

Plain Language Expectations for Authors of Cochrane Summaries (PLEACS)

Cochrane has approved standards for the content of plain language summaries of Cochrane Reviews. These standards specify the key messages from Cochrane Reviews that should be included in the plain language summary. They include the requirement that text be written in plain English, so the core components of writing for a lay audience are presented in the rationale for the first standard.

The standards provide authors with guidance on the composition of plain language summaries. Cochrane Review Groups will be able to direct authors to these standards for use in writing plain language summaries. Editors and review authors are expected to ensure that all plain language summaries are compliant with these standards.

Each standard is given a status of either mandatory (defined as compliance required for publication) or highly desirable (defined as expected but may be justifiably not done). The standards and additional information are available at methods.cochrane.org/mecir.