

How consumers can be involved in the authoring of Cochrane covid-19 rapid reviews

Who are consumers?

In Cochrane the term consumer means patients, people with personal experience of a healthcare condition, health and social care service users, caregivers, and family members.

What reviews could I be involved with?

Cochrane is currently undertaking and collaborating with other organisations on rapid reviews on a wide range of topics related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The exact number of reviews, and the nature of the questions, continues to evolve.

What will I do?

You can discuss and agree about your role with the team at the outset. This should take into account your interests, skills, experience, availability and preferences, and the review team's requirements. Cochrane's consumer coordinator can provide support with this step.

Consumer roles

As a consumer, you may be asked to contribute to the review in one or more of the following ways:

Become a consumer author.

In some cases, consumers can become a core member of the rapid review team. This would mean you provide input throughout the whole review process as a co-author. Because of the rapid nature of these reviews, any person involved in this way should have sufficient experience in systematic reviews.

During the review planning stage (the protocol)

- Help decide on the question(s) the rapid review will address, and criteria to be used to select studies.
- Suggest the outcomes of interest to patients for the review. This might include suggesting additional outcomes or saying which outcomes are of greatest importance.
- Comment on how evidence will be brought together (analysed). This might include contributing to decisions about whether it is relevant to group together particular population groups or treatment groups for the analysis.

During the review writing stage (the review)

- Provide feedback on a draft of the review results. You might be asked for specific feedback about how the review team have interpreted the results, or to give suggestions for what the key messages should be.
- Contribute to writing the Plain Language Summary of the review. You might be asked to lead the writing, with support from the review team.
- Comment on the plans for sharing (disseminating) the completed review. You might make suggestions so the review will reach the general public, or particular population groups. More information about consumer involvement in disseminating reviews can be found [here](#).

What support will I receive?

You can access free online learning about Evidence Based Medicine and Cochrane Reviews, and other resources. If you are new to contributing to Cochrane Reviews you can be supported by an experienced Cochrane consumer. Cochrane's Consumer Coordinator will also be able to provide support.

Next steps?

To get started please visit the Consumer website [here](#) and if you have any other questions contact consumers@cochrane.org.