

Withdrawing published Cochrane Reviews

Cochrane's editorial and publishing policies can now be found on the Cochrane Library [Editorial policies page](#). Cochrane authors and editorial teams should refer to the Cochrane Library as the primary source of information on this policy. For editorial guidance on policies the EPPR remains the primary location.

Cochrane Reviews

Cochrane Reviews should only be withdrawn under exceptional circumstances, for example, if there is a concern about the conduct or reporting of the Cochrane Review. Reasons that do not fall under exceptional circumstances include questions related to the usage and currency of the review in question, the availability of new studies or information, how this information could impact the review and whether there are new methods that could make important changes to the review.

Examples of reasons for withdrawing a Cochrane Review

- **Serious error in a Cochrane Review.** Following the conclusions of the published review could result in harm to patients or populations of interest (other than known adverse effects); and/or there are factual errors in describing one or more included studies that risk misinforming implementation or investment decisions about an intervention; and/or the reported treatment effect is inconsistent with the real effect shown in the reported data. *Also see [Serious errors in published Cochrane Reviews](#).*
- **Confirmed serious error in a Cochrane Review as a direct result of the retraction of an included study.** This could occur if studies included in a Cochrane Review are retracted from publication, and an analysis shows that the removal of the retracted studies from the analyses in the Cochrane Review could lead to a serious error (defined above). *Also see [Serious errors in published Cochrane Reviews](#).*
- **Scientific misconduct in the Cochrane Review.** This could refer to fraud or other scientific misconduct in the preparation of the review.
- **Serious breach of Cochrane's conflict of interest policy.** A ruling by Cochrane's Funding Arbiters that a Cochrane Review has seriously breached Cochrane's [conflict of interest policy](#).

Withdrawing a Cochrane Review generates a [new citation version](#). For Cochrane Reviews, this includes a new entry in PubMed.

Protocols for Cochrane Reviews

Withdrawal policy: change in policy for protocols

As of March 2022, protocols must not be withdrawn for any reason other than serious error. The current withdrawals policy can now be found on the [Cochrane Library Editorial policies page](#).

Prior to March 2022, protocols were also withdrawn for one of the following reasons:

- The protocol was out of date and did not meet the current methodological standards of Cochrane.
- Authors had made no progress with the protocol in XX months/years, and new authors were being sought to take over this protocol.
- The protocol had been split into or merged with other protocols.

With the introduction of the new policy in March 2022, the decisions or events described above are covered by [Editorial Notes](#). See also [Editorial note: editorial guidance](#).

Withdrawing a protocol for a Cochrane Review generated a [new citation version](#).

Up to 16 December 2014, withdrawn protocols were removed from the *CDSR* after one issue of publication. From this date onwards, withdrawn protocols remain published to maintain the public record of publication and to complement the inclusion in [PROSPERO](#).

Withdrawal followed by republication

The Editors may accept for publication a revised version of a Cochrane Review that addresses the issues raised in the withdrawn notice. Any such version will be re-evaluated using standard Cochrane editorial process, and may then be approved for publication (as a separate, subsequent version) in consultation with the [Editor in Chief](#).