



Cochrane
Library

INTRO TO COCHRANE LIBRARY

Training Script



SLIDE 1

Hello everyone, welcome to our introduction to the Cochrane Library training! Thank you for joining me today.

[Speaker introduces self]

I'm confident that by the end of the presentation, you'll feel more comfortable using the Cochrane Library and you will learn some helpful usage tips.

[Speaker can cover housekeeping items or any else of note]

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With all of these things in mind, we can move on to today's **Agenda**.

- First, we'll talk about what the Cochrane organization is.
- **Then we'll go through what's in the Cochrane Library** – what are the different databases and elements that we can find within? What content is available?
- There have been some updates and enhancements to the platform in the last year or so that we'll cover in **what's new in the Cochrane Library**.
- We'll also go through some **key features** of the Cochrane Library as well that are helpful when running searches and finding content, including filters, browsing content, the PICO search, and how to set up alerts.
- The last part of our session today will be on **using the Cochrane Library**, and we'll be exploring this through a live demo. We'll be doing walk-through of some of the platform's key functionalities so you can see everything in action.

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What is Cochrane? **An international collaboration of over 50,000 researchers and health professionals passionate about improving health outcomes** for everyone, all over the globe.

The ultimate objective of Cochrane is to ensure that the treatments used every day around the world are **based on the best available evidence, and they've been doing this for 25 years**.

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So with that understanding in mind, we can answer this question: **What is the Cochrane Library?**

The Cochrane Library is **a collection of databases that allow you to make informed decisions in a healthcare setting**.

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Let's talk about what is actually in the Cochrane Library.

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Here we have the different components that comprise the library. We will break these down individually over the next few slides, and we'll also see them in the live demo later.

A lot of you might be **familiar with systematic reviews**, which is probably the most well-known element of the CL. But as you can see, **we have 8 different databases in the Cochrane Library**.

- Every time you're running a search, you're running a search across 8 different databases simultaneously, which saves a lot of time.

We have some figures here on this slide, and these are subject to change as more items are published, but right now on the platform, there are:

- Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews.
 - Over 8200 systematic reviews
 - Over 2400 Protocols (unfinished reviews)
- Central Register of Controlled Trials, also known as CENTRAL.
 - Over 1.7 million articles
- Cochrane Clinical Answers (very helpful in a healthcare environment)
 - Over 2800 Clinical Answers
- Systematic reviews from Epistemonikos (external database)
 - Over 350000 reviews
- Over 130 Editorials and over 40 Special Collections.
- Reviews from two new databases by McMaster University: Health Systems Evidence (over 14000) and Social Systems Evidence (over 44000).

In the next few slides, we'll walk through some of the differences between these databases and the purposes that they serve, so you can understand how they're useful as well as how they're different from each other.

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A systematic review **addresses a clearly formulated question** – for instance, can antibiotics alleviate the symptoms of a sore throat?

Systematic reviews investigate the effects of interventions for prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation methods in a healthcare setting.

They're created using very strict guidelines to establish whether or not there is conclusive evidence about a specific treatment.

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Next on our list, we have the Central Register of Controlled Trials, or CENTRAL

CENTRAL is the world's largest database of randomized controlled titles.

Here you'll find details of published articles taken directly from bibliographic databases and other published resources of the article.

These records include the title of the article, where it was published, and oftentimes the abstract.

You won't find the full text of these trials as part of the subscription to the Cochrane Library. You may find a link that takes you somewhere else, and then the text may be there.

The processes on how CENTRAL is created are fully documented here [presenter can click hyperlink and explore these details].

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The trials within CENTRAL come from different sources and includes randomized and quasi-randomized controlled trials.

You might have access to PubMed or Embase, and some of this data is publicly available. But with

CENTRAL, one search pulls trials across all of these different sources. [Speaker can read list on slide and click into the links if desired]

As well hand searched literature from other biomedical sources.

