



THE CAMPBELL COLLABORATION

Preparing, maintaining and promoting the accessibility of systematic reviews of the effects of social and educational policies and practices

Methods Group Newsletter
Volume 3
July 2003

Two Campbell Methods Group Meetings to Take Place at Cochrane Colloquium in Barcelona

Come to Barcelona!



The 11th Cochrane Colloquium will take place in Barcelona from Sunday, October 26 to Friday, October 31, 2003. The Methods Group will meet twice during the Barcelona Conference.

For more details about the Barcelona Conference, please visit:

<http://www.colloquium.info/docs.aspx?wfID=3&lid=1>

Barcelona 2003
XI Cochrane
Colloquium



Evidence, health
care and culture
Evidencia, atención
sanitaria y cultura

Campbell Methods Group Meeting

Tuesday Oct 28 at 6 pm

AND

**Joint Meeting of the Cochrane
Collaboration and C2 Methods Group**
Thursday Oct 30 at 10 am

Methods Group Meeting Information

Contact person: Harris Cooper

Date: Tuesday, October 28, 2003

Start: 6 pm - 8 pm

Room: Sala Cristal 2

Venue: Hotel Fira Palace

This will be a general meeting for conveners and others interested in the Campbell Collaboration Methods Groups. After a general meeting, time will be set aside for meetings of separate methods groups.

For more details about this C2 meeting, please visit:

<http://www.colloquium.info/ShowMeeting.aspx?wfID=29&wdID=78&lid=1&eventID=123>

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Joint Meeting of the Cochrane Collaboration and C2 Methods Group

By Harris Cooper

For the first time, at the 11th Cochrane Colloquium in Barcelona, there will be a joint meeting of the Cochrane Collaboration and Campbell Collaboration Methods Groups (Thursday, October 30, 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM). The three-hour meeting will be organized as follows:



- outline of the roles, purpose, and history of methods groups in Cochrane (Jon Deeks) and Campbell (Harris Cooper)
- current methods groups from both Collaborations outline their current research, and what they have developed by way of materials, guidelines, etc.
- break into discussion groups around areas of mutual interest to investigate potentials for sharing of material and information, and work out future plans
- come back together to discuss any plans that have been made, and the barriers to collaboration that have been encountered



It will be of great value for methods groups to hear what they are all doing, as well as to promote information sharing with Cochrane methods groups. There will be time for informal interaction as well.

...there are many excellent opportunities on the Barcelona program to learn about cutting edge issues in research synthesis methodology

Also on the Colloquium agenda is a meeting of the Campbell Methods Groups (Tuesday, October 28, 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM, see page one of newsletter). This will begin with a presentation of the *What Works Clearinghouse Study Design and Implementation Assessment Device (DIAD)* and *Cumulative Research Evidence Assessment Device (CREAD)*.

The Study DIAD was developed to assist in:

- a. describing the research relevant to a systematic review
- b. selecting studies for inclusion and exclusion from an evidence base

The CREAD was developed to assist in:

- a. characterizing the confidence that can be placed in the conclusions of an evidence base
- b. exploring the implications of study design and implementation for the outcomes of research

At its last meeting, the Campbell Collaboration Steering Committee began a year long process of seeking input before deciding whether C2 systematic review preparers should be encouraged to use the Study DIAD and CREAD as part of their reports. A full description of the Study DIAD and CREAD can be found by going to www.w-w-c.org and clicking on the "Standards" link. This will be an important opportunity to learn about the Study DIAD and CREAD from one of its developers (Jeff Valentine).

Finally, there are many other excellent opportunities on the Barcelona program to learn about cutting edge issues in research synthesis methodology. We hope to see you there!

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Joint Cochrane and Campbell Methods Groups Meeting
Thursday 30 October 10.00 - 13.00

