

Cochrane Library – Quick Guide

The Cochrane Library is the premier resource for information on the effectiveness of healthcare interventions. It is a collection of six evidence-based health care databases including:

Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (Cochrane Reviews): full text of the Cochrane Collaboration’s completed reviews, plus protocols for reviews in preparation.

Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects (Other Reviews): structured abstracts of quality assessed systematic reviews from around the world. Included reviews have been evaluated by reviewers at the Centre for Reviews and Dissemination. Reviews in this database cover topics yet to be addressed by Cochrane Reviews.

Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (Clinical Trials): references to randomised controlled trials (RCTs) identified through searching databases and hand searching journals.

Accessing the database from the Intranet

1. From the intranet home page click on **Library Service** under **Corporate**.
2. You should now be on the South Devon Health Libraries home page.
3. Click on **Search databases** on the left hand side of the screen.
4. Click on **Cochrane**. This will take you to the Cochrane Library.

Accessing the database from home

1. Open your browser of choice then type www.sdhl.nhs.uk in the address bar and press return
2. Click on **Search databases** on the left hand side of the screen.
3. Click on **Cochrane**. This will take you to the Cochrane Library.

1. Searching the Cochrane Library

The Cochrane Library home page looks like this:

The screenshot shows the Cochrane Library homepage with several callout boxes:

- Access Cochrane Reviews and other resources:** Points to the navigation menu (Cochrane Reviews, Trials, More Resources).
- Highlighted reviews:** Points to the 'Highlighted Reviews' section.
- Quick Search box:** Points to the search bar at the top right.
- For detailed search tips click on Help:** Points to the 'Help' link in the top right navigation.
- To combine searches and apply restrictions e.g. to select a particular database use Advanced Search:** Points to the 'Advanced Search' button.
- Scroll down the homepage to browse reviews by topic:** Points to the 'Browse' button.

Some general search features to note:

Combining terms: **AND**, **OR** and **NOT** can be used to create a more complex search. If you use a combination of AND and OR, use brackets to control the order in which the search executes, e.g. **magnesium AND (eclampsia OR perinatal asphyxia)**.

A space between words: Cochrane assumes 'AND' for spaces between terms. A search for **acute bronchitis** will list any document that includes both words.

Phrase searching: use quotation marks to search for terms as a phrase, e.g. **"myocardial infarction"** or **"hip replacement"**.

MeSH: Use the **MeSH (Medical subject headings) Search** to expand your search with related keywords e.g. synonyms. NOTE: MeSH are not attached to all records. See the Trust Library's **Searching the Cochrane Library** leaflet for further information about MeSH.

2. Search Results

Whether **Advanced** or **Quick Search** is used, results are displayed as below. A maximum of 25 records are displayed on each page. Results are grouped by database (see the database list on the left hand side). Click on a database to see results from it. The one already selected is shown by a black dot.

The screenshot shows the search results for 'falls prevention' in the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews. The search bar at the top contains 'falls prevention' and the search type is set to 'Title, Abstract, Keywords'. Below the search bar, there are tabs for 'Search', 'Search Manager', 'Medical Terms (MeSH)', and 'Browse'. The results are grouped by database, with 'Cochrane Reviews (48)' selected. A list of results is shown, including 'Interventions for preventing falls in older people living in the community' and 'Population-based interventions for the prevention of fall-related injuries in older people'. A callout box on the left points to the 'Cochrane Reviews (48)' selection, stating 'Select which database you want to view results from'. Another callout box points to the title of the first result, stating 'To view a document, click on the title of the review'.

The screenshot shows the full review page for 'Population-based interventions for the prevention of fall-related injuries in older people'. The page includes a title, authors (Roderick J McClure, Cathy Turner, Nancy Peel, Anneliese Spinks, Elizabeth Eakin, Karen Hughes), publication date (24 January 2005), and a table of contents. A callout box on the left points to the 'PDF' icon, stating 'Jump to specific sections of the review by clicking the relevant link in the menu.' A callout box on the right points to the 'Abstract' link in the table of contents, stating 'Jump to specific sections of the review by clicking the relevant link in the menu.'

4. Printing

Cochrane Reviews can be viewed in PDF and printed.

Finally... This sheet does not cover all the features of the Cochrane Library.

For further information use the Cochrane Library help pages or sign up for the Trust Library training course **"Searching the Cochrane Library"**.