



## Cochrane Collaboration Training Courses 2010

### Guidance Notes

#### Background

The bringing together of evidence from randomised trials in systematic reviews to help inform decision making is increasingly common, not least because of the formation of The Cochrane Collaboration with its aim to prepare, maintain and promote the accessibility of reviews in all areas of health care. Systematic reviews are a vital part not only of the process of summarising existing research but also of the process of planning future research. For example, ethics committees, research funders and health care policy makers require that systematic reviews be done in advance of new research.

Traditional narrative reviews, usually written by a recognised expert, are generally not systematic. Authors might simply not have the time to identify and bring together all relevant studies or they might actually seek to discuss and selectively combine trials that confirm their opinions and prejudices. A systematic review aims to circumvent this weakness by the use of a predefined, explicit methodology. The methods used include steps to minimise bias in the identification of relevant studies, in the selection criteria for inclusion, and in the collection of data.

Since 1993, The Cochrane Collaboration, through the establishment of Cochrane Review Groups across healthcare topics, has been preparing systematic reviews (Cochrane reviews) of the effects of interventions. These are published in full, in electronic form, in *The Cochrane Library*. There are now more than 4000 full reviews, together with published protocols for a further 1900. Access to The Cochrane Library is available free of charge to anyone with internet access on the island of Ireland using the following link: [www.thecochranelibrary.com](http://www.thecochranelibrary.com) sponsored by the Health Research Board (HRB) in Dublin and the Health and Social Care Research & Development Division (HSC R&D Division) in Northern Ireland.

To build capacity in the conduct of systematic reviews on the island of Ireland, the HRB and the HSC Research & Development Division, (HSC R&D Division), Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland have run a series of training courses since 2002 in association with the Training Team of the UK Cochrane Centre. This year, the portfolio of training courses includes both a half-day Introduction to Cochrane (see Appendix 1) and a more intensive two-day course (see Appendix 2) for those who would like more detailed knowledge of systematic reviews.

These courses will be led by personnel from the UK Cochrane Centre and people from the Island of Ireland experienced in systematic reviews.

## **Dates and venues for courses**

The half-day training courses are scheduled for

- Belfast (22 April 2010)
- Dublin (24 May 2010)
- Galway (10 June 2010)
- Cork (10 September 2010)

A series of four 2-day training courses will be held throughout the island of Ireland and every effort will be made to offer a course in a location that suits successful applicants. The proposed dates and venues for these 2-day courses in 2010 are:

- Cork (6 & 7 July 2010)
- Galway (Late August 2010)
- Belfast (13 & 14 September 2010)
- Dublin (11 & 12 October 2010)

## **Application Process**

Read Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 in the next section of this guidance document **before** applying. The aims and content of each course are described here and will help you decide which course is most suitable to your experience and needs.

All applications must be made using the online HRB eGrants system. New applicants to the HRB need to register first on the eGrants system. The eGrants system can be found at <http://egrantsproduction.imaxan.ie/>

The deadline is **12.00 noon on Friday 26 March 2010** and applications will not be accepted after this deadline.

Applicants will be informed about their success in attaining a place on these courses and will receive confirmation of training dates as soon as possible following receipt of application.

**All enquiries relating to the training courses should be addressed to:**

**Sara Lord**  
Research Management Unit  
**Health Research Board**  
**An Bord Taighde Sláinte**  
t +353 1 2345205  
e [slord@hrb.ie](mailto:slord@hrb.ie)



## APPENDIX 1

<b>Title of course</b>	<b>Introduction to The Cochrane Collaboration, Cochrane systematic reviews <i>The Cochrane Library</i></b>
<b>Duration of course</b>	<b>Half day</b>
<b>Eligibility</b>	Participants do not need any experience of The Cochrane Library or systematic reviews
<b>Aim</b>	
<p>This half-day course has been developed to raise awareness of the work of The Cochrane Collaboration, to give an introduction to systematic reviews and to help people access and use The Cochrane Library. It is suitable for anyone (healthcare practitioners, academic researchers, librarians) who wishes to improve their knowledge of evidence-based healthcare, the principles and practice of systematic reviews and the work of The Cochrane Collaboration.</p>	

