Group has prepared five protocols for systematic reviews which have been submitted for publication in The Cochrane Library through existing review groups. For further information, contact:

Lisa Bismuth, Review Group Coordinator
Department of Anaesthesiology,
Bispebjerg Hospital,
DK-2400 Copenhagen NV, Denmark
Telephone: +45 35 31 3014
Fax: +45 35 31 3958
E-mail: l.bismuth@cochrane.dk
Web site: www.cochrane-anaesthesia.suite.dk

The Empirical Methodological Studies Methods Group with Andy Oxman, Norway, as coordinating editor was registered as a review group in July 1999. The Group is interested in methodological questions regarding the conduct and critical appraisal of evaluations and reviews of health care. The primary focus of the Group is on bias and methods to protect against bias, such as concealment of allocation. For further information, contact:
Kirsty Loudon Olsen, Coordinator
Health Services Research Unit
National Institute of Public Health
Postbox 4404 Torshov
0403 Oslo
Norway
Telephone: +47 22 04 23 65
Fax: +47 22 04 25 95
E-mail: k.l.olsen@samfunnsmed.uio.no

In addition to the names mentioned above, 12 other review groups have Nordic editors:

- Back Review Group For Spinal Disorders (Alf Nachemson, Sweden)
- Ear, Nose and Throat Disorders Group (Jørgen Lous, Denmark)
- Effective Professional Practice (Andy Oxman, Norway)
- Fertility Group (Olav Meirik, Norway)
- Incontinence Group (Steinar Hunskaar, Norway)
- Inflammatory Bowel Disease Group (Jørgen Rask Madsen, Denmark)
- Lung Cancer Group (Roger Henriksson, Sweden)
- Peripheral Vascular Diseases Group (Lars Janzon, Sweden)
- Prostatic Diseases and Urologic Cancers Group (Gunnar Steineck, Sweden)
- Schizophrenia (Kristian Wahlbeck, Finland)
- Upper Gastrointestinal and Pancreatic Diseases Group (Åke Andren-Sandberg, Sweden)
- Wounds Group (Christina Lindholm, Sweden)

Nordic researchers participate in many additional review groups and fields (see The Cochrane Library). In the fourth issue of 1999 of The Cochrane Library, 10 reviews and 23 protocols were listed with a Nordic contact address, which amounts to 2.6% of the 1287 reviews and protocols.
Acknowledgements

The staff at the Nordic Cochrane Centre and its branches are grateful for the financial support received from our funders:

- Apotekerfonden af 1991 (The 1991 Danish Pharmacy Foundation)
- Bayer, Moscow
- Central Library for Medical Sciences, Finland
- Copenhagen Hospital Corporation
- CPR, St. Petersburg
- Danish Institute for Health Technology Assessment
- Danish Medical Research Council
- Danish Ministry of Health
- Duodecim, Finland
- European Union
- Finnish Medical Association
- FinOHTA
- Glaxo Wellcome, Norway
- Institute for Occupational Health, Finland
- Media Sphera Publishing Group, Moscow
- Medical Enlightenment Charity Foundation, Moscow
- Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Norway
- National Institute of Public Health, Norway
- Nordic Council of Ministers
- Pfizer, Norway
- Rigshospitalet, Denmark
- Stakes (National R&D Centre for Welfare and Health), Finland
- Swedish Council for Technology Assessment in Health Care

The following individuals have participated as handsearchers during 1999:

Denmark: Louise Engell, Peter C. Gøtzsche, Kirsten Lone Jensen, Helle Krogh Johansen, Viola Olesen, Finn Berlum Kristensen.
Finland: Vesa Jormanainen, Kati Juva, Marjukka Mäkelä, Iris Pasternack, Osmo Saarelma, Sirpa Sairanen, Helena Varonen.
Iceland: Ari Johannesson.
Norway: Arild Bjørndal, Cheryl Carling, Siv Nielsen, Kirsty Loudon Olsen.
Russia: Vasiliy V. Vlassov.
Sweden: Marie Monik, Gun Britt Knutsson.