- Using Cochrane Library in this case will ultimately save time.
 - You can still run a search in any of these collections, but you're going to be getting the same results if you use the same keywords.
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Moving on to the next one on the list...

What is a Cochrane Clinical Answer?

- Clinical answers (CCA) have a very specific job. A CCA provides a concise summary of the results of a Cochrane Review with sufficient underlying data to allow:
 - Application of the results to a specific patient group (e.g. children or adults, older patients with co-morbid conditions.)
 - Understanding of the strength of the evidence supporting conclusions about key clinical outcomes
 - They are written by clinicians, for clinicians, and they serve to make reviews more accessible to an important audience.
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- Clinical answers follow a Q&A format to make information easier to digest.
 - They provide the evidence at hand on key outcomes.
 - They make the information a clinician would be interested more accessible.
 - The goal of CCA is use information from Cochrane Reviews to **inform healthcare decisions.**
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How does a CCA ease application of results in clinical practice?

A clinical answer distills the 50+ pages of a Cochrane review into 1-3 pages. The time requirement is very different.

Even though CCAs are designed to be much shorter, you can still find additional data if you need it, as CCAs consolidate **PICO data**: Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome summary, as well as quality of the evidence. Let's take a look.



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Here we have an example of a Clinical Answer, so you can see how it looks.

[click for box animation]

We see the title: a clearly posed itself, followed by the answer.

[click] The aim is to keep the Answer under 250 words if possible. If it is longer, the Answer has a single bold take home message.

We see that this one is only 3 paragraphs. So, it takes me just a few minutes to read and understand the information; this is very different than engaging with a full systematic review.

[click] If you want more information, you can click into different sections to expand them, starting here with the Comparison section.

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[click] I can review the different outcomes, and these portions are collapsible, I can click to expand the different pieces to see the different sections and more details.

[click] You also see the PICO data at the bottom of clinical answer page, which describes people and interventions included in the trials to aid you in determining clinical relevance.

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Each expanded outcome includes further information from the original review.

[click] We see indicated the risk of bias, a clear narrative result, as well as statistical data on relative effects and a link to a forest plot.

There is always a link to the Cochrane Review upon which the CCA is based.

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The next database on the list is **Epistemonikos**.

This is another group of systematic reviews.

These systematic reviews come from a different group of researchers from Epistemonikos. The content has been integrated in the Cochrane Library.

Through this integration and partnership, we're able to incorporate over 350000 additional systematic reviews into the Cochrane Library. As mentioned, you're automatically searching these reviews when you search the platform, ultimately saving time.

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Let's take a look at an example from Epistemonikos.

As you can see, the appearance of a systematic review from Epistemonikos is a bit different, as we've kept their original appearance, **but the functionalities are fairly similar**.

You'll see many sections that you would typically find on a regular or Cochrane systematic review.

You have the ability to export the citation, you have different translations available, as well as information about sources, etc.

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Almost wrapping up.

We also have two new databases from McMaster University that add to the content in the Cochrane Library.

These two new databases provide comprehensive evidence and further research about health systems and social systems and include research about different programs, services, and products that belong to different government sectors, like housing, education, environmental conservation, etc.

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Also circling back to two other points on our list that are fairly straightforward, the first being *click* Editorials: editorials are pretty straightforward; you're going to see them featured on the home page.

We also have Special Collections- basically a special collection is a group of systematic reviews about the same topic.

So, **these are all the different databases we can find within the Cochrane library.**

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And again, *click* every time you run a search, you're running a search across all of the different databases simultaneously.

[This is a good time to pause for questions.]

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In the next section, we're going to talk about what's new in the Cochrane Library.

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The HSE and SSE databases from McMasters are now supporting translations.

Cochrane has updated the list of MeSH-preferred terms. If you download the presentation, these two things are hyperlinked, so you can access the updated list of MeSH-preferred terms.

You may also find new service error messages, to help you understand if something is wrong on the platform, or if you run into some type of error.

