



Cochrane
Nordic

Annual Report 2019

Cochrane Nordic



Trusted evidence.
Informed decisions.
Better health.

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Foreword

The year 2019 saw important milestones for Cochrane Nordic and was a year of change, including a transition of leadership. After celebrating our 25th anniversary in the fall of 2018 with a research symposium highlighting our many achievements and contributions to research and healthcare, it was also a time to reflect on our future and direction as a Centre. I especially want to thank my colleagues at the Centre for showing incredible engagement, ability to adapt and for supporting our efforts as a centre during this period.

We are very thankful for Peter Gøtzsche's contribution to our Centre over his 25 years as its leader, as well as for his contribution to promoting systematic reviews and evidence-based healthcare in Denmark.

Also, in 2019, we developed a partnership with WHO Europe, situated in Copenhagen, and their EVIPNet programme to promote evidence informed healthcare decisions in the European region. We aim to support their efforts in our region in partnership with our Cochrane network. We plan to assist in providing training in evidence synthesis and regard this as a very important development in terms of making evidence more accessible and expanding our network of key collaborators and stakeholders.

The Danish Ministry of Health initiated an independent, international evaluation of our Centre in 2018, under the coordination of the Danish Centre for Social Science Research (VIVE). This [evaluation](#) was performed during 2019 and a final report was published in early December that year. The independent report concluded that we fulfil the requirements for our government grant; that we perform very well at an international level with our research publications being cited almost 3 times more than the average publication in our field; and that we are a trusted resource for our stakeholders with important impact on healthcare, helping to drive science and clinical practice forward.

Both the transition and work related to the evaluation of our Centre required significant time and resources. Despite this, we were able to contribute with important results through evidence synthesis and training, and support evidence-based decision-making, resulting in substantial impact on health research and healthcare.

In June 2019, the Danish Medicines Agency (DMA) tightened its employee policy on stock ownership in the medical industry, aligning it with that of the European Medicines Agency and with agencies in our neighbouring countries. This followed a considerable effort on our part, urging the DMA to live up to the standards of its European counterparts, by advocating for transparency in several publications in the Danish Medical Journal and national news media. Thereby safeguarding integrity in healthcare and information put forward for critical appraisal. We greatly appreciate this direction. It follows an important development in the recognition of the risk of conflicts of interest in healthcare in general, and the need for securing better transparency to benefit public health.



Karsten Juhl Jørgensen, MD, MSc
Acting Director, Cochrane Nordic

About Cochrane Nordic

Cochrane is a global, independent research network with members and supporters worldwide. Cochrane Nordic (NCC) is a Geographic Centre contributing to evidence-based decision-making in healthcare, by producing and disseminating the findings from high-quality independent research and systematic reviews. The Centre is hosted by Rigshospitalet in Copenhagen, Denmark. There are associate centres referring to us in Finland, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden. We also have 7 Cochrane review groups based in the Nordic Region and a new Cochrane Field (launched in 2019), established in collaboration with Cochrane Sweden, to improve sustainability in healthcare.

One important aim at NCC is to synthesize and provide the best available evidence for health professionals, researchers, health decision-makers, media and the public. Producing trusted evidence and working towards enabling informed decisions. We help maximise the use and visibility of Cochrane systematic reviews primarily in Denmark and across the Nordic Region. We assist healthcare professionals and researchers in producing systematic Cochrane reviews, but also through producing evidence in relation to scientific methodology and other factors that influence medical research, such as conflicts of interests. As part of Cochrane, we do not accept commercial or conflicted funding. This is vital for us to generate authoritative and reliable information, working freely and unconstrained by commercial and financial interests.

Systematic Cochrane reviews are published in the Cochrane Library, which is a collection of databases that contain different types of high-quality, independent evidence to inform healthcare decision-making. The Library is freely available to everyone in Denmark due to a national licence. This aims to make the results useful for the public through plain language summaries of the reviews, apart from to health care professionals.

Mission of Cochrane Nordic

Cochrane Nordic's vision, mission and goals are aligned with the global Cochrane Collaboration.

Our vision as part of Cochrane is a world of improved health where decisions about healthcare are informed by high-quality, relevant and up-to-date synthesized research evidence.

Our mission is to promote evidence-informed health decision-making by producing and advocating for high-quality, relevant, accessible systematic reviews and other synthesized research evidence.

Cochrane Nordic's strategy

The overall strategy and purpose of our Centre follows that set out by Cochrane internationally in its [Strategy to 2020](#) and through our role as a [Cochrane Geographic Centre](#). Our specific research agenda is set locally, and a core value of our Centre has been our independence to set this agenda. As generally in research, we develop our research direction together with our collaborators, internationally and nationally. Our research agenda is partly defined by the core functions of a Cochrane Geographic Centre to contribute to methods research and production of systematic reviews. In addition, topics for reviews and other types of research performed at our Centre are also formed by the skills set of our team, the needs of collaborating clinicians and governmental institutions, as well as our research collaborators.

