



Capacity building and health system strengthening through Cochrane sensitization and training in the Caribbean

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BACKGROUND

There is a growing need for evidence to inform policy and practice in the Caribbean. The Cochrane Collaboration (C1) has recognized the need to expand the number of entities, especially outside highly developed countries, to be a true global organization. Networking and training can be used as a method of accomplishing this increased capacity. A workshop was conducted in Jamaica to inform Caribbean healthcare providers, policy makers and researchers about the Cochrane Collaboration and train participants in the principles of systematic reviews (SRs).

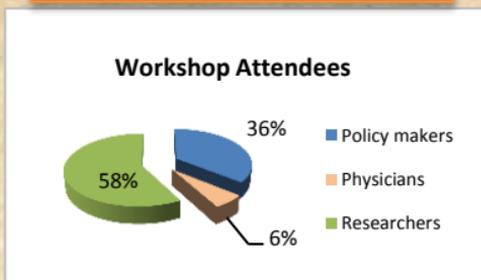
METHODS

- A Health systems strengthening and introduction to systematic review workshop was conducted by trainers from the University of West Indies Clinical Epidemiology Unit, the University of Ottawa and the US Cochrane Center.
- The Cochrane Standard Author Training approach was used and a course evaluation which included an awareness of the C1 was done.
- The workshop included theory based lectures, a webinar and small group interactive and practice sessions.
- The Ministries of Health in 9 Caribbean countries were contacted via email and telephone, to nominate 2 persons to attend.
- Representatives from the Caribbean Health Research Council (CHRC) and the Clinical Epidemiology Unit were also invited to attend.
- Persons were identified as policy makers, physicians or researchers based on the job description provided at registration.

RESULTS

- 34 participants from nine Caribbean countries were sensitized to the Cochrane Collaboration and introduced to the conduct of SRs.

Figure 2: Distribution of Workshop Attendees



- Participants became knowledgeable of how to include the concept of equity in SRs.
- More than half the participants reported not being aware of SRs, the Cochrane Collaboration or the Cochrane Library.
- Fifty five percent of the participants indicated an interest in further training in SRs.
- The majority (85%) preferred in-person workshops. There were requests to conduct similar workshops throughout the Caribbean in conjunction with the Caribbean Health Research Council training schedule.
- Participants highlighted the need for a Caribbean working group to provide support for conducting SRs and using them for policy decisions.

Figure 1: Cochrane Collaboration Awareness Questions

The Cochrane Collaboration:

How often do you currently read Cochrane reviews?
 once a week once a month less frequently never before today

Are you interested in further training on any topics relating to research and systematic reviews?
 If yes, for what topics? _____

Which format would you prefer to meet your further training needs?
 in-person workshops
 distance learning alternatives (see below for additional question)
 other, please specify: _____

If you are interested in distance learning, which of the following options would you prefer?
 online access to self-paced training modules
 online access to recorded audio/video of training seminars
 live web seminars
 other, please specify: _____



Participants and facilitators of the workshop held in Kingston, Jamaica.

CONCLUSION

Capacity building activities such as training workshops in the Caribbean and distance learning activities are avenues for increasing awareness and contribution to the Cochrane Collaboration and SRs. There is a need to continue to train individuals and develop programmes to support use of evidence for informed policy making and clinical practice in the Caribbean.