And finally, in the last year, the Cochrane organization worked to transform the way they were publishing and making content available to users, to make sure that content is made available in the most efficient way possible.

Consolidated view of all Cochrane content to:

- enable a more consistent **user experience**
 - **link** our content
 - integrate **new** content (e.g. Cochrane Clinical Answers)
 - **innovate** faster (in ongoing future releases)
 - provide **better access and visibility to translated content** (including a new Spanish portal)
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You're also going to notice article metrics - **information about citations, guidelines, and alternative metrics** – are now found on the right-hand navigation pane. We'll see what these look like in the live demo.

There's also been an update to the export help link within the citations, to make that tool more userfriendly.

You also now have the ability to export citations directly into Sciwheel reference manager.

And finally, you may run into some Rapid Reviews. Cochrane has worked to prioritize and develop these for key questions arising in the context of COVID-19 and make them available to users as quickly as possible. There's now a filter to allow users to easily find and identify these.

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Here we have a snapshot of how you're able to export results. Recently, Cochrane added CSV format as an option, as well as Sciwheel reference manager

The "export help" button is now more prominently displayed, and here you'll find additional help and instructions on making the most out of this tool.

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So, before we start with the live demo, let's walk through some key features of the Cochrane Library.

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Remember: every time you run a search, you're running a search across all 8 of the different databases, **and this is how the results page is going to look.**

We're going to see all of the results classified their respective databases up here on the different tabs, as you can see – we have the Cochrane reviews, protocols, editorials...[read list]

And then at the very end, we have the Epistimonikos and the two new databases by McMaster, in the "other reviews" tab.

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In this results page, *click* we see we have our filters on the left-hand side, where we can select certain filters that will allow us narrow down our results and find the most relevant content.

So what filters can we find?

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For Cochrane reviews, we're able to filter results by publication, by status, and by type.

With the status filter: remember that systematic reviews are based on trials; as we continue to add trials, new data becomes available. Sometimes, based on those updates, systematic reviews and their respective conclusions might change. The status filter will allow us to more easily identify those cases in which the conclusions change in systematic reviews.

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You're also able to filter by languages – up to 16 different language – [click] and by topic.

The topic filter is a really convenient one – this allows you to narrow your results based on Cochrane supplied topics.

- For example: running a search on diabetes. This will yield a lot of results. To narrow your results to the impact of diabetes on children's health, you can select this filter to focus your results from this particular angle.
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When you move to the CENTRAL tab, **you'll see that some of the filters change.**

Specifically for CENTRAL, you can filter on the date, the original publication year, and the source. Remember that all of the trials collated here are coming from different sources: Embase, PubMe, CT.gov, ICTRP, and CINAHL.

If you're interested in pulling from a specific source, this filter can help you accomplish that, but remember that your results will come from this list of sources.

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Next we'll talk about the PICO search, which is an advanced search function on the platform. PICO search allows you to search and find content by filtering on populations, interventions, comparisons, and outcomes.

Here on the PICO tab in an advanced search, you're able to insert a term, for instance, asthma.

As you do that, you'll see a drop-down menu come up, and you can select the closest match, or the exact match of your term.

Then you'll choose your PICO context – population or outcome.

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After that, I see the PICO results page, **which is a little bit different.** You'll see that your filters are different; there are PICO-specific filters here, so you'll filter based on different conditions, different parts of the population, different comparisons, and by different outcomes.

You can also view PICO terms in results to quickly identify relevant articles.

In this example, if I really want to focus on reviews where part of population required emergency care, or experienced wheezing, I could apply some of these filters to focus on those qualities and narrow my results.

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PICO terms will also display in search results pages from all standard Cochrane searches - select "View PICOs" to view them.

At a glance, you can read about the different population data, as well as different interventions, comparisons, and outcomes.

- I can get an idea of how the review was built without having to read the entire abstract.

It is likely much faster to absorb and digest the information this way, and it can also add some nice context to your research; maybe framing it in a different way or bringing new comparisons or interventions that you didn't have on your radar.