GOAL 1: Producing evidence

To produce high-quality, relevant, up-to-date systematic reviews and other synthesized research evidence to inform health decision-making.

GOAL 2: Making our evidence accessible

To make Cochrane evidence accessible and useful to everybody, everywhere in the world.

GOAL 3: Advocating for evidence

To make Cochrane the 'home of evidence' to inform health decision-making, build greater recognition of our work, and become the leading advocate for evidence-informed healthcare.

GOAL 4: Building an effective & sustainable organization

To be a diverse, inclusive and transparent international organization that effectively harnesses the enthusiasm and skills of our contributors, is guided by our principles, governed accountably, managed efficiently and makes optimal use of its resources.

Our strategic plan for the period 2016 to 2020 is available through our website here:

<https://nordic.cochrane.org/strategic-plan>. As described above, this is aligned with the goals and strategy of Cochrane internationally and we are in dialogue quarterly with the Central Executive Team to co-ordinate our strategy and efforts.

GOAL 1: Producing evidence

Systematic reviews

During 2019, we worked on and published several Cochrane reviews. We also regularly publish systematic reviews in other publications when the type of research included, topic or other issues makes this relevant. In addition to Cochrane reviews, we produce other types of research, such as methodological research to help advance systematic review methods. Our focus on methodological research has been pivotal in driving many of our research efforts in the last few years. We also conduct analyses of evidence synthesis and comment on published research in top medical journals (see our publications section for 2019 on page 19-20).

New or updated Cochrane reviews, protocols, and editorials

Financial conflicts of interest in systematic reviews: associations with results, conclusions, and methodological quality

[Hansen C, Lundh A, Rasmussen K, Hróbjartsson A. Financial conflicts of interest in systematic reviews: associations with results, conclusions, and methodological quality. Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2019 aug 5;8:MR000047. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.MR000047.pub2>](https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.MR000047)

Screening for reducing morbidity and mortality in malignant melanoma

[Johansson M, Brodersen J, Gøtzsche PC, Jørgensen KJ. Screening for reducing morbidity and mortality in malignant melanoma. Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2019;2019\(6\). CD012352. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD012352.pub2>](https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD012352)

Cochrane Sustainable Healthcare: evidence for action on too much medicine

[Johansson M, Bero L, Bonfill X, Bruschetti M, Garner S, Glenton C o.a. Cochrane Sustainable Healthcare: evidence for action on too much medicine. Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2019 dec 6;12:ED000143. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.ED000143>](https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.ED000143)

General health checks in adults for reducing morbidity and mortality from disease

[Krogsbøll LT, Jørgensen KJ, Gøtzsche PC. General health checks in adults for reducing morbidity and mortality from disease. Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2019 jan 31;1:CD009009. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD009009.pub3>](https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD009009)

Social skills training for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children aged 5 to 18 years

[Storebø OJ, Elmoose Andersen M, Skoog M, Joost Hansen S, Simonsen E, Pedersen N o.a. Social skills training for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder \(ADHD\) in children aged 5 to 18 years. Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2019 jun 21;6:CD008223. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD008223.pub3>](https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD008223)

Supporting the development of Cochrane methods

NCC has contributed substantially to the development of Cochrane methods. We continue to do so through our research and knowledge translation efforts. Over recent years, NCC has focused on research and training underpinning Cochrane methodological developments. These methodological developments are making the evidence synthesis process increasingly complex. One topic, which we have focused on, is the use of Clinical Study Reports (CSRs) in systematic reviews. At NCC, we have been working with CSRs for more than a decade, and the Centre's efforts to obtain CSRs from the European Medicines Agency (EMA) played a major role in EMA's subsequent decision to routinely release CSRs after approval of new drugs. We continually use our efforts to call for more transparency and making this information publicly available from drug regulators. Aiming to gain information which is an important data source for systematic reviews and thereby ensure high-quality research to healthcare decision-makers.

Several PhDs conducted at NCC have been partly based on CSRs, including L. Jørgensen's PhD dissertation on the benefits and harms of human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines, which was defended and approved in 2019. We currently work on several research projects that are based on CSRs in collaboration with other Cochrane entities and international research institutes.

Collaboration with Cochrane France to further use of CSRs in systematic reviews

In 2019, PhD student AS Paludan-Müller, had a two-month research stay at Cochrane France in Paris. Here, he worked on a project comparing the reporting of harms of oncological drugs in clinical trial registries and publications with the reporting in CSRs. The project documents the importance of using CSRs in systematic reviews, as harms are reported in extensive detail in CSRs compared to other sources.

Collaboration with the Cochrane Methods review group on use of CSRs in systematic reviews

In May 2019, Director Karsten Juhl Jørgensen and PhD student AS Paludan-Müller participated in a meeting with the Cochrane Methods group about the use of CSRs in Cochrane reviews. At the meeting in London, it was discussed when to include CSRs, and how to use them.