### Proposed content (Times and precise content to be confirmed)

9:00 am	<b><u>Introductions</u></b>
9:10 am	<b><u>The Cochrane Collaboration</u></b>  Overview of The Cochrane Collaboration, its history, mission, structure, and impact.
10:00 am	<b><u>The Cochrane Library</u></b> Overview of databases in The Cochrane Library and how to use them. General concepts of search strategies for a systematic review.
11:00 am	Tea/ Coffee
11:20 am	<b><u>Cochrane Systematic Reviews</u></b>  Overview of the process involved in a Cochrane systematic review.
12:20 pm	Questions and Answers
12:40 pm	Finish

## APPENDIX 2

<b>Title of course</b>	<b>Cochrane systematic review course</b>
<b>Duration of course</b>	<b>Two days</b>
<b>Eligibility</b>	Participants should have an understanding of research processes and be familiar with The Cochrane Library and systematic reviews
<b>Aim</b>	
<p>This two-day intensive course has been developed to provide an overview of systematic review methodology and critical appraisal skills. It is suitable for those who require an understanding of the importance of evidence-based practice and who are interested in acquiring a more detailed knowledge of systematic reviews with a view to perhaps conducting their own systematic review.</p>	
<b>Expected Outcomes</b>	
<p><i>Having completed the course, attendees should be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Outline the key components of a Cochrane review</li> <li>▪ Describe the role of The Cochrane Collaboration</li> <li>▪ Explain the essential steps of preparing and maintaining a Cochrane review, including formulating the question, literature searching, data extraction, study quality assessment, and basic statistical analysis.</li> </ul>	

### **Topics covered (Times and precise content to be confirmed)**

#### **Day 1:**

An introduction to Systematic Reviews and The Cochrane Collaboration

Research study designs

Study identification

Statistical analysis and forest plots

Critical appraisal

#### **Day 2:**

Assessing study eligibility

Data extraction

Introduction to meta-analysis.

Heterogeneity

Resources and what next?



## Technical guidelines for completion of the eGrants application form

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The deadline for submission of applications is **12.00 noon** on **Friday 26 March 2010**. Please note that the system will be taken off-line promptly at **12.00 noon**.

While we have made every effort to make the online application as straightforward as possible, if you are not familiar with online systems this procedure will take longer than the conventional hard-copy system. For this reason we suggest you allow extra time to complete your application.

We recommend that you first work offline using the guidance notes and then copy and paste the relevant information into the related sections in egrants. This is to facilitate a backup of your information in case of system failure.

Please use the following notes for reference when completing the application form.

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### Computer Requirements

You will need:

- A PC (personal computer) or Mac

The eGrants system has been optimised to work on Internet Explorer version 6 on a PC.

- Connection to the internet

The eGrants system can be accessed on Internet Explorer/Netscape version 4 or higher. If you have an older version of either browser; you can download a more recent version free of charge at:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/downloads/default.asp> for Internet Explorer.

<http://wp.netscape.com/download/> for Netscape.

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### Registration

In order to submit an online application with the HRB, you are required to register at the following address:

<http://egrantsproduction.imaxan.ie/>

**Step 1:** Click on 'Register Yourself' on the left-hand menu. Please supply the details of the Fellowship Applicant on this screen. The name and address details will appear at the top of your application form. All mandatory fields are marked with an asterisk\*.

**Step 2:** When you have submitted your registration, you will receive an email. Follow the instructions in the email to confirm your registration. The email also contains your username, password and researcher ID. You will need your username and password for logging in to the eGrants site and you will need your researcher ID for all future correspondence with the HRB.