Methods Group	Conveners	Presenting
Applicability & Recommendations	Paul Glasziou / Gordon Guyatt	Jenny Poust
Health Economics	Miranda Mugford / Cam Donaldson / Luke Vale	Miranda Mugford
Health related Quality of Life	Catherine Acquadro / Dick Joyce / Donald Patrick	Donald Patrick
Individual Patient Data Meta-analyses	Lesley Stewart / Mike Clarke / Jayne Tierney	Mike Clarke
Methodology Review Group	Andy Oxman / Mike Clarke	Mike Clarke
Non-randomized studies	Barney Reeves / Ole Olsen	Barney Reeves
Prospective Meta-analyses	Davina Gherzi / Jesse Berlin / John Simes	Davina Gherzi
Qualitative Methods	Jennie Popay / Katrina Roen / Jane Noyes	Jennie Popay
Reporting Bias	Matthias Egger / David Moher / Jonathon Sterne	Matthias Egger
Screening & Diagnostic Tests	Constantine Gatsonis / Frank Buntinx	Constantine Gatsonis
Statistics	Doug Altman / Jon Deeks / Julian Higgins	Doug Altman
Possible Information Retrieval	Alison Weightman / Carol Lefebvre / Steve Pritchard	
Possible Equality	Peter Tugwell	
Statistics	Larry Hedges / Betsy Becker / Terri Pigott	Larry Hedges / Terri Pigott
Quasi-Experimental Designs	David Myers / Will Shadish	David Myers
Implementation Process	Jenny Popay	Jenny Popay
Information Retrieval	Hannah Rothstein / Darcy Strauss/ Julia Lavenberg	Hannah Rothstein

Reports of Methods Groups Activities

The Implementation Process Methods Group, Aug 2002 – Mar 2003

By Jennie Popay

1. Meetings of the group

▪ *Participation in and presentation at C2 methods conference*

Members of the group participated in the C2 Methods Group conference in Baltimore in the autumn of 2002 organised by Harris Cooper and colleagues. Helen Roberts and Jennie Popay presented a paper to the conference which contributed to an on-going debate about the role of evidence from process evaluation and qualitative research in Campbell Reviews. Members of the C2 Steering Group present at the conference emphasised the importance of the methods group producing practical examples of this role in order to demonstrate the value of extending Campbell reviews to include evidence on issues such as diverse perspectives on the appropriateness of interventions, including those of people who are the target of policy and evidence on the factors that contain and/or facilitate the implementation of interventions shown in systematic reviews to be effective.

▪ *Windermere Seminar on evidence synthesis in context of diverse study designs.*

Funding for this seminar, which took place in Windermere in the English Lake District in January 2003 was provided by the UK based Health Development Agency. The participants came from several European countries as well as from the USA and Canada. The seminar opened with a stimulating session focusing on the need for evidence synthesis to be made more relevant and accessible to policy users. Speakers included Mark Petticrew, from the University of Glasgow, Scotland and Sharon

Witherspoon from the Nuffield Foundation in London. The second session of the seminar focused on issues in the assessment of quality in qualitative research. Speakers included Janice Morse, from the University of Alberta in Canada and Jane Lewis from the National Centre for Social Research in London who presented findings from methodological work developing an appraisal tool for evaluative studies using qualitative methods. The third session was concerned to explore ways in which 'traditional' systematic reviews of effectiveness are being extended. Angela Harden from the EPPI Centre at the Institute of Education in London for example, talked about her work reviewing evidence on the mental health needs of young people alongside evidence on the effectiveness of different interventions in this field.

Helen Roberts and Jennie Popay presented a paper to the conference which contributed to an on-going debate about the role of evidence from process evaluation and qualitative research in Campbell Reviews.

Becky Maynard from the University of Pennsylvania in the USA and Andrew Long, from the University of Salford, England also gave papers here. Papers in the next session described approaches to evidence synthesis that contrast with the 'traditional' effectiveness reviews. Rona Campbell from the University of Bristol described the work of herself and colleagues using meta ethnography to synthesise qualitative research and Ray Pawson from Leeds University in the UK talked about his realistic synthesis approach to reviewing the evidence on Megan's Law. In the final plenary session of the seminar papers were concerned to explore how evidence synthesis can be made more accessible and

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useful for policy makers nationally and locally. Phil Davies, from the Cabinet Office in the UK considered what is needed from research synthesis from a policy-making perspective whilst Mike Maher from a local NHS trust in the Midlands of the UK described a low project aiming to get evidence synthesis into practice in the criminal justice area. A report containing the papers presented at the seminar and summarising some of the key points to arise in the discussion will be published in the autumn by the health Development Agency in the UK.

▪ *Annual meeting - C2 Colloquium, Stockholm 2003*

As in other years the group held a meeting at the annual Colloquium of the collaboration attended by about fifteen people and the discussion centered on a draft of the guidance to be produced for the Collaboration. A small group signed up to help with the production of this guidance and it is hoped that this will be completed during 2003. Members of the group were also pleased to see a diverse range of papers presented during the plenary and parallel sessions at the colloquium with many considering the role of evidence on implementation and users experience in the context of systematic reviews of effectiveness.

2. Methodological Work

Extending systematic reviews to include evidence on implementation processes.