Collaboration with The Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine, Oxford on use of CSRs for randomised trials in statins

Our Centre has supported the work of Professor Tom Jefferson, Associate Tutor and Honorary Research Fellow at The Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine, University of Oxford, and Maryanne Demasi, PhD, to acquire and assess clinical study reports for randomised trials on statins. This preparatory work is planned to lead to a Ph.D. based on the clinical study reports, in collaboration with The Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine, Oxford.

Collaboration with The Meta-Research Innovation Center, Stanford University

From September 2019 to February 2020, PhD student Kim Boesen stayed six months at the Meta-Research Innovation Center at Stanford University (METRICS) under supervision of Professor John Ioannidis. They worked on a project related to drug regulatory agency guidelines on how to design pivotal psychiatric drug trials. The protocol is published here: <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.01.22.20018499v1>. During the stay, Kim presented three

times at the weekly METRICS meetings, once about the current project, and twice about clinical trial registries and outcome requirements.

PhD collaboration with the Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine, Odense

NCC and the Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine, Odense, are working together on two PhD projects.

The first project, which PhD David Laursen is currently working on, is to investigate the use of active placebos in randomised drug trials. The results from this will provide empirical data on the impact of unblinding and the potential usefulness of active placebos. With drugs where risk of unblinding is a potential issue, this may prove helpful for systematic reviewers assessing the risk of bias in trials, as well as for trialists in the process of designing and choosing a suitable control intervention. Furthermore, David is also co-authoring a chapter on placebos in a textbook on evidence-based medicine for medical students.

Publications/poster presentations for 2019

Laursen DRT, Paludan-Müller AS, Hróbjartsson A. Randomized clinical trials with run-in periods: frequency, characteristics and reporting. Clin Epidemiol 2019;11:169-184. <https://doi.org/10.2147/CLEP.S188752>

Laursen DRT, Paludan-Müller AS, Hróbjartsson A. Active placebo versus standard placebo control interventions in pharmacological randomised trials: a systematic review. In: Abstracts of the 26th Cochrane Colloquium, Santiago, Chile. Vol 1 Suppl 1. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews; 2020:307. doi:10.1002/14651858.CD201901

We also support the PhD project by PhD student Camilla Hansen concerning conflicts of interest in clinical research. Camilla investigated how financial conflicts of interest impact on results and conclusions of two core types of medical research: systematic reviews and randomised trials. Additionally, the project aims to investigate how financial and non-financial conflicts of interest impact on clinical guidelines, reports from advisory committees, opinion pieces such as editorials and commentaries, and narrative (also called non-systematic) reviews.

Publications/poster presentations for 2019

Hansen C, Lundh A, Rasmussen K, Hróbjartsson A. Financial conflicts of interest in systematic reviews: associations with results, conclusions, and methodological quality. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2019. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.MR000047.pub2

Hansen C, Lundh A, Jørgensen KJ, Abdi SAIS, Gelle MHA, da Costa BR, Christensen R, Hróbjartsson A. Financial conflicts of interest and estimated intervention effects in randomized clinical trials: a systematic review of meta-epidemiological studies. Cochrane Colloquium 2019. Available at: <https://colloquium2019.cochrane.org/abstracts/financial-conflicts-interest-and-estimated-intervention-effects-randomized-clinical-trials>

Courses and workshops

Throughout 2019, our team supported training activities aimed for Cochrane authors, university students, health professionals and the media. Some of these events were in collaboration with Cochrane Sweden and Cochrane Norway as part of our ambition to strengthen a Scandinavian network across the region to enhance facilitation of use of evidence in informing healthcare decisions.

In 2019, we organised and/or contributed to the following training events:

Introduction to Cochrane Methodology, Lund University

This was a 40-hour PhD course on Cochrane methodology for systematic reviews held in September.

Introduction to Cochrane Methodology, Gothenburg University

This one-day workshop in February was hosted by Cochrane Sweden in collaboration with Cochrane Norway. The course was mainly aimed at university students but was open to everyone.

Introduction to Cochrane Methodology, Lund University

This was a one-week PhD course in collaboration with Cochrane Sweden and took place in May. Cochrane Interactive Learning modules were utilised in the course. The course was mainly aimed at PhD students, but was open to everyone.

Evidence Based Medicine training for research librarians

The course was hosted by Copenhagen University Library North with 15 librarians in attendance.

Evidence Based Medicine for clinicians at Rigshospitalet

This course was hosted by the Department of Clinical Physiology, Nuclear Medicine and PET. All 30 staff members attended the course.

Rational Clinical Decision-Making to specialist clinicians

The course is administrated by the Danish Health Authorities for all specialist clinicians and took place at the Odense University Hospital.

Medical Sociology course

The medical sociology course is a mandatory part of the curriculum for medical students at the University of Copenhagen.

Introduction to Evidence Based Medicine at the University of Southern Denmark

The EBM course is a mandatory part of the curriculum for medical students at the University of Southern Denmark

Research training for general practitioners as part of the specialist clinician education programme

This lecture is taught several times a year for medical doctors during their last year of residency to become general practitioners.

