



Media Release

Don't Google your Health Questions. Cochrane them!

Vancouver to host National Cochrane Health Symposium

(Ottawa –February 14, 2011) “It’s a no-brainer,” says Alan Cassels, pharmaceutical policy and Canadian medical reporting researcher. “If the Canadian health system wants its consumers to be informed, they must have access to the best information; and that includes *The Cochrane Library*.”

The Cochrane Library (www.thecochranelibrary.com) is an online database of health research and systematic reviews. The Cochrane Collaboration is encouraging the public to search for answers to their health treatment questions on *The Cochrane Library*, rather than using Google in an effort to lead people directly to reliable health information. However, national access to the Library comes at a cost, and the Canadian Cochrane Centre, the Canadian branch of the international Collaboration, is looking for national funding to cover the fee. While the Collaboration and its various international branches are not-for-profits, money is required to pay the library’s publisher and, therefore, the library is available through a subscription basis.

“The value of *The Cochrane Library* continues to be proven daily. It is considered the gold standard in evidence-based health care and the fact that not everyone in the health field is aware of it and that all Canadians don’t have access to it is a travesty,” says Dr. Jeremy Grimshaw, co-chair of The Cochrane Collaboration, Canadian Cochrane Centre director and Canada Research Chair in Health Knowledge Transfer and Uptake.

“The money saved in stopping treatments that do not work because of evidence found in *The Cochrane Library* more than pays for the library itself. If we are really concerned about the sustainability of the health care system, we need to get good information into the hands of our Canadian citizens,” adds Grimshaw.

Countries such as India have had national provisions allowing all citizens access to *The Cochrane Library* since 2007.

The 4,500 systematic reviews in the Library are synthesized by the over 28,000 contributors of The Cochrane Collaboration to produce the most reliable, up-to-date information on health treatments. The Cochrane Collaboration is the world's leading independent assessor of medical interventions and medical research.

Cassels shares Grimshaw’s sentiments and believes better healthcare includes access to information: “Informed health consumers make better consumers. Period.”

Getting *The Cochrane Library* into the hands of medical practitioners and consumers will be discussed at Cochrane Canada’s 9th Annual Symposium in Vancouver, February 16-17, with presymposium workshops on February 14-15. The symposium expects to bring more than 200 delegates together for four days of discussions and workshops. More information can be found at www.ccc-symposium.org.

For more information:

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About the Canadian Cochrane Centre:

The Canadian Cochrane Centre (CCC), registered in August 1993, is one of 14 independent, not-for-profit Centres of The Cochrane Collaboration worldwide. The CCC is located at the Institute of Population Health at the University of Ottawa. We support the activities of over 2,067 members of The Cochrane Collaboration in Canada to promote the Collaboration, *The Cochrane Library* and evidence-based health care in Canada. We collaborate with health professional organizations, health researchers, health technology assessment groups, national consumer associations, governments and other interested groups in order to achieve this goal. The CCC is a part of Cochrane Canada which is composed of 1,400 review authors, six Review Groups, two Methods Groups, one Field and 18 Regional Sites.

About *The Cochrane Library* national pilot:

The Canadian public did have full access to *The Cochrane Library* for 12 months through a pilot program made possible through donated top-up funding. The pilot demonstrated the Library's momentous value with a significant increase in usage when Canadians were able to access it for free. Over 11,500 people tried to access the Library without success within the first month after access was no longer free. Cochrane Canada's goal is to secure federal level funding to cover the national subscription and make the library available to all Canadians at the click of a mouse.

About *The Cochrane Library*:

The Cochrane Library is a collection of six databases that contain different types of high-quality, independent evidence to inform healthcare decision-making, and a seventh database that provides information about groups in The Cochrane Collaboration. The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (CDSR) is the leading resource for systematic reviews in health care. The CDSR includes all Cochrane Reviews (and protocols) prepared by Cochrane Review Groups in The Cochrane Collaboration. Each Cochrane Review is a peer-reviewed systematic review that has been prepared and supervised by a Cochrane Review Group (editorial team) in The Cochrane Collaboration according to the *Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions* or *Cochrane Handbook for Diagnostic Test Accuracy Reviews*. [Find out more](#) about Cochrane Reviews and Protocols. The CDSR has an impact factor of 5.653 for 2009 and is ranked 11th in the "Medicine, General & Internal" category.

*"Every day someone, somewhere searches The Cochrane Library **every second**, reads an abstract every **two seconds** and downloads a full-text article **every three seconds**."*

- *The Cochrane Library* usage data 2009