A major conclusion ... was that the implementation data in the studies were insufficiently robust to provide a good evidence base for practitioners and policy makers.

In the September 2002 Methods Newsletter we reported on the research Jennie Popay, Helen Roberts and others were undertaking exploring some of the methodological issues involved in extended two existing systematic reviews of the effectiveness of

initiatives aiming to prevent child accidents. This work is now completed and a report has been produced for the funder, the Health Development Agency. This study found that many papers reporting on studies purporting to involve evaluation of implementation contained little information on how this work was done. A majority of the papers reviewed were judged to have too little information on study design to allow quality to be assessed. In many cases, it was unclear whether statements about factors impacting on implementation were based on research evidence. A major conclusion of the work was that the implementation data in the studies reviewed were insufficiently robust to provide a good evidence base for practitioners and policy makers. The report ends with recommendations for researchers, systematic reviewers, funders, and journal editors.

Developing approaches to the narrative synthesis of qualitative and quantitative: In the last Newsletter we reported that a project aiming to develop methods for the narrative synthesis of evidence in the context of systematic reviews had failed to get funding. We are pleased to announce that the UK based Economic and Social research Council has now agreed to fund some of this work. Although statistical meta-analysis has received a great deal of attention it is not always appropriate for combing quantitative data from multiple studies and is not relevant to the synthesis of findings from qualitative research or from mixed method studies. In this context approaches to the synthesis of evidence involving a narrative 'summary' or 'synthesis' of the findings from multiple studies are being developed. However, the validity and reliability of these different approaches needs to be tested. On the basis of a review of relevant literature and a critical assessment of current approaches to narrative synthesis being used by those undertaking systematic reviews this study aims to develop draft methodological guidance on the conduct of narrative synthesis in the context of systematic reviews. This guidance will be empirically tested and revised where necessary and widely disseminated. The study team includes: Amanda Sowden, Helen Roberts, Katrina

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Roen, Jennie Popay, Lisa Aria, Mark Petticrew and Sally Baldwin. Further information is available from Jennie Popay at j.popay@lancaster.ac.uk

Should studies of implementation processes be included in the C2 reference database?

Policy brief on implementation and qualitative studies: The Methods Group have been asked by the Collaboration Steering Group to produce a policy brief to provide guidance for those wishing to extend a Campbell systematic review to include evidence on implementation processes. However, because methods for the systematic review of evidence on implementation processes are in an early stage of development it is not yet possible to provide detailed guidance in this area. Rather, the brief seeks to develop an overall framework within which the methodological challenges involved in this work can be addressed. The brief will address a number of key issues including:

What role can studies of implementation and/or evidence from qualitative studies have in a C2 systematic review?

Can C2 systematic reviews focus only on evidence on implementation processes within the context of a review of evidence on effectiveness?

What type of study designs should be included in C2 reviews of implementation processes?

When systematic reviewers retrieve and code characteristics of qualitative studies, what characteristics should routinely be coded and, if possible, examined for their impact on the outcomes of studies?

Should C2 recommend particular approaches to the assessment of study quality, the synthesis of evidence from multiple studies and the integration of synthesis of evidence on implementation with evidence on effectiveness. If so what should these be?

Should studies of implementation processes be included in the C2 reference database? And if included should they be identifiable through a separate searchable field?

Should we exploit C2 SPECTR so as to generate casebooks or electronic synopses of exemplars of implementation studies in the context of randomized trials?

Can C2 play a role in routinely identifying remarkable examples of new ideas produced by qualitative/process/implementation studies that are embedded in randomized trials?

The policy brief will be developed during spring and summer this year with a view to it being submitted to the Steering Group in the autumn. If you are interested in helping with this process please contact Jennie Popay.

3. Developing the membership



To date the number of people actively involved in the work of the group is very small. In addition the majority of people expressing interest in being involved in the work are more interested in the synthesis of evidence from qualitative studies than in evidence from the more diverse methodological studies focusing on implementation processes. There is a need for the group to develop a more active membership during 2003/4 and one which more strongly reflects the international Individuals on the joint Cochrane Qualitative Network and the Campbell Implementation Process Methods Group mailing list have been surveyed about the activities they would be interested in contributing to and the results of this are currently being analysed. To date it would appear that most members of the IP group are more interested in the synthesis of findings of qualitative studies than evaluative studies of implementation processes. This is an important issue for the group to resolve and is discussed further below.