Understanding systematic reviews – an introduction to students at University of Copenhagen

This lecture is part of a course teaching health research methodology for students at the University of Copenhagen's Master of Science in Global Health.

Workshop on Cochrane systematic reviews and evidence synthesis to journalists

Cochrane Nordic gave a presentation on Cochrane evidence and how to communicate about the findings of systematic reviews to science journalists from the Danish science media outlet Videnskab.dk.

Workshop and international network meeting on psychiatric drug withdrawal with the International Institute for Psychiatric Drug Withdrawal

In September 2019, PhD student Anders Sørensen participated in a workshop and network meeting in Gothenburg arranged by the International Institute for Psychiatric Drug Withdrawal.

Conferences

Cochrane Colloquium Santiago, Chile

The Cochrane Colloquium was planned for 22nd to 25th October 2019, in Santiago, Chile. Due to civil unrest across the city of Santiago in the days leading up to the event, the decision was taken to cancel the Colloquium. Members of Cochrane Nordic staff were to participate and present at this event. Instead, Cochrane held a virtual event from the 2nd -6th December. The meetings of the Cochrane Governing Board took place immediately prior to the Colloquium.

Cochrane Governance meeting, Poland

Cochrane staff participated at the annual Governance meeting in Krakow, Poland. The Mid-Year meeting takes place once a year and is an opportunity for Cochrane's Board and Executives to meet and discuss the organization's strategic and operational plans and priorities.

Cochrane Russia Conference

Senior researcher Klaus Munkholm presented, virtually, on using Cochrane methods and software to conduct systematic reviews and on the critical appraisal of network meta-analyses, illustrated with network meta-analyses of antidepressants for anxiety and depression at the Cochrane Russia conference on Cochrane Reviews in a Digital Era.

Invited lecture in Stockholm at the national conference for Swedish clinical oncologists

Karsten Juhl Jørgensen lectured on cancer screening. Also, a session on Cochrane and EBM was given to the Young Oncologists Association.

Seminar: Improving the detection, analysis, and reporting of harms in medicines

Two of our PhD-students, AS Paludan-Müller and L Jørgensen, participated in a seminar on improving the detection, analysis and reporting of harms in medicines. The seminar was hosted by the Center for Evidence Based Medicine at the University of Oxford and WHO's Uppsala Monitoring Centre, and took place in Sicily, Italy. At the seminar, they both gave presentations and participated in structured discussions on how to improve handling of harms in all phases of drug development. The seminar culminated in a [statement](#) mapping out priority areas for safer medicines.

Preventing Overdiagnosis Conference, Sydney

Karsten Juhl Jørgensen is a member of the scientific panel for this annual conference, which is held in a collaboration between the Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine, Oxford University and The British Medical Journal. Cochrane's Editor in Chief, Karla Soares-Weiser, launched our Cochrane Sustainable Healthcare Field at this event.

GOAL 2: Making our evidence accessible

As part of our knowledge translation initiatives, we have focused on a coordinated effort to disseminate and support the use of our Cochrane reviews.

We maintain and develop our website and translate relevant content to Danish. We also engage and disseminate activities and research results through several communication channels including our website and Twitter platform [@NordicCochrane](#) in English and Danish, and in collaboration with the Cochrane Knowledge Translation team.

We have focused on developing strategic partnerships and collaborations, supporting healthcare decision-makers in the use of Cochrane methods. This year, we proactively engaged in advocating for evidence and disseminating our work to a wider audience through public debate and through media. We disseminate a number of various Cochrane reviews to Danish press.

In 2019, our website gained 28,176 new visitors. The top 5 countries visiting our website are Denmark (28,42% new visitors), followed by the United States, Spain, United Kingdom and Sweden.

Ensuring access to the Cochrane Library for Denmark

A substantial part of our governmental grant is dedicated to finance a national license that allows everyone in Denmark access to the [Cochrane Library](#). Securing this access in 2003 was an important accomplishment for our Centre. This means all healthcare professionals, patients and other stakeholders have open access to all Cochrane reviews, as well as, other content in the Library, such as methods reviews and individual studies through the CENTRAL database. All published Cochrane reviews are written with the intention that their results and conclusions are useful in an international perspective. We continue to promote awareness and the use of the Cochrane Library through our training & communication efforts to our stakeholders in Denmark.

Partnerships and collaborations

In 2019, we initiated a collaboration with WHO Europe and their Evidence-informed policy network (EVIPNet) with the aim to further systematic use of evidence in policy-making in the WHO European region. The partnership is part of our knowledge translation efforts of supporting WHO in their work to strengthen the use of evidence to inform policy-making. It is also part of our efforts for making our evidence accessible and useful to policy-makers and strategic partners (goal 2 and 3).

(<http://www.euro.who.int/en/data-and-evidence/evidence-informed-policy-making/evidence-informed-policy-network-evipnet>)

We participated at the [6th EVIPNet Europe multicountry meeting](#) in Turkey in September as observers. This meeting resulted in consolidating our collaboration with WHO EVIPNet Europe and initiating agreements for future training support of WHO Europe staff and member states.

