

Following 411 Cochrane protocols to completion: retrospective cohort study

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What is the issue?

- Systematic reviews are useful to policy-makers and patients
- Policy-makers need current, up-to-date information
- Reviews by the Cochrane Collaboration are highly regarded
- Every Canadian has access
- BUT time to publication and factors associated with publication are unknown

Study questions

- What is the time to publication of Cochrane reviews?
 - Shorter time to publication is better
- What are the factors associated with the time to publication of Cochrane reviews?
 - Country, funding, review methods

Study findings

- Average of 2.4 years to publication BUT some took over 8 years to be published
- For every 5 Cochrane reviews conducted, 1 remained unpublished
- Only 1/3 Cochrane reviews were updated
- Factors affecting time to publication:
 - Review updated vs. not updated
 - 2 vs. 1 protocols

Why is this important?

- Policy-makers need current information
- Many of the Cochrane reviews required updating
- Wasted resources (time and study funding)
- Some researchers failed to disseminate their review results

My advice

■ Cochrane

- All Cochrane reviews should be published & published quicker
- More support required for Cochrane reviews with protocol changes
- More Cochrane reviews should be updated

■ Policy-makers

- Support the Cochrane Collaboration
- Make sure that up-to-date information is used for decision-making

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<http://www.cochrane.org/>