



Dear friend,

COVID-19 Consumer rapid response group

Welcome and thank you!

Thank you for volunteering for Cochrane's response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Cochrane, alongside several partner organisations, is working to get the best evidence available to people making decisions, especially when faced with uncertainty. Consumer involvement is vital to Cochrane's work.

Cochrane is working on many rapid and full evidence reviews related to COVID-19. You can read more about Cochrane's response to the pandemic [here](#).

Consumers are part of the research team

We want review teams and consumers to collaborate in the short time available for rapid reviews, often over days or sometimes hours. To do this, a group of consumers, review authors, editors, and others came together to form a task group to make it possible (listed [here](#)).

Our values and principles

In 2017 the Cochrane Board adopted the [Statement of Principles for Consumer Involvement in Cochrane](#). It sets out why Cochrane believes your contributions are important and how it believes you should be treated.

Who can help with reviews?

The consumer rapid response group is made up of people who have recovered from COVID-19, and other people who are affected in different ways. The full range of criteria can be viewed [here](#).

How you can partner with Cochrane

The task group is working closely with the wider Cochrane community to identify Cochrane reviews on COVID-19 and consumer involvement opportunities. As our consumer rapid response group grows (90 consumers, and growing), we will try to match you with tasks according to your preferences, location and so on. Currently, review authors contact us by email with their research topic, and we contact consumers by email to ask if someone is interested. Generally, opportunities are given to the first suitable responder. We aim to do our best to share the tasks as fairly as possible.

Your role in COVID-19 research

These are the different ways that you can be a part of COVID-19 research:

- You could be part of the author team (see [here](#))
- You could be a peer reviewer, and give your feedback from your consumer perspective (see [here](#))
- You could help make Cochrane research accessible and available to other consumers (see [here](#))

- If you are an experienced consumer, you could offer peer support to newer members of this group

The support that is available for you

To help you contribute in the best possible way, there is a range of support available to you. All the following are free for Cochrane contributors.

Learning

- [Evidence Essentials](#) is online learning that covers an introduction to Evidence Based Medicine, clinical trials, evidence synthesis, and Cochrane reviews.
- [Cochrane Interactive Learning](#) is over 10 hours of self-directed learning on conducting a complete systematic review, for both new and experienced review authors. The first module is free. Access can be granted to members of the rapid response group on request.
- [Knowledge Translation](#) learning resources show how you can contribute to Knowledge Translation activities.

“How to” resources

- How consumers can be involved in the authoring of Cochrane COVID-19 rapid reviews (see [here](#)).
- Video - how consumers can be involved in authoring of COVID-19 rapid reviews (see [here](#)).
- What is expected of you as a peer reviewer (see [here](#)).
- Consumer peer review checklists for [protocols](#) and [full reviews](#). Consumer peer reviewers for some rapid reviews may be asked to use Scholar1 - an online system for submitting peer review feedback. Guidance will be given.
- How consumers can be involved in dissemination (see [here](#)).

Peer Support

A number of people have volunteered to offer peer support for members of the rapid response group who need advice or guidance when contributing to rapid or full reviews for Cochrane. Please email consumers@cochrane.org to be linked with someone who can help you quickly.

The Cochrane consumer network

We encourage you to join the Cochrane Consumer Network for further support. It is a growing community of patients, carers, family members, and others, who have an interest in health evidence and who often wish to be involved in partnering in research. It is free to join. Members receive a monthly news digest with reliable information about health evidence, involvement in research, and opportunities to contribute. You can follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), can vote in elections and attend Cochrane events often at a reduced cost. You can find out more and join [here](#).

COVID-19 rapid response group webpage

We have created a webpage for you here which has all the above information and more. You can find it [here](#). We will update it regularly.

Feedback

We want to ensure that your experience is positive. We will contact you so that you can give us your views and how you contributed when you have been a partner in a review.

Updates

We will keep in touch with you on a regular basis to tell you about how we are doing with regard to the COVID-19 rapid response group.

Your data

Your personal information is held in line with Cochrane policy. You can find out more about our policy and leave this group at any time by emailing consumers@cochrane.org.

In summary

- Authors of Cochrane COVID-19 rapid reviews are contacting us in order to find consumers to involve.
- You might receive an email asking if you will contribute to a specific review.
- We are trying to tailor these invitations according to the preferences that you have told us about, and what the review authors have told us about their review plans.
- If you receive an email and you want to get involved, then please reply as quickly as possible.

And finally

Thank you again. Your help with research into COVID-19 is very much appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact us by email at consumers@cochrane.org.

Richard Morley

Cochrane Consumer Engagement Officer