The use of Cochrane reviews and methods in Denmark and the Nordic region

Cochrane reviews are being widely used in the area serviced by Cochrane Nordic and Associated Centres, with over 439,000 full text accesses of Cochrane articles in 2019. This is an increase of 14% compared with 2018.

Cochrane review methods are implemented and applied within the Danish health system by healthcare decision-makers for the five regions of Denmark and by the Danish Health Department (DHD). Most recently, The Danish Medicines Council (established in 2017) applied the Cochrane Handbook in their process and methods guide for how to assess several medicines within the same therapeutic area. We are happy to have been able to assist the DHD in this process and to provide methods assistance for individual guidelines.

According to The Danish Medicines Council, the [guide](#) forms the foundation for the joint regional treatment guidelines.

The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews is within the top 10 of scientific journals where researchers from our host institute Rigshospitalet publish their articles in 2019.

(<https://intranet.regionh.dk/rh/nyheder/intranetnyheder/Sider/2020/juni/hvilke-tidsskrifter-publicerer-oftest-fra-rigshospitalet.aspx>)

In 2019, we participated in a working group under the Danish Health Department, which has set out to perform an evidence-based re-evaluation of the evidence for the benefits and harms of breast cancer screening. This re-evaluation, as other evidence assessments at the Department, will be based on the Cochrane and GRADE-methodology. We have supported, publicly and through consultancy, the introduction of national clinical guidelines from the Danish Health Authority based on the GRADE framework. These have been in diverse areas and have been important to build our network and collaboration with clinicians through several publications based on these guidelines.

Research meetings

In 2019, we hosted 3 open research meetings:

- Agnieszka Pac, visiting researcher at Cochrane Sweden, did a presentation on parent-child discrepancies in the reporting of adolescent emotional and behavioural problems in epidemiological studies.
- Britta Tendahl from the Danish Health Authorities, did a presentation titled in Danish, “Kom og bliv klogere på nationale kliniske retningslinjer”, highlighting Danish national clinical guidelines and how Cochrane evidence and methods are used to inform policy decision-makers.
- Senior Researcher at NCC, Tom Jefferson’s research meeting presentation highlighted his preliminary findings in his research project on statins and was titled, “Statins - searching for the evidence base”.

Communicating our evidence

We have developed, with the support of the Cochrane Knowledge Translation team, a dissemination campaign for 2 of our Cochrane reviews.

Cochrane review: [General health checks in adults for reducing morbidity and mortality from disease](#)

We created an awareness campaign, in collaboration with the Cochrane Knowledge Translation Team with a number of communication initiatives to disseminate the results of the review. The review was highlighted as a [featured review](#) and the Cochrane EPOC review team created a blogshot to support dissemination efforts. It was disseminated through a broad range of Cochrane communication channels

including web and social media. This resulted in coverage by a number of media outlets and the review became one of the five most accessed and one of the five most shared reviews in 2019 for all Cochrane reviews. So far, the review has been translated in to five different languages (<https://www.cochranelibrary.com/collections/doi/10.1002/14651858.SC000026/full>).

To date the review has an Altmetric score of 641, resulting in it being in the top 5% of all research outputs scored by Altmetric.

Cochrane review: Screening for malignant melanoma

We also helped publish the Cochrane review on screening for malignant melanoma (skin cancer) in collaboration with Cochrane Sweden. We led the dissemination efforts for the review in collaboration with the Cochrane Skin review group and Cochrane Knowledge Translation Team. A part of creating awareness of the review results was communicating directly through email to key stakeholders, such as cancer organisations and patient groups. The review was also highlighted as a feature review with an interview article of the author Karsten Juhl Jørgensen followed by a podcast by lead author Minna Johansson from Cochrane Sweden. The review has gaged international media attention. See example from Jama (https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/article-abstract/2764237?guestAccessKey=f151461a-b988-4cb5-ba47-c7b943b93902&utm_source=silverchair&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=article_alert-jama&utm_content=olf&utm_term=040120) and Medscape (<https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/916090>). It has also been picked up by Wikipedia (<https://en.wikipedia.org/?curid=716631>), along with a Cochrane blog highlighting the evidence.

To date the Altmetric score is 60 and is ranked as being in the top 5% of all research outputs scored by Altmetric.

Reanalysis of a systematic review on antidepressants for the treatment of depression

On June 27, 2019, the BMJ Open published a reanalysis of a very influential systematic review on antidepressants for the treatment of depression in adults. It gaged a high level of international attention (<https://blogs.bmj.com/bmjopen/2019/08/08/top-10-most-read-in-july-antidepressants-for-adult-depression-productivity-loss-due-to-menstruation-related-symptoms-and-sex-differences-in-the-effect-of-diabetes-on-major-cardiovascular-outcomes-an/>). The reanalysis was conducted by researchers from NCC and highlighted several methodological shortcomings of the original systematic review, including the lack of unpublished data and irregularities in the risk of bias assessments. The publication became the most viewed manuscript from BMJ Open in July 2019 and has, per June 2020, been accessed online more than 24.000 times. It also gaged media coverage, see examples from Danish media: <https://videnskab.dk/krop-sundhed/nyt-studie-saar-forny-tvivel-om-antidepressiv-medicin> and <https://www.dr.dk/nyheder/viden/kroppen/forskere-sar-tvivel-om-antidepressiv-medicin>

Presentation to the Psychiatric Centre Copenhagen, Gentofte

Senior Researcher Klaus Munkholm gave a presentation on the findings from the BMJ Open publication on antidepressants to a research group at the Psychiatric Centre Copenhagen at Gentofte Hospital.

