

## Updating Classification System: update and next steps

September 2020

The [Updating Classification System](#) (UCS) was developed to help editorial and author teams assess and report on the updating status of an individual Cochrane Review (whether a review is up to date, likely to be updated in future, or does not need updating at the current time).

A project to publish UCS data on the Cochrane Library started in January 2019, and the project team worked closely with Managing Editors from four Cochrane Review Groups (CRGs) to pilot the publication process. The UCS data for Cochrane Infectious Diseases started publishing in May 2019, and a number of bugs were noticed soon after publication started, so further UCS publication was paused while those bugs were addressed. As we previously communicated in February 2020, we decided to pause the project pending an assessment of the situation and a review of what we'd learned.

One of the publication issues – in which publishing the UCS prevents the publication of standard publication status information – was found not to be a bug but instead an issue with the way the publication of the UCS data had been set up. Unfortunately, this could not be fixed. Enabling publication as originally envisaged was found to require redevelopment work, beyond the scope of the project. This was disappointing to everyone who had been involved in the UCS project, but we gained useful experience and insight about using the UCS and the publication of the UCS data.

In discussion with the project team we have decided to discontinue work on publishing the UCS data as it is currently set up and instead focus efforts on integrating the key elements into established editorial and publishing approaches, focusing on Cochrane Library developments to make. In related work, the ITS team has also started work with Managing Editors to explore the tools and systems Groups need in order to best manage their review portfolios in the context of moving to the new EMS.

The UCS will remain in place in Archie in the near future, and we know it helped Groups prioritize their updating workload and to help manage their portfolio. Groups that find it useful for prioritization or other uses can continue to use the UCS, but this data will not be published on the Cochrane Library.

In the near future, we will also be looking at related policies such as the withdrawal policy and 'what's new' events, to ensure they are fit for purpose in the absence of publicly available UCS data.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Managing Editors of the four Cochrane Review Groups who applied the UCS to their Groups' reviews for their collaboration and patience, and to Harriet MacLehose and the project team for their work on this project and for their report on the UCS data publishing project, which is [available here](#).

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