

# COCHRANE SOUTH AFRICA

## LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Learning opportunities are provided for a variety of stakeholders. Below is a menu of our current courses, workshops and support activities.

COCHRANE SPECIFIC AUTHOR TRAINING <sup>1</sup>		DURATION
1	Cochrane protocol development workshop	4-5 days
2	Cochrane Review progress/update school	3 days
3	GRADE	1.5 days
4	RevMan workshop	0.5 days
5	Cochrane Review 'time-out' fellowships	As needed
6	Mentorship for novice authors	As needed
7	One-on-one RevMan or methods support from Cochrane SA staff	As needed

<sup>1</sup> Participants must have a registered Cochrane Review title

GENERAL SYSTEMATIC REVIEW TRAINING		DURATION
1	Introduction to evidence-based health care, systematic reviews and the work of Cochrane <sup>2</sup>	2 hours - 1 day
2	Searching for studies and systematic reviews: the Cochrane Library and MEDLINE <sup>2,3</sup>	2-4 hours
3	How to read a systematic review <sup>2</sup>	3-4 days
4	Systematic reviews and meta-analysis: semester course of the MSc Clinical Epidemiology, Stellenbosch University <sup>3</sup>	e-learning and 3 days contact time
5	Title registration support, one-on-one support <sup>3</sup>	As needed
6	Primer in Systematic Reviews & Research Synthesis: online short-course with Stellenbosch University <sup>2</sup>	11 weeks

<sup>2</sup> Participants include researchers, healthcare professionals, policy-makers and other stakeholders interested in learning more about the work of Cochrane and how to access and read Cochrane Reviews

<sup>3</sup> Participants include those interested in conducting a systematic review

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## **Additional information regarding the above general systematic review training courses:**

### **1. Introduction to evidence-based health care, systematic reviews and the work of Cochrane**

The overall aim of this workshop is to increase awareness about evidence-based health care and how to access, appraise and interpret evidence from systematic reviews. The workshop is relevant for health professionals, policy makers, and other stakeholders who have an interest in or are involved in making decisions about which health care interventions to implement, and people who are interested in becoming authors of systematic reviews. By the end of the course participants will be able to:

- outline the principles of evidence-based health care;
- describe the features of good systematic reviews;
- briefly explain the role of Cochrane;
- search *the Cochrane Library* to access systematic reviews;
- critically appraising the quality of a systematic review, and
- Interpret the results of a systematic review.

### **2. Searching for studies and systematic reviews: the Cochrane Library and PubMed**

The aim of this workshop is to equip researchers to develop and implement a search strategy in PubMed and search the *Cochrane Library* for systematic reviews. By the end of the workshop participants will be able to:

- Identify relevant electronic databases to search for published studies
- Identify relevant resources to search for published and unpublished studies
- Describe what MeSH terms are and why it is necessary to include them in a PubMed search strategy
- Describe and use Boolean operators in a PubMed search
- Develop a search strategy for PubMed
- Conduct searches in PubMed and the *Cochrane Library*

### **3. How to read a systematic review**

This course is for both users and potential doers of systematic reviews. It equips participants to understand, appraise and use systematic reviews of effects. By the end of the course participants will be able to:

- Outline the rationale for research synthesis
- Identify components of a high quality Cochrane systematic review
- Access systematic reviews of effects after formulating clear questions using PICO
- Critically appraise reviews of effects, including statistical interpretation of meta-analysis
- Interpret a GRADE profile
- Outline key components of a systematic review of effects that need to be considered in applying to health policy and practice

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#### 4. **Systematic reviews and meta-analysis**

This module is part of the Stellenbosch University MSc in Clinical Epidemiology course ([www.sun.ac.za/clinepi](http://www.sun.ac.za/clinepi)) offered by Cochrane South Africa and the Centre for Evidence-based Health Care. The course enables participants to understand the methods for conducting a systematic review to answer a clearly defined question about the effects of a health care intervention. Specific content/objectives include:

- Explain what systematic reviews are, why they are needed and where to find them
- List the components of a good research question (PICO) and explain why this is fundamental to the success of a systematic review
- Explain the importance of developing a comprehensive search strategy and conduct a search within MEDLINE and CENTRAL for a specific review topic
- Describe the data management process of a review including screening the results of your search using pre-defined eligibility criteria, and extracting relevant data
- Assess the risk of bias in randomised controlled trials
- Outline concepts in data analysis relevant for systematic reviews, including different data types, measures of effect, heterogeneity, subgroup analysis and sensitivity analysis
- Read and interpret the results of meta-analyses, including being familiar with the contents of Summary of Findings tables within a systematic review
- Describe the role of systematic reviews in evaluating adverse effects of interventions
- Outline key concepts in reporting patient related outcomes
- Explain the challenges of conducting a qualitative review
- Outline the challenges of including non-randomised studies in a systematic review
- Outline the role of overviews of reviews
- Describe the methods and challenges of incorporating evidence into policy and practice
- Optional skills for this module:
  - Write a protocol for a systematic review in a topic of your choice
  - Demonstrate the use of RevMan software for completing a protocol and conducting meta-analyses

This is an accredited, full semester course and is a blended module which includes both contact sessions and e-learning. All participants complete assignments during the semester and an exam at the end of the module. 30 CPD points are awarded on completion of the course.

#### 5. **Primer in Systematic Reviews & Research Synthesis: online short-course with Stellenbosch University**

This 11-week online short-course is offered by the Centre for Evidence-based Health Care and Cochrane SA. The course aims to help participants find, appraise, interpret and consider the use of systematic reviews of effects of interventions for decision-making.

For more information about the course's entry requirements and costs please contact Mrs ME Esterhuizen at [lesterhuizen@sun.ac.za](mailto:lesterhuizen@sun.ac.za), or at (021) 938 9314.

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