Copy Edit Support

Note: *During 2021, Cochrane is changing its editorial management and production systems, including changes to the way copy-editing operates. This page will be updated in due course. Any questions about copy-editing should be addressed to ces@cochrane.org and any enquiries about the editorial process should be addressed to support@cochrane.org.*

Cochrane's Copy Edit Support team provides a copy-editing service for protocols and reviews ahead of publication, working alongside Cochrane Review Groups to enhance clarity and readability. Copy Edit Support is part of Cochrane's Editorial and Methods Department and supports the publication of high-quality Cochrane Reviews. Copy Edit Support was set up in 2004 by Cochrane's publisher, Wiley, which continues to support the service. In January 2014 management of Copy Edit Support was transferred to Cochrane.

What are the standards used for copy-editing?

Copy-editors check submissions against the Cochrane Style Manual.

How do I submit Cochrane Reviews (including protocols and updates) for copy-editing?

The Copy Editing Support team can help with queries relating to copy-editing at any time in a review's lifecycle. The more information you can provide (and the earlier the better) before it is submitted, the more Copy Edit Support can support you. For example, it is helpful to know the approximate word count, the number of tables, included studies, number of comparisons, and 'Summary of findings' tables, and anything notable or unusual about the review.

Please notify Copy Edit Support as soon as your review is ready for copy-editing. Send an email about the review to ces@cochrane.org. Please state the review title in the subject line of your email and whether the submission is a protocol, new review or an update. For new reviews and updates, please state how many included trials there are. There is no need to send a copy of the protocol, review, or update with the email message.

If a review is updated frequently or soon after the previous citation version, it may not be necessary to copy-edit all of the text. If you are submitting an updated review where this may apply, please notify Copy Edit Support on submission.

What if my review is urgent or there is a deadline for publication?

The Copy Edit Support team receives a growing number of submissions indicated as urgent for various reasons. While the Copy Editing Manager will try to prioritize your submission, this may not be possible if there are multiple concurrent urgent submissions. Please contact Copy Editing Support (ces@cochrane.org) as early as possible if you have urgent work, and take extra care to ensure these submissions are ready for copy-editing.

Note that for reviews linked to funding from NIHR Programme Grants, NIHR considers reviews to be completed once Co-ordinating Editor sign-off has been completed.

How does copy-editing work in practice?

Members of Copy Edit Support copy-edit reviews in Review Manager (RevMan), using the following process:

1. The Copy Editing Manager lets the CRG know which copy-editor will be working on the submission. The copy-editor is copied in on this response so that s/he is advised of the assignment.
2. The CRG authorizes the named copy-editor to have the necessary Archie document permissions for the review to be copy-edited, and ensures that the review is in the 'Editorial' phase.
3. The copy-editor checks the review out of Archie, copy-edits it (British or American English spelling; and provides notes/comments in the CRG's preferred format), and checks it back in.
4. The copy-editor informs the CRG when the review has been copy-edited.

When will I get the reviews back?

Copy Edit Support works to a schedule of returning copy-edits within two weeks of submission. Occasionally, submissions may take longer if the number of submissions requiring processing during a particular period exceeds the team's working capacity, or if there is a problem in access being granted to a review once a copy-editor has been assigned. Copy Edit Support will inform CRGs if delays are anticipated.

What should I do after I get my reviews back?

The copy-editor will let you know when the review has been copy-edited.

Copy Edit Support copy-editors do not use RevMan's track changes function when they copy-edit reviews and protocols, because it slows down the copy-editing process to a degree that outweighs the benefits. Copy-editors will let you know about any important changes, and you can use Archie's 'Compare' versions tool to see what changes have been made in detail. It is also possible to get a more detailed comparison of versions using Word (see guidance on Comparing version of reviews or protocols in Archie).

Once any outstanding queries have been addressed, the review or protocol can be approved for publication.

Note that any changes made post copy-edit must not reverse changes made by copy-editors in accordance with the Cochrane Style Manual, and in general changes should be avoided unless to resolve queries. If you have questions or concerns about the copy-editing of a particular review, please discuss them with the Copy Editing Manager.

What kind of training does Copy Edit Support provide?

Copy Edit Support does not provide basic copy-edit training, but rather focuses on providing training in elements of Cochrane style. For further information, please contact Elizabeth Royle.

Copy Edit Support team

Elizabeth Royle (Copy Editing Manager)

Denise Mitchell (Senior Copy Editor)

Freelance copy-editors:

- Kate Cahill
- Clare Dooley
- Jason Elliot-Smith
- Hasci Horvath
- Anne Lawson
- Anne Lethaby
- Dolores Matthews
- Heather Maxwell
- Vicki Pennick
- Jessica Sharp
- Andrea Takeda
- Deirdre Walshe
- Lisa Winer

Copy Edit Support also recruits and trains new copy-editors periodically. For more information, please send an inquiry to Elizabeth Royle.