



GUIDE TO PROTOCOL PROCESSES

YOUR REVIEW TITLE IS REGISTERED: NEXT STEPS

Once your title has been registered:

1. Download the RevMan 5 software from <http://tech.cochrane.org/revman> and install it.
2. Respond to the system-generated email to initiate your Archie account (new authors). (To request a user account go to <http://archie.cochrane.org> and select 'Request a user account', or email the Managing Editor).
3. Set up RevMan so that it can connect with the Archie server where reviews are stored. To do this:
 - open RevMan 5 and go to Tools/Preferences and then click on the 'Connection' tab.
 - Choose the Archie server (not the test or training server), then type in your Archie username and password.
 - If this is your own computer click 'save username and password when RevMan is closed', if it is a shared computer and you do this, other people who may be using RevMan may be checking in and out using your Archie user account.
 - If you have problems gaining access you try selecting or deselecting 'Use secure connection (SSL)'. If this does not help, you may need to contact your IT department to resolve any issues regarding the proxy address and port.
 - We also advise that under the 'General' tab you
 - Select: Check for updates 'every session'
 - Select 'Show warnings...'
 - Make your choices on the spell checking tab.
4. Check out your protocol file (which contains guidance and suggested text prepared by the Review Group) from Archie and into RevMan. To do this open RevMan 5 > File > Check out.... Choose the protocol or review you wish to work on from those available to you in the list. **Please remember to check in at the end of every work session.**
Note: You can only check your review in to Archie from RevMan 5 if the version you edited was checked out from Archie. All previous versions of the review will be retained on Archie.
5. Prepare your protocol within the RevMan software, using the guidance listed below.
6. You can share versions of the protocol with co-authors by checking it back into Archie and emailing your co-authors to let them know they can now view your version in Archie or check it out to RevMan. **Please do not share versions of the protocol with co-authors by emailing RevMan files.**

7. When the protocol is ready, submit it for editorial and peer review:
 - Use File > Check in to open the Check-in Wizard in RevMan.
 - Describe the version (e.g., 'your name' edits)
 - Check the 'Submit for editorial approval' and enter text in the 'Message to Cochrane Review Group' box to communicate with the Managing Editor about your submission. This replaces a message you would otherwise have sent in an email.
 - If this is the first time you are submitting the protocol, or if the Managing Editor otherwise requests it, you must complete the presubmission checklist (<http://cccr.org/cochrane.org/author-resources>) and email it to the Managing Editor. Your protocol will be returned to you if the checklist has not been submitted.
8. If necessary, in a separate Word document outline your response to each item of editorial feedback provided at title registration stage which was to be dealt with at protocol stage, indicating any action you have taken in relation to your protocol, and email it to the Managing Editor when you submit your draft protocol for editorial review and approval.

QUICKSTART FOR AUTHORS & TOP TIPS FOR AUTHORS USING REVMAN AND ARCHIE

The [Quickstart for Authors](#) document gives a brief overview of how to manage contact details and use Archie in conjunction with Review Manager (RevMan) to prepare a Cochrane Review. The [Top Tips for Authors Top using RevMan 5 and Archie](#) is a more detailed document which is essential reading for all authors.

REVMAN TRAINING AND SUPPORT

A user guide and self-training exercise are available via the Help Menu in RevMan 5. More information is also available at the following site: <http://tech.cochrane.org/support/authors> which we recommend you work through before starting to work on your protocol. RevMan training may form part of the training for review authors provided (usually at no charge) by regional Cochrane Centres. Send requests for technical and general support to the Review Group's Managing Editor in the first instance.

RESOURCES

The Cochrane Consumers and Communication Group's website contains a comprehensive collection of resources for authors. Please visit <http://cccr.org/cochrane.org/author-resources>.

Your main resource in completing a Cochrane protocol and review is the latest version of the [Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions](#).

We have also pasted detailed guidance and template text into your protocol RevMan file.

The Cochrane [Methodological Expectations of Cochrane Intervention Reviews](#) (MECIR) conduct and reporting standards apply to all new Cochrane intervention reviews. These standards are incorporated into all of the Consumers and Communication Review Group's materials for authors.

We also highlight the **pre-submission checklist** available at <http://cccr.org/cochrane.org/author-resources> which will help you to prepare your review according to Cochrane MECIR requirements.

COMPARE VERSIONS IN ARCHIE

To compare the latest version of your protocol with an earlier version of your protocol, or see changes the editorial team may have made to your work:

- In Archie, open the protocol 'Properties' (double click on title or right-click and choose Properties)
- Under the 'History' tab, select the latest version then Ctrl + click on the version for comparison. Once both version are highlighted, click on the 'Compare' button
- You can print or save this 'tracked changes' document (diffdoc.htm) using the icon buttons in the upper left corner of the viewing screen – it will normally automatically save the version to your computer desktop.

You will also see here that you can print and save the tracked changes document or the version of your choice as a PDF.

THE EDITORIAL PROCESS

Once you have submitted your protocol for editorial review:

1. We will check the protocol and your completed presubmission checklist at the editorial base to ensure that they have been completed correctly and in full. If any issues are identified, we may return the protocol to you for amendment. When this step is completed, the protocol is sent to one to two editors of the Cochrane Consumers and Communication Group, to the Group's Trials Search Coordinator, and to two external peer referees (including one consumer). It will take about five weeks for the editors and external peer referees to review the protocol and send comments back to the editorial office. The comments will be collated by your contact editor.
2. We will send you the comments and ask you to address these comments and submit a revised protocol and a formal response to the comments.
3. Once the protocol is revised to the satisfaction of your contact editor, she or he will make a recommendation to the Review Group's Coordinating Editor that the protocol be approved for publication. At that point the protocol will be copy edited by a Wiley-Blackwell copy editor and then submitted to the Coordinating Editor for approval to publish the protocol on The Cochrane Library. Only when the Coordinating Editor is satisfied with the protocol's quality and accuracy, will it be approved for publication.
4. At that stage, all authors will receive a proof of the final version and a link to a licence for publication form that requires electronic completion. When all authors have completed the licence form, the protocol will be released to Wiley-Blackwell for publication.

PUBLICATION TIMEFRAMES

In May 2013 The Cochrane Library transitioned to a 'publish when ready' model. Ideally, review authors should submit their draft protocol for editorial and peer review **four months before** the release date of the desired issue of The Cochrane Library they wish to have the protocol published in.

While the Review Group will make every effort to meet agreed deadlines and to facilitate publication on a particular issue of The Cochrane Library, publication of a protocol or review always remains at the discretion of the Group's editorial team and the Coordinating Editor. Publication of a protocol or review, particularly on a specific issue number of The Cochrane Library, is not guaranteed. We reserve the right to reject the protocol outright if it is insufficiently developed and/or if publishable quality has not been achieved.

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