Presentation at the Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine, Oxford University

PhD student Kim Boesen presented on the use of grey literature in systematic reviews based on the Cochrane review of methylphenidate for adult ADHD.

Our Communication Consultant at Cochrane Nordic, Dina Meng, has been invited to join a network of dissemination experts as part of a wider Cochrane Knowledge Translation Project. This project aims to provide an opportunity to connect and learn from colleagues within Cochrane and to develop skills to train and support others within the Cochrane community. Dina will be participating at the first face-to-face meeting in London with the rest of the group in January 2020. Dina is a part of the Cochrane Knowledge Translation group (Cochrane Dissemination Checklist Community of Practice), which developed a dissemination checklist for Cochrane reviews. Dina also participates in a Cochrane Knowledge Translation mentoring programme to further develop her KT efforts for Cochrane Nordic.

GOAL 3: Advocating for evidence

NCC takes an active part in public debate with the aim of ensuring better healthcare decision-making and working towards making our evidence accessible to all. We insist that decisions in healthcare should be made based on the best available evidence and promote an agenda of transparency, open access to data, and reduced influence of conflicts of interest through declaration and regulation.

Advocating to health professionals, policy makers and consumers**69th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe**

Cochrane Nordic represented the Cochrane Collaboration at the annual WHO Europe conference in Copenhagen. The event was an opportunity for Cochrane Nordic to advocate for evidence and network with stakeholders on behalf of the Cochrane organisation.

Highlighting Cochrane evidence through public debate

In 2019, NCC participated in the healthcare conference “[2 Days for Healthcare](#)”, hosted by the Danish Healthcare Magazine Dagens Medicin. The event was attended primarily by healthcare professionals, politicians, media and patient groups. Acting Director Karsten Juhl Jørgensen participated in a panel along with Danish healthcare opinion leaders on the topic titled, ‘The battle for evidence’ advocating for Cochrane evidence in healthcare.



From left to right – Per Fink: Professor at the research clinic for Functional Disorders and Psychosomatics, Aarhus University Hospital. Leif Vestergaard Petersen: Council Representative on the Danish Medicines Council. Karsten Juhl Jørgensen, Acting Director at NCC, Stinus Lindgren (RV), member of the Danish Folketinget. Ida Donkin, MD, Læger Formidler, Anne Kaltoft, Director, Danish Heart Foundation. Thomas Senderovitz, Director, Danish Medicines Agency.

NCC also participated at the annual political event in Denmark called ‘Folkemødet’ (People’s Meeting). A festival type setting with debates and events open for everyone giving citizens the opportunity to meet politicians face-to-face and strengthen democratic dialogue. 114 thousand people participated in 2019 and evidence-based medicine was a core topic for various healthcare related debates. NCC used its social media channel to leverage impact and advocate for the use of evidence to inform healthcare decisions. NCC participated in all debates relevant to advocating for evidence, engaged and networked with stakeholders and utilised social media channels through our Twitter account to create visibility for Cochrane at the event.

Through these efforts, we ensured visibility of NCC and our work at the event. This can for example be most notably measured by a notification from the Danish media monitoring company Overskrift.dk, who evaluated that NCC was the most cited Twitter account on the first day of the 3-day festival.



Cochrane Nordic in the media

Researchers from Cochrane Nordic are often called upon by the media to address the quality of evidence in healthcare research. Our role has been to advise and explain the evidence (goal 2&3).

Working with science journalists to improve the quality of health information

Our ongoing support to especially Danish journalists resulted in a workshop tailored to scientific journalists on the 12th November hosted by Videnskab.dk. We are regularly used by journalists from Videnskab.dk as an independent commentator on new medical research in diverse fields due to our methods research background.

Supporting the development of an evidence barometer to improve evidence-based reporting

Researchers at the NCC initiated a dialogue with Videnskab.dk, the Danish based science media outlet, due to their launch of a new project, labelled the 'evidence barometer'. We met with the responsible journalists to provide feedback on their barometer and have become involved in a grant application to develop a new evidence appraisal tool for journalists in a Scandinavian collaboration (<https://videnskab.dk/krop-sundhed/videnskabdk-lancerer-ny-maerkningsordning-til-sundhedsnyheder>).

