

Formal Exploratory Meeting on the Initiation of a Cochrane Behavioral Medicine Field:
August 25, 2004 in Mainz, Germany

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Over the last four years members of the Evidence-based Behavioral Medicine Committee of the Society of Behavioral Medicine (www.sbm.org/ebbm/) have worked together to apply concepts and methods of evidence-based medicine to behavioral medicine interventions (1). Upon reviewing the various systems, this committee proposed that behavioral medicine consider joining the Cochrane Collaboration (www.cochrane.org) with the belief that the efforts within behavioral medicine to develop effective interventions would be well-served by creating a Behavioral Medicine Field within the Cochrane Collaboration (2).

Topic-based Cochrane Fields facilitate the work of the disease-based Collaborative Review Groups within the Cochrane Collaboration through the following activities (3, p. 127-128): identifying relevant trials and making them accessible through a specialized register; ensuring the proper representation of its specialist area of health care in Cochrane Review Groups; acting as a liaison point between the entities within the Cochrane Collaboration and its specialist area of health care; promoting the accessibility of Cochrane reviews in its specialist area of health care; helping to identify funding opportunities for Cochrane Review Groups. Although currently acknowledged as a “Possible Field” by the Cochrane Collaboration, to continue the process of initiating a Cochrane Field, a Formal Exploratory Meeting must be held to assess the level of interest and enthusiasm for the proposed Field.

A number of international scientists as well as some EBBM Committee members worked together to have this meeting. The meeting took place on August 25th in Mainz, Germany and was attended by 27 individuals representing seven different countries. During the course of the meeting, participants learned about the Cochrane Systematic Review process, as well as the different entities of the Cochrane Collaboration from various Cochrane representatives (i.e.,

Claire Allen, Deputy Administrator of The Cochrane Secretariat as well as Consumer Representative of the Cochrane Complementary Medicine Field; Joyce Coutu, Systematic Reviewer of the US Cochrane Center; Heather Maxwell, Coordinator of the Cochrane Peripheral Vascular Diseases Group and a member of the Cochrane Collaboration's Monitoring and Registration Group; and Iris Pasternack, M.D., representative of the Cochrane Occupational Health Field).

Meeting participants decided that it is worthwhile to initiate a Cochrane Behavioral Medicine Field. Subsequently, small groups discussed then presented:

- a) a list of possible reviewers associated with the Field, and possible contributions to existing or future Collaborative Review Groups,
- b) the process for generating a list of journals to review for the specialized register,
- c) potential fiscal resources for developing a Field, and
- d) methods to identify potential Advisory Group members.

A self-nominated ad hoc group is working together to prepare the registration materials for the Cochrane Behavioral Medicine Field to submit to the Monitoring and Registration Group. If you have any questions or comments about these activities, please contact Karina Davidson at kd2124@columbia.edu or Kimberlee Trudeau at kimberlee.trudeau@mssm.edu.

References

- (1) Davidson, K. W., Goldstein, M., Kaplan, R. M., Kaufmann, P. G., Knatterud, G. L., Orleans, C. T., Spring, B., Trudeau, K. J., & Whitlock, E. P. (2003). Evidence-based behavioral medicine: What is it, and how do we achieve it? *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 26(3), 161-171.
- (2) Davidson, K. W., Trudeau, K. J., Ockene, J. K., Orleans, C. T., & Kaplan, R. M. (In press). A primer on current evidence-based review systems and their implications for behavioral medicine. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*.
- (3) Cochrane Collaboration Secretariat. Cochrane Manual. . [Online.] 2004 August [cited 2004 September 13]; Available from: URL <http://www.cochrane.org/cochrane/cc-man.htm>