

## Governing Board Paper

<b>Agenda number:</b>	13.3 [2018-LISB-13.3]
<b>Agenda item:</b>	<b>Cochrane Library Oversight Committee (CLOC): Interim Report and Terms of Reference</b>
<b>Submitted for Governing Board meeting:</b>	Lisbon, March 2018
<b>Submitted by:</b>	David Tovey, Editor in Chief
<b>Sponsored by:</b>	Ginny Barbour, Chair CLOC
<b>Access:</b>	Open
<b>Decision or information:</b>	Information
<b>Resolution for the minutes:</b>	The Board: 1) Notes the interim report from the Cochrane Library Oversight Committee (CLOC) and the Cochrane Library Complaints Procedure that CLOC has developed; 2) Approves the CLOC Terms of Reference.
<b>Executive summary:</b>	N/A
<b>Consultation with Cochrane Council:</b>	No
<b>Financial request:</b>	None

## 1 Background:

The Cochrane Library Oversight Committee met in February 2018 after a substantial hiatus following the resignation of the previous Chair and Deputy Chair. The new Chair is Dr Ginny Barbour, and she is supported by Dr Tracey Koehlmoos as Deputy Chair.

The additional members of the CLOC are:

Dr Saeed Farouq  
 Dr Manu Mathew  
 Dr David Moher  
 Dr Lijing Yan  
 Dr Charles Young

The CLOC is looking to recruit up to three new members, including an individual with expertise in publishing law.

The CLOC agreed its Terms of Reference below.

## 2 CLOC Terms of Reference

### Remit of the Cochrane Library Oversight Committee

To support the Editor in Chief's editorial independence by providing a mechanism for avoiding or resolving disputes about the content of *The Cochrane Library* or any editorial positions taken by the Editor in Chief (EiC) in respect to the *Library* that may arise between the EiC and the Cochrane Governing Board, or the publishers of *The Cochrane Library*.

To consider and where appropriate seek to mediate on matters of tension that relate to the editorial process or published content, between the Governing Board (previously Steering Group) and the EiC at the request of either party. The Chair will decide whether an issue is relevant for the Committee and may consult with either the EiC or Cochrane's Chief Executive Officer (CEO). For complaints that do not relate to editorial process or published content, the EiC is accountable to the CEO.

To provide independent, impartial advice on issues regarding performance management for the EiC, including:

Proposing to Cochrane's Governing Board an appropriate suite of performance measures to assist it in its function of measuring and managing effectively the EiC's performance in the role.

Discussing with the EiC appropriate measures and strategies for continuous improvement.

Reporting to the Governing Board on the EiC's performance in post, and recommending changes that could be taken by the EiC or the Governing Board to enhance the effectiveness of the EiC.

Proposing revised performance measures in the light of experience.

To advise the EiC on matters of editorial independence that (s)he may wish to seek their opinion on.

### Responsibility

The Oversight Committee is an independent body, and should develop its own policy with regard to matters such as external communications. When a recommendation is made to the Governing Board, if it should choose to reject such advice, the Board must provide a rationale for the rejection.

The Oversight Committee shall report regularly to the Governing Board to keep it apprised of any issues it is deliberating. The Committee chair shall provide a formal report to the Governing Board at least annually. In addition, the chair shall make interim reports to the Governing Board or its Executive as necessary if the Committee has specific recommendations to be considered pertinent to an issue under its consideration.

### Accountability

This is an independent committee.

### Chair/Deputy Chair

The Chair must be selected by the members from among their number, and serve a term of three years. (The initial Chair was appointed by the Cochrane Steering Group.) The Deputy Chair must be selected by the members from among their number. (The initial Deputy Chair was appointed by the Steering Group.)

## Membership

The committee includes a chair, deputy chair, up to 6 additional members and the Editor in Chief. Ideally, the committee should be comprised as follows:

- Not more than half of its members should be members of the Collaboration.
- Not more than half of its members should be based in the UK/North America.
- At least a third of its members should be from developing countries.
- Not more than half of its members should be medically qualified.
- There should be at least one consumer.
- There should be at least one former journal editor.
- There should be some members with legal, ethical, statistical experience.
- There should be roughly equal numbers of men and women.