Supporting journalists in understanding the evidence on Tramadol

In 2019, the Danish Health Authority published a report, which showed that use of Tramadol had fallen since the 2nd quarter of 2017 to the 2nd quarter of 2018 by 23%. They emphasize that this is partly due to media attention on tramadol use in Denmark and initiatives by Danish health authorities on the usage of the drug (https://sundhedsdatastyrelsen.dk/da/nyheder/2019/tramadol_05042019). The media attention they address is partly the result of our Centre's involvement through our collaboration with Danish media, which developed into the production of two Danish documentaries in 2017. We were requested by journalists from DR (Danish Broadcasting Corporation) to evaluate the evidence behind the promotional claim that the pain treatment medications tramadol and tapentadol were rarely addictive. The documentaries, which included interviews with our Director Karsten Juhl Jørgensen, were shown on DR2. The first documentary aired on the 11. June 2017, followed by national TV news coverage and was a debate topic for the programme Deadline on DR2, where Karsten also participated as an expert.

According to the Danish Medical Agency, 265,000 people (<https://laegemiddelstyrelsen.dk/en/news/2018/new-report-on-adverse-reactions-reported-with-tramadol-for-pain-relief/>) received treatment with tramadol in Denmark in 2017. These televised programmes raised awareness about an opioid crisis in Denmark and led to new regulations ensuring that tramadol and tapentadol are now regulated as other opioids (<https://www.sst.dk/da/nyheder/2017/tramadol-og-andre-opioider-aendrer-udleveringsstatus>).

Subsequently, after the documentary aired, the Danish Medicines Agency wrote a new report focusing on tramadol and reports of adverse reactions to the medication (see above link). In December 2019, Karsten Juhl Jørgensen was called upon by international journalists wanting to highlight the evidence issue and international impact (<https://apnews.com/56b0e448d317684a2344b5efcd9cca37>).

See links on media coverage:

- <https://www.dr.dk/nyheder/indland/ekspert-indberetning-af-tramadol-bivirkninger-er-spild-af-laegers-tid>

- <https://www.dr.dk/tv/se/afhaengighed-morfin-1-dr2dokumentar-2017/morfinpillens-skyggeside/danskere-fanget-i-pille-helvede>
- <https://www.dr.dk/nyheder/indland/tramadol-myndighederne-skaerper-kravene-til-laegerne>
- <https://www.dr.dk/nyheder/indland/ekspert-indberetning-af-tramadol-bivirkninger-er-spild-af-laegers-tid>
- <https://politiken.dk/forbrugogliv/sundhedogmotion/art5991176/%C2%BBDer-var-ogs%C3%A5-et-fors%C3%B8g-med-fire-aber-hvoraf-den-ene-abe-foruroligende-nok-d%C3%B8de%C2%AB>
- <https://politiken.dk/forbrugogliv/art5990952/L%C3%A6ger-advarer-mod-udbredt-smertemedicin>

An overview of some of the articles & podcast for 2019:

[Finanslobby lønner uafhængige forskere //Magisterbladet](#)

[With self-compression, women suffer less and mammogram quality not at all // Reuters](#)

[Åbenhed er godt men ikke nok // Dagens Medicin](#)

[Hver femte 0-årige kommer til kiropraktor men virker det? // Danmarks Radio](#)

[Hvad-er-videnskabelig-evidens // Videnskab.dk](#)

[Ønskedroemme-til-en-høj-pris // Dagens Medicin](#)

[Ikke al forskning giver lige meget evidens: Lær at skelne // Videnskab.dk](#)

[Debating whether checkups are time wasted or time misused // JAMA](#)

[BMJ: talk medicine podcast: Talk evidence – health checks, abx course and p-values](#)

[Studie sår fornyet tvivl om antidepressiv medicin // Politiken](#)

[Antipsykotisk medicin: Store bivirkninger og sparsom evidens //Jyllands Posten](#)

[We don't know how well antidepressants work: Danish study blows lid off flawed medical research// Reuters](#)

[Chefer i Lægemiddelstyrelsen ejer aktier i Novo Nordisk – nu skal det stoppes//Jyllands Posten](#)

[How Tramadol, touted as safer opioid, became 3rd world peril // Associated Press](#)

[Myndigheder og øget mediedækning sænker antallet af opioid-brugere med 23 pct // MEDWATCH](#)

[Kræfttjek giver falsk tryghed til kvinder // Jyllands Posten](#)

[Antidepressiva virken kaum besser als Placebo //SRF](#)

GOAL 4: Building an effective & sustainable organization

Our Centre serves as the local representative for Cochrane in Denmark and at times in countries where centres affiliated with us exist. This role includes knowledge translation and communication work in Denmark, teaching and training evidence-based medicine, and production of systematic reviews and methodological research with an international scope. Our systematic reviews often lead to spin-off research projects on the same topic, but using other types of research designs, including epidemiology, cross sectional surveys and developing approaches to better implement or de-implement medical interventions based on evidence synthesis.

We aim to further develop our international research collaborations, as well as those in Denmark. We will continue to provide and further our provision of high-quality training and knowledge translation work in Denmark and through our international collaboration with Cochrane and external partners such as WHO.