**NB: Remember to click on the link in the email to confirm your registration.**

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## Tools

When you are filling out your application form, there are a number of useful tools in a menu on the left-hand side of the computer screen. They are:

- User Home
- Edit Profile
- Email Us
- View Application Layout
- Guidelines
- View Form
- Print Form
- Form Headings

**User Home:** This button will return you to your unique user homepage, which gives details of your project title, its submission status, and the number of days to the submission deadline.

**Edit Profile:** This button allows you to update your personal details, which you entered for your registration.

**Email Us:** You may email the HRB helpdesk ([help@hrb.ie](mailto:help@hrb.ie)) for assistance and your query will be answered within 24-hours Monday to Friday.

**View Application Layout:** This button opens another window that contains a list of all the questions on the form. Use this to skip to whichever question you wish to fill in. This is a useful tool to navigate through sections of the form.

**Guidelines:** This document.

**View Form:** You may use this button at any stage to see the layout of the form, and the content you have entered to date.

**Print Form:** Click here to view your form in print layout and to print off your application form.

**Form Headings:** This button allows you to view each section of the form individually.

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## Helpdesk

If you require help with the eGrants system please contact the HRB helpdesk:

Email: [help@hrb.ie](mailto:help@hrb.ie)

Telephone: +353 1 2345122

All queries will be dealt with within 24 hours, Monday to Friday.

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## Timeout and Saving Information

Please ensure that you save your information at least once every 50 minutes. The system will automatically log you out after 60 minutes if you do not save your information and you may lose whatever you have entered. This protects your private information and saves valuable system resources.

We recommend that you complete any large sections offline (in MS Word, for example) and copy and paste it into the relevant sections.

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## Completing the eGrants Application Form

Log in to your eGrants home page at:

<http://egrantsproduction.imaxan.ie/>

Please log in using your unique username (email) and password, and select New Application under the heading **Cochrane Training Course**.

You can login and logout as often as you wish to fill in the form and you can make changes to any section before you submit your application. After filling in a question, you must click on **Next (Save)** to save the information you have entered. **Once you have submitted your application, you will not be able to make changes to it.**

You will first be asked to enter your **Project Title**. The title should not exceed 200 characters. Please note that only plain text may be used in entering the project title. If you don't have a project title you may enter "**Cochrane Training**" instead.

The **Important** notice coming up asks you if you have read the Guidelines (this document) for this scheme. Choose '**Yes**' in the menu.

**NAVIGATION:** Once you have passed the first question Project Title, on the application form, the option '**View Application Layout**' will appear on the left hand side menu, which contains a list of all the questions on the form. Use this to skip to whichever question you wish to fill in. This is a useful tool to navigate through sections of the form.

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## Cochrane Library Training Courses – Questions on Application Form

### 1. APPLICANT'S DETAILS

The next screen will show you the details you entered for registration. You can edit these details at any time using the **Edit Profile** button (see 'Tools' above).

### 2. DATES/LOCATION

Please indicate from the dropdown menu which course you wish to attend and which venue would be your first choice. Exact dates for some of these courses will be confirmed in the near future.

The **half-day Introduction to Cochrane** will be held in 4 locations in 2010:

- Belfast (22 April 2010)
- Dublin (24 May 2010)
- Galway (10 June 2010)
- Cork (10 September 2010)

The **two day Cochrane Systematic Review Course** will be held in 4 locations in 2010:

- Cork (6 & 7 July 2010)
- Galway (Late August 2010)
- Belfast (13 & 14 September 2010)
- Dublin (11 & 12 October 2010)

### 3. REASONS FOR APPLYING

Please state briefly the reasons for your application and give the potential benefits of the course to you. (maximum 650 words)

#### 4. CURRICULUM VITAE

Please include a brief Curriculum Vitae in the space provided.

##### **Checklist and Submission**

Please ensure that you have completed all the relevant sections of the application form. Click "**Next**" and you will be returned to your homepage. To submit your application use "**Click to submit**" under the heading "**Status**". Upon submission, you will receive a submission key as proof of submission. Once you have submitted your application, you cannot edit or unsubmit it.