

Announcements

Bahrain Medical Bulletin announces the establishment of:

Dr Mohamed Al Khalifa Research Prizes

Prize No.1: BD1,000 (\$2,652), Prize No.2: BD600 (\$1,592), Prize No.3: BD400 (\$1,061)

Every research article published in Bahrain Medical Bulletin is entitled to be considered for the prizes.

The committee for the prizes will meet in January, February and March of each year to decide the winners.

Each winner will be given the research prize and a certificate by Dr. Mohamed Al Khalifa during the certificate distribution at the end of the Research Writing and Editing Workshop of June of each year.

A Public Health Review Group for The Cochrane Collaboration

Professor Elizabeth Waters^{1,2}

Jodie Doyle^{1,2}

Rebecca Armstrong^{1,2}



1. Cochrane Public Health Review Group
2. The McCaughey Centre: VicHealth Centre for the Promotion of Mental Health and Community Wellbeing, Melbourne School of Population Health, Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, University of Melbourne.

Professor Elizabeth Waters, together with a strong and distinguished team of local and international collaborators, are delighted to announce the official registration of the Public Health Review Group (PHRG) within the international Cochrane Collaboration. The demand for a PHRG has arisen out of the call for complex public health review topics on the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews that have been outside the scope of existing Cochrane Review Groups but important to decision making in public health. The Cochrane PHRG, based in Melbourne, Australia, will provide leadership on and responsibility for production and publication of systematic reviews of relevance and usefulness for public health decision makers. It will prioritise interventions to improve health and other outcomes at the population level, including income distribution, education, public safety, housing, work environment,

employment, social networks, food supply, transport and pollution. Overarching our approach will be a focus on making a contribution to better understanding what works for whom, why and at what cost. We will be particularly interested in identifying what works to improve health equity and reduce health and social inequalities. It is also the intention of the PHRG to use gaps highlighted in our reviews to influence new primary research in public health.

The registration of this group is the accumulation of 12 years of work as the Cochrane Health Promotion and Public Health (HPPH) Field and the establishment of strong affiliations with, and shared understanding of the knowledge needs of international public health agencies, such as the World Health Organization and Pan American Health Organisation, as well as national organizations including, but not limited to, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Public Health Agency of Canada, the new Public Health Foundation of India, and the UK National Institute for Clinical Excellence. We also acknowledge the ongoing support of the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) who have provided funding to the HPPH Field, now the PHRG, since 2000.

This is an exciting and opportune time for the introduction of this new Cochrane entity, with the first impact factor for the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews on *The Cochrane Library* due for release in June 2008. Impact factors are calculated as the average number of times published papers are cited up to two years after publication. They are often used for supporting academic promotions and for calculating DEST points. Therefore, conducting a Cochrane review will become a recognised academic activity. As a result of this we hope that readers of this journal become increasingly involved in the conduct of Cochrane reviews.

The PHRG has already established a dedicated editorial team with specific public health content and reviewing expertise and an understanding of the research needs to inform decision making. Along with the core staff they will provide editorial support to authors keen to undertake these types of reviews. We have also established a group of experts committed to developing and refining methods further to guide authors and to best meet the evidence needs of users of public health reviews. Details regarding the Cochrane PHRG editors, the core team, and the development of a specialised registry of studies can be found at www.ph.cochrane.org/en/about.html.

The PHRG is keen to be responsive to the needs of public health practitioners, policy makers and consumers from all over the world and thus welcome your feedback and contribution to the PHRG program of work. We are very keen to have more contributors from the Middle-Eastern regions. Potential editors, authors, and those willing to act as peer reviewers and/or handsearchers are encouraged to contact the PHRG for information on opportunities to contribute to this new review group.

Elizabeth Waters, Coordinating Editor (ewaters@unimelb.edu.au)

Jodie Doyle, Review Group Coordinator (jdoyle@unimelb.edu.au)

Rebecca Armstrong, Senior Research Fellow, Knowledge Translation and Exchange (ramstrong@vichealth.vic.gov.au)