Launch of the new Cochrane Sustainable Healthcare Field

In December 2019, Cochrane Nordic helped launch a new Field in collaboration with Cochrane Sweden. The new Cochrane Sustainable Healthcare Field will be based at Lund University with Minna Johansson, a researcher from Cochrane Sweden, as the new Director and Dina Muscat Meng from NCC as the Field Coordinator. The Field aims to address medical excess in healthcare, supporting priority setting and more sustainable health systems. So far, the Field has worked towards establishing partnerships with Choosing Wisely and WHO. The Field launched at the Preventing Overdiagnosis conference in Sydney in December 2019.

Find more information on the new Field here: <https://sustainablehealthcare.cochrane.org/>

Please also see the Editorial on the new Field:

(<https://sustainablehealthcare.cochrane.org/news/cochrane-sustainable-healthcare-evidence-action-too-much-medicine>).

Cochrane review & method groups in the Nordics

We have six review groups and one methods group in the Nordics. We host research meetings throughout the year as an opportunity to share knowledge and build our Cochrane community.

- [Cochrane Anaesthesia](#)
- [Cochrane Emergency and Critical Care](#)
- [Cochrane Colorectal Cancer](#)
- [Cochrane Effective Practice and Organisation of Care](#)
- [Cochrane Hepato-Biliary](#)
- [Cochrane Work](#)
- [Cochrane Bias Methods](#)

We also give support to the Copenhagen unit of the Cochrane Informatics & Technology Services team. Most recently with the development of the Cochrane software tool RevMan Web, where we functioned as end-users to help identify needs and test the usability of new applications in RevMan Web.

Our responsibilities have grown substantially over recent years, most notably, we serve as the Centre supporting and managing other Cochrane Associate Centres in Sweden, Norway and Poland (as well as assisting Cochrane Russia where our Acting Director serves on the Advisory Board (see: <https://russia.cochrane.org/advisory-board>). In 2019, NCC has mostly supported in providing training at events in these countries. We also continuously attract skilled students and clinicians from Denmark and internationally to our Centre for longer or shorter periods. This year, we had a visiting researcher Marinos Ioannides from the Imperial College, London. Marinos worked on a project exploring conflicts of interest with medical journal editors and whether their presence is associated with the frequency of published positive conclusions about new medical interventions in their journal.

Acting Director Karsten Juhl Jørgensen became a Cochrane elected Board Member in December 2018. This was important for both NCC and our collaboration in terms of demonstrating internal coherence and continued commitment to Cochrane. During 2019, the Board have had several very important decisions to make. A new Editor in Chief for the Library has been appointed; we needed to sign a new contract with a publisher after a long evaluation process with several high-profile publishing houses; and we needed to begin the process of setting a new strategy for the collaboration beyond 2020.

Publications by Cochrane Nordic

New or updated Cochrane reviews, protocols, and editorials

Hansen C, Lundh A, Rasmussen K, Hróbjartsson A. Financial conflicts of interest in systematic reviews: associations with results, conclusions, and methodological quality. Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2019 aug 5;8:MR000047. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.MR000047.pub2>

Johansson M, Brodersen J, Gøtzsche PC, Jørgensen KJ. Screening for reducing morbidity and mortality in malignant melanoma. Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2019;2019(6). CD012352. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD012352.pub2>

Johansson M, Bero L, Bonfill X, Bruschetti M, Garner S, Glenton C o.a. Cochrane Sustainable Healthcare: evidence for action on too much medicine. Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2019 dec 6;12:ED000143. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.ED000143>

Krogsbøll LT, Jørgensen KJ, Gøtzsche PC. General health checks in adults for reducing morbidity and mortality from disease. Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2019 jan 31;1:CD009009. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD009009.pub3>

Storebø OJ, Elmo Andersen M, Skoog M, Joost Hansen S, Simonsen E, Pedersen N o.a. Social skills training for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children aged 5 to 18 years. Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2019 jun 21;6:CD008223. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD008223.pub3>

Journal articles and reports

Danborg PB, Gøtzsche PC. Benefits and harms of antipsychotic drugs in drug-naïve patients with psychosis: A systematic review. *Int J Risk Saf Med* 2019;30(4):193-201. <https://doi.org/10.3233/JRS-195063>

Danborg PB, Valdersdorf M, Gøtzsche PC. Long-term harms from previous use of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors: A systematic review. *Int J Risk Saf Med* 2019;30(2):59-71. <https://doi.org/10.3233/JRS-180046>

Laursen DRT, Paludan-Müller AS, Hróbjartsson A. Randomized clinical trials with run-in periods: frequency, characteristics and reporting. *Clin Epidemiol* 2019;11:169-184. <https://doi.org/10.2147/CLEP.S188752>

Munkholm K, Paludan-Müller AS, Boesen K. Considering the methodological limitations in the evidence base of antidepressants for depression: a reanalysis of a network meta-analysis. *BMJ Open* 2019 jun 27;9(6):e024886. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2018-024886>

Paludan-Müller AS, Ogden MC, Marquardsen M, Vive J, