

Serious errors in published Cochrane Reviews

[Version history](#)

Cochrane has robust, open, and methodologically mature processes aimed at ensuring that Cochrane Reviews provide the best available evidence of the effects of healthcare interventions. These include documented methodologies, training, peer review, an open feedback system, and a willingness to embrace continuous improvement. However, it can be expected that, despite these best endeavours, flaws may appear in Cochrane Reviews from time to time.

A serious error occurs when:

- Following the conclusions of the review could result in harm to patients or populations of interest (other than known adverse effects).
- There are factual errors in describing one or more included studies that risk misinforming implementation or investment decisions about an intervention.
- The reported treatment effect is inconsistent with the real effect shown in the reported data.
- Or when there is a 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).

The Editor in Chief must be notified of all suspected or confirmed serious errors. The Editor in Chief along with the Co-ordinating Editor of the Cochrane Review Group (CRG) that published the Cochrane Review and the Network Senior Editor will investigate and agree a course of action.

Also see [the policy for withdrawing published Cochrane Reviews](#).