4. Dissemination & Publications

As reported previously the IP methods group now has a joint website with the proposed Cochrane Qualitative Methods Group and a joint mailing list

http://mysite.freemove.com/Cochrane_Qual_Method/index.htm

As already noted the group will be publishing with the UK based Health Development Agency and the proposed Cochrane qualitative methods group a report on the Windermere seminar. Additionally, a report on the pilot work on the systematic review of evidence on the implementation of child accident prevention initiatives will also be published during 2003 by the Health Development Agency. Both reports will also be posted on the website. We are also developing a methodological database on the website - so have a look and send us additional

references please. The website also contains protocols for systematic reviews of qualitative evidence and/or evidence on implementation processes.



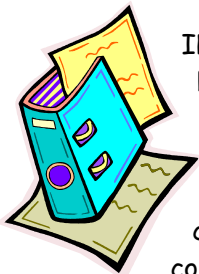
AS ALWAYS WE ARE LOOKING FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE WILLING AND ABLE TO MAKE AN ACTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORK OF THE GROUP SO PLEASE GET IN TOUCH WITH JENNIE POPAY IF THAT IS YOU!

j.popay@lancaster.ac.uk

Information Retrieval Methods Group Launched

By Hannah Rothstein, Herbert Turner III and Julia Lavenberg

The Campbell Steering Committee approved the formation of an Information Retrieval Methods Group (IRMG) on September 16, 2002. Meeting in Baltimore three days later, IRMG convener Hannah Rothstein and committee members Darcy Strouse and Julia Lavenberg developed initial goals for the group. Shortly thereafter, Alan Gomersall and Herb Turner joined the committee.



IRMG furthers the aims of Campbell by assisting reviewers and review groups with information retrieval and assessment of publication bias.

Information retrieval is a time-consuming and complex task when conducting any systematic review. In social science reviews the time investment and

complexity often increase substantially, since many of the databases and journals utilized do not routinely index or keyword by study design. Furthermore, many relevant studies are reported in the less frequently searched grey literature (i.e., conference proceedings, government documents, organizational reports, dissertations, masters' theses, etc.).

Information retrieval is a time-consuming and complex task when conducting any systematic review.

To address the needs of reviewers and review groups, IRMG's planned activities include:

- surveying Campbell entities about their information retrieval needs and concerns;

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- developing bibliographies on locating and selecting relevant studies;
- developing bibliographies on publication bias;
- conducting research on information retrieval strategies, such as studies on the sensitivity, specificity, and reliability of various search strategies;
- providing electronic methodological search filters and creating a clearinghouse of substantive search strategies used by reviewers;
- assembling a handsearch manual containing specific procedural information and training materials;
- enhancing C2's Sociological, Psychological, Educational, and Criminological Trials Register (C2-SPECTR) and the Prospective Trials Register (C2-PROT); and
- collaborating with other Campbell groups to provide workshops, training and support.

...Hannah and Herb drafted a policy brief that provides general guidance to review groups and reviewers and establishes minimum standards for key information retrieval tasks.

Additionally, IRMG will serve as a forum for discussion of issues related to the comprehensive and unbiased retrieval and inclusion of information in systematic reviews.

At the 3rd Annual Campbell Colloquium in Stockholm in February, Hannah Rothstein, Alan Gomersall, and Herb Turner presented a session on the development of IRMG, its goals and objectives. Insightful discussion was generated, contributing to the development of the planned activities listed above. Herb and Hannah also presented a session focusing on

the continuing development of C2-SPECTR, the present software and hardware configurations, and the search capabilities. Feedback from this presentation was used to plan the future development of C2-SPECTR.

In the spring, Herb, Julia and Hannah collaborated with Robert Boruch, Anthony Petrosino, and Dorothy de Moya and wrote an article on methods, guidelines, procedures, and future plans for populating and enhancing C2-SPECTR. The article is scheduled to appear in the September 2003 issue of the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*.

Also this past spring, Hannah and Herb drafted a policy brief that provides general guidance to review groups and reviewers and establishes minimum standards for key information retrieval tasks. The brief was sent out for external review in June. So far, comments have been positive and encouraging.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the group or discussing information retrieval and bias issues or you would like a copy of the annotated bibliography on publication bias, please contact Hannah Rothstein (hrothstein@mindspring.com)



Thanks are extended to the following methods group members for providing critiques:

Laurie Anderson	Gilbert Ramirez
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Alison Cunningham	Will Shadish
Adam Hafdahl	Darcy Strouse
Mark Lipsey	Jeff Valentine
Therese Pigott	David Wilson