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Something else to highlight today is how **all of the content is connected**. Once you find content that is relevant to you, keep in mind that it's going to be easy for you to find related content.

Let's say you find a systematic review that you're interested in utilizing. You're going to be able to see which trials were used to develop that review, and vice versa.

You'll also be able to see if there are any Cochrane Clinical Answers based on a particular review. Typically, one out of four reviews will have a Clinical Answer available.

And you might also run into podcasts, which will be linked if they are available! Podcasts on the platform will be quite short, 5 or 6 minutes, but this is an excellent way to stay updated and digest information in a different way.

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Let's walk through an example of what this can look like. This is an example of a trial about Crohn's disease, and we can see that there is some content linked here on the right side.

On the right-hand menu, you can click on "How Cochrane used this article." [click]

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And when you do that, you'll see that the Cochrane researchers developed a review based on this trial. From here, if you click on the title, you're taken to that review.

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You could also click on "show how this review used this CENTRAL record" - and you'll be provided with the PICO analysis and risk of bias for this article.

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When you find a systematic review, on the right-hand menu, you'll find a related content tab.

When you click on the related content button, you'll see if there are any related reviews, protocols, podcasts, or any linked editorials or guidelines.

As you can see, it's very easy to find related content and branch out from anything on the platform that you want to use.



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Other items that you'll see sometimes are **guidelines**.

Guidelines are not published by the Cochrane organization. They're a way to keep track of which institutions or organizations around the world are using the information published on the platform to inform their healthcare policies or guidelines.

For instance: this review about preventing falls in older people has been used to develop 35 different guidelines – and we see that listed here under the title.

If you click on that, you'll be able to see **which organizations have used this review to inform their guidelines or policies. So, you're able to learn more about the impact of the content; how it's affecting or improving healthcare globally.**

And then also linked to this review are the editorials, podcasts, and special collections.

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Also, some good news for any time you might be browsing the Cochrane Library on the go using a cell phone or a tablet; we now have a button to collapse all the sections within a systematic review, which is **an exciting navigation update**.

As mentioned, reviews can be very long, over 50 pages or 100 pages. With this update, you can click "collapse all," and you can click on the sections you're interested in.

If you're using a small screen device, it's now much easier to access or navigate the platform.

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Another key feature of the Cochrane Library is setting **alerts**. This is a huge time-saving feature and can really help use the tool efficiently.

If you set up an alert, you're going to be the first one to know if there is a new systematic review, a new protocol, or a new clinical answer about a topic of your choice, and this is available through the home page. When I'm browsing by topic, click on "set email alerts."

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Browse these different topics and expand the section to select more specific subtopics. Click the ones you're interested in.

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If I'm interested in genetic disorders, for example, but not all of these shown, I can select just the few that I want.

I'll receive an email alert if there's anything new added matching my criteria, otherwise I won't be bothered.

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Similar to alerts, you have the ability to follow reviews. Alerts are for new content; following reviews are for existing content.

- This will notify you when a specific systematic review is updated. With new databases added, new trials and new data becomes available.
- If you happen to be working with a certain systematic review that is critical to your research or project, or you simply care about it – you may want to know if something changes.
- If you follow that review, you will be the first to know if and when something changes.



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Now in the live demo, we will look at how all of this works together so it's very clear. Before we do that, I want to pause and see if we have any questions.

Demo Points to cover:

Homepage overview

Searches

- Basic search
- Advanced Search
- MeSH
- Search Manager
- PICO Search
- Search help - contains details of how to search, including limits and Boolean operators

Browse by topic or Cochrane review group

Set up alerts

Systematic reviews

Where to find information on CENTRAL

Article metrics

Viewing results

Filter results

Follow reviews

Downloading PDF

Download citations

Guidelines

Finding related content

Where to find "Help"

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Thank you for joining today! You can reach out with questions, and we encourage you to sign up for future Cochrane Library training sessions.

