

About translation at Cochrane

Only about 6% of the world's population are native English speakers, while 75% of people don't speak English at all.

Many people do not have access to high-quality health information, because it is not readily available in a language that they understand. We translate Cochrane evidence to make it more accessible, and to reduce the linguistic barrier to global evidence-informed health decisions. **We have published more than 49,000 translations of Cochrane Review plain language summaries and/or abstracts across 20 languages on the Cochrane Library and cochrane.org as of January 2024.**

Cochrane groups in different parts of the world lead our knowledge translation activities in different languages. They translate Reviews and related Review content, such as podcasts or blogshots. But they typically also or instead write and disseminate news and other content in their language, do social media, work with professional societies, policy makers, patient groups or the media in their country, and offer training.

Most Cochrane groups have no or very little funding for translations. Some have support from their local funders, for example, ministries of health or hosting universities, central Cochrane funding, or temporary grants, but most involve substantial volunteer time.

A list of translation projects is available on the [Cochrane community website](#).

Get involved

You're a Cochrane group and want to translate Cochrane Reviews or related products? Please contact [Judith Deppe](#).

You would like to participate as a volunteer translator? Read more about what to expect as a [volunteer translator in one of our Review translation projects](#), or join [Cochrane Engage](#).

What we translate

Our priority is to translate and disseminate Cochrane Reviews. All teams translate the plain language summaries, some also the abstracts or other main text sections, of the Review. These translations are published with the English Review on the [Cochrane Library](#) and on their own version of [cochrane.org](#), which has been translated into 20 languages and can be browsed and searched in those languages, too. In addition, teams may translate related Review content (podcasts, blogshots, press releases, special collections, featured Reviews and news items), training materials, etc.

How we prioritize Reviews for translation

The local context, culture, and resources vary for each of our translation teams, and this affects how they set priorities. They generally focus on recently published Reviews. Some select Reviews for translation based on their expertise in specific areas of health; based on what topics are most relevant in their country, or to their funders and partners; and they often let translators focus on their interests and expertise.

How we do translation at Cochrane

As with Reviews, our translation workflows take place in a highly automated and standardised technology infrastructure, so we can produce and publish a large volume of translations efficiently. We use [Phrase](#), a third-party translation management system, which we make freely available for our translators. Phrase is connected to our Review production and publication infrastructure, so we can send Reviews to Phrase for translation, and translations from Phrase to our websites, automatically.

All translation teams use one or a combination of the following approaches to translation:

Volunteer translation

Most of our projects involve volunteer translators, and the project managers often contribute on a volunteer basis, too. The majority of our volunteers have a health-related background, while few are linguists or translators. Some of our volunteers are students in health or language studies and contribute to Cochrane in order to learn and gain experience.

Professional translation

Professional translation is expensive, and therefore only a few of our projects work with paid professional translators on a regular basis. Languages that use professionals have their translations reviewed by health professionals to ensure accuracy.

Machine translation and post-editing

Most of our teams use off-the-shelf or custom machine translation in combination with human post-editing to speed up their workflow, but we do not publish unedited machine translations.