In addition, we owe special thanks to:

Lars Werkö (chair 1993-1996); Henrik Wulff (chair 1996-1998); Arild Bjørndal (chair 1998- ) and other members of the Advisory Board of the Centre; chief editor Liselotte Højgaard, Ugeskrift for Læger; Managing Director Jørgen Jørgensen and Medical Director Helle Ulrichsen, Rigshospitalet; Managing Director Erik Juhl, Copenhagen Hospital Corporation; Medical Director Einar Krag, National Board of Health; Director Finn Børlum Kristensen, Danish Institute for Health Technology Assessment; Review Group Co-ordinator Dimitrinka Nikolova, The Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Group; General Secretary Jan Lindgren, Finnish Medical Society Duodecim; Chief Librarian Liisa Salmi, Kuopio University Hospital; Librarian Leena Lodenius, Medical Society Duodecim; Taito Pekkarinen, Finnish Medical Journal; Mike Clarke, The UK Cochrane Centre.
# Appendix 1. List of handsearched journals

## Denmark

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Country of publication</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acta Anaesthesiologica Scandinavica</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acta Oto-laryngologica</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acta Radiologica</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allergy</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Completed up till 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APMIS</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Search stopped 1999, too few trials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood Pressure</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Completed up till 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiology</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Completed up till 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemotherapy</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Transplantation</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Månedsskrift for Praktisk Lægegerning</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Search stopped late 1999, no trials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nephron</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Completed up till 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oncology</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicus</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Search stopped late 1999, no trials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandinavian Journal of Haematology</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ugeskrift for Læger</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Completed up till the end of 1999</td>
</tr>
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## Finland

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<tr>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Country of publication</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ann Medicinae Militaris Fenniae</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Completed until 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annales Chirurgiae et Gynaecologiae</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Completed until 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annals of Medicine</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Completed until 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duodecim</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Completed until 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerontologia</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Completed until 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunnalislääkäri</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Completed until 1998</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suomen Lääkärilehti</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Completed until 1998</td>
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## Russia

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<th>Status</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Terapevticheskii Arkhiv</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voprosy Onkologii</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2. Publications and awards in 1999

Publications by staff at The Nordic Cochrane Centre

New or updated Cochrane reviews and protocols


Other publications


Correspondences

Fischer M. Why being a reviewer in the Cochrane Collaboration is a better deal than working outside it! [letter]. eBMJ (http://www.bmj.com/cgi/eletters/319/7216/1040#EL4).


Gøtzsche PC, Hammarquist C, Burr M. Control of house dust mite in managing asthma (authors’ reply). BMJ 1999;318:871.


Olsen O. ABC of labour care: Relief of pain - Any adverse effects? [letter]. EBMJ (http://www.bmj.com/cgi/eletters/318/7188/927#EL8).


Publications by staff at The Finnish Branch of The Nordic Cochrane Centre

New or updated Cochrane reviews and protocols


Other publications


Publications by staff at The Norwegian Branch of The Nordic Cochrane Centre

Other publications


**Publications by staff at The Russian Branch of The Nordic Cochrane Centre**

**Other publications**


Бойко АН. Организационное заседание международной группы Кокрейн по подготовке аналитических обзоров по вопросам лечения рассеянного склероза. Журнал неврологии и психиатрии им. Корсакова 1997;5:75-76.


Власов ВВ. Полвека рандомизированный испытаний. Кардиология 1998;11:4-8.

Власов ВВ. Медицина, основанная на доказательных данных. Врач 1998;6:32.

Власов ВВ. А нужен ли российский “Медлайн”? Медицинская газета 1999;10 ноября.


Li Wan Po А. Фармакотерапия, основанная на доказательствах. Клиническая фармакология и терапия 1998;7:2.

Львов Ю. “Чем лечат, а чем калечат?” Новые известия, 24 июля 1999.

Львов Ю. “Особенности национальных лекарств”. Новые известия, 2 декабря 1999.

Мешалкин ЛД. От Потсдамской декларации до шкалы надежности знаний. Компьютерные технологии в медицине 1998;1:65-68.


**Awards received**

Peter C. Gøtzsche received The Henrik R. Wulff award from the Danish Society for Medical Ethics, Philosophy and Methods.
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About The Cochrane Collaboration
www.cochrane.dk
www.cochrane.org

Abstracts of Cochrane Reviews
www.cochrane.dk/cochrane/revabstr/mainindex.htm

Information about The Cochrane Library
www.update-software.com