Disseminate translations and track response

If you want to make sure that your translations are accessed and reach their audience, active and targeted dissemination and promotion are useful to achieve this. The first section of this guide examines dissemination channels in more detail, while the second includes practical ways to track response and information about our global media monitoring service.

You can find a free online learning module with an introduction to knowledge translation (KT) at Cochrane here.

What do we mean by dissemination?

There are several definitions of dissemination, but it can be summed up as the process or act of sharing information to a targeted audience, with the aim of passing on the benefits to others.

You may have different target audiences that you want to reach or focus on, e.g. doctors, clinicians, decision-makers, patients or the wider public, and might want to use different ways of sharing information to best reach them.

If you have very little time and resources for dissemination activities, there are still some things you can do that do not require lots of work or learning new skills.

Stay informed on Slack

Cochrane's core staff uses Slack, an online collaboration and chat platform, to encourage communication between members of our core community. The "all-comms-help" channel on Slack has been set up to increase the coordination of communication activities across our organisation as well as provide content ideas and guidance for dissemination activities. It also provides a platform for members to ask questions and share their news with the rest of the community, who may in turn circulate it to their audience if relevant.

Please find more details here on how to access Slack: https://community.cochrane.org/news/cochranes-core-staff-are-communicating-slackjoin-us

cochrane.org and your Cochrane group website

cochrane.org has a dedicated sub-site for each language, including search functionality for each language. You should translate at least the basic navigation and main pages of cochrane.org, so that people who access your translations have a good user experience. A coherently translated navigation and main pages will avoid confusion among users, look more professional and trustworthy, and improve detectability via search engines. You can also promote your translations on your own website, and direct your users to your translations on cochrane.org. We can also set up a feed of new translations in your language on your website.

Use your networks

If you have access to relevant networks, e.g. your University, partner organisations, thematic networks or associations you are part of, promote your translation work through them, and ask them to share and promote more widely using their own channels.

Use your own communication channels

If you have your own mailing lists or regular newsletters, make use of these to promote your translations, for example, highlight a new translation each month, or provide a monthly summary of new translations. If you don't have a newsletter or mailing list yet that you could use for this purpose, you could start one and invite people to subscribe. We can provide free newsletter templates and mailing lists and help you get started.

Local events

You can promote your translation work at relevant meetings, university events, training workshops, or conferences, e.g. giving out leaflets to participants or presenting about your work depending on what is feasible and appropriate at different events.

Social media

Social media plays an increasingly important role in communication. Some of the benefits of social media are that it is easily accessible to a wide and diverse audience in many countries, content can be shared easily, also via smartphones, and many social media platforms can be used free of charge. Many Cochrane groups have established their own social media accounts, particularly on Facebook or X (formerly Twitter), to share news relevant to their area of health or their region, and in their languages. You can find more detailed guidance on how to get started and how to use social media here: https://training.cochrane.org/online-learning/knowledge-translation/how-share-cochrane-evidence/choose-right-dissemination-produ-9

Blogs

Blogging is another option for disseminating and promoting your work, putting evidence into context, and giving a perspective, but that does require dedicated time and writing skills. If you cannot do it yourself, maybe you can find an existing blog, or scientific writer, who would be interested in blogging about Cochrane on a regular basis.

Examples from Cochrane groups

- Wissen was wirkt (German: knowing what is effective): A German-language blog launched as a joint venture between Cochrane Switzerland, Cochrane Germany and Cochrane Austria. It is written in accessible language and focuses on evidence-based health care in general, and Cochrane evidence in particular, featuring regular updates about new German translations.
- Evidently Cochrane (no longer active): This weekly blog presented Cochrane evidence in simple, accessible language, to help people make informed decisions about health. The blog was targeted at a non-medical audience and encouraged discussion so people were able to leave comments at the end of the articles. Blogs were updated to reflect any changes made to Cochrane Reviews.

Collaborations

Establishing partnerships with other organisations to support your dissemination efforts could help raise your profile. Collaborations come in various forms, for example:

- Linking to your translations from other websites.
  - Featuring translations in health journals, media or blogs on a regular basis. Please note though, that reprint of translations outside of Cochrane websites requires approval from Cochrane and Wiley.
  - Partnering with universities to involve medicine or translation students in your project.

Examples from Cochrane groups

- The German translation project has partnered with several medical journals and medical associations in different topic areas. The journals regularly translate and co-publish a small number of translations in their publications, while the translations also appear on the Cochrane websites.
- The French translation team has partnered with Master Students at Paris Diderot University. Students in specialised translation are post-editing translations produced using custom-built machine translation.
- The Spanish translation team has partnered with a nutrition network to translate blogshots. Read more here: http://community.cochrane.org/news/match-made-blogshot-heaven-cochrane-iberoamerica-teams-spanish-nutrition-network-red-nube

Targeting the media

A key target audience is the mainstream media: newspapers, radio and TV. Establishing and maintaining media relationships can be quite a lot of work, but in some cases, it might be very beneficial to maintain personal contact with the science editor of a widely read newspaper, or popular radio or TV programme. A lower resource approach could be to set up a mailing list for journalists, to be able to send new translations and press releases on a regular basis. We can provide you with a list of media contacts from your country who focus on health and medicine to help you get started with this, but building up subscribers to a mailing list will also take some time. You can find more guidance on building relationships and interacting with the media as well as targeted dissemination in our toolkit.

Tracking response

As you promote your translations, you should also measure the effect of your dissemination efforts, to see whether they are successful. Being able to show the successes of your translation and dissemination activities can be useful when talking to funders. Some fairly easy and free ways of measuring response include:

- Tracking the number of subscribers of your mailing lists and newsletters.
- Tracking the number of followers, likes, tweets etc. on your social media accounts. This data is usually easily accessible within your account.
  - Tracking the access to your translations on cochrane.org. We can provide analytics on various metrics including the number of page views, origin of users etc. over any given period of time.
  - Tracking press coverage via Cochrane's global media monitoring service. We can track mentions of Cochrane in different languages, and share press from your region or language with you. An introductory video to explain why media monitoring is useful and how it can help you with dissemination is available here: http://ow.ly/azXw30bLMOc.