## Appointment of members

- 1) Members of the Oversight Committee should have experience in scientific publication or editorial policy, be capable of independence of thought, and be prepared to act in the best interests of *The Cochrane Library*.
- 2) Members will be proposed by the members of the Oversight Committee. The Governing Board and the Editor in Chief have the power of veto for any individual proposed.
- 3) Expression of interests (addressing the Terms of Reference) for membership will be sought from the Cochrane community and suitable non-Cochrane members via e-mail and personal contact. The Oversight Committee will inform Cochrane via the Central Executive of the name(s) of the proposed new member(s), together with a short biography or CV, and the proposal will be put forward to Cochrane's Governing Board, of which the Editor in Chief is a member, for ratification. The Editor in Chief alone or other members will have the power of veto, but if a veto is effected by the Governing Board, it must be a majority decision. No reason need be given to the unsuccessful candidate.
- 4) Members serve a single term of three years, with extension for a further three years at the discretion of the Chair.

## Current membership

- Chair: Ginny Barbour
- Deputy Chair: Tracey Pérez Koehlmoos
- Members:
- David Tovey, Editor in Chief, The Cochrane Library
- Tracey Pérez Koehlmoos, Bangladesh: Head of the Health and Family Planning Systems Programme, ICDDR, B (formerly International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh). Joined CLOC 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov 2010
- Dr Saeed Farooq, Visiting Professor and Consultant Psychiatrist, Centre for Ageing and Mental Health, Staffordshire University & Black Country Social Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. Joined CLOC 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2014
- Dr Lijing L Yan, MPH, PhD, Head of NCD Research, Global Health Research Center, Duke Kunshan University, Jiangsu, China Joined CLOC 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2014
- Dr Manu Easow Mathew, Medical Consultant, WHO-RNTCP Technical Support Network, Dte. Health Services, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India Joined CLOC 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2014

- Dr Charles Young, London. Joined CLOC 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2014

### Meetings and communication

- Meetings to be held twice a year.
- Communication via e-mail discussion list.
- Written report to the Cochrane Governing Board once a year at its face-to-face meetings.

## Cochrane Library Complaints Procedure

This procedure applies to complaints about the policies, processes or actions of staff, contributors or position holders within Cochrane, who are involved in the publication process or content of the Cochrane Library.

We welcome complaints as one of the means by which we improve our product and processes, and we aim to respond efficiently and constructively. We define complaints as an expression of unhappiness about a failure of process or an important misjudgement. The Editor in Chief is responsible for the complaints procedure and will respond to queries about it.

### Comment or complaint?

We encourage people wishing to make a comment about the content of Cochrane Reviews or Protocols, to submit feedback using the Cochrane Library online feedback system. The "Comments" button is located on the landing page of each Cochrane Review and Protocol. Such comments are usually published alongside the review and where appropriate should be addressed by the review author team.

The Complaints process exists in parallel with the "Comments" process and may be used either if the complainant believes that the comment is of such a serious nature that urgent corrective action is warranted, or where the usual process has not been satisfactorily managed or resolved.

Complaints relating to *The Cochrane Library* in general, or about staff or actions of the Cochrane Editorial Unit, should be referred directly to the Editor in Chief.

### How to complain

Complaints relating to the Cochrane Library in general, or the staff or actions of the Cochrane Editorial and Methods Department, should be referred directly to the Editor in Chief. Complaints can be made by email, phone or letter.

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If the complainant is not content with the response, or if the complaint relates to the conduct of the Editor in Chief, the complainant can refer the complaint directly to the Cochrane Governing Board via the [Chief Executive Officer](#) (CEO).

### How we deal with complaints

All complaints will be acknowledged within three working days.

For complaints addressed to the Editor in Chief, where possible a definitive response will be made within two weeks. If this is not possible an interim response will be given within two weeks. Further interim responses will be provided until the complaint is resolved.

In the case of complaints that are addressed to the Cochrane Co-Chairs, it may be necessary to call a subgroup of the Cochrane Governing Board to hear the complaint and the Editor in Chief's response and to adjudicate. In such cases, either the Editor in Chief or Co-Chairs can request for the complaint to be heard by the [Cochrane Library Oversight Committee](#). The Cochrane Co-Chairs, CEO or Editor in Chief will be responsible for communicating progress and any outcome to the complainant.

Complainants who remain unhappy after this procedure has run its course may consider referring the matter to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). *The Cochrane Library* and all Cochrane Review Groups are members of COPE, which publishes a code of practice for journal editors. COPE will consider complaints against journals only after the journal's own complaints procedures have been exhausted.

## 3 Recommendation(s):

The Board:

- 1) Notes the interim report from the Cochrane Library Oversight Committee (CLOC) and the Cochrane Library Complaints Procedure that CLOC has developed. It understands that the CLOC will provide a full report for the September meeting of the Governing Board;
- 2) Approves the CLOC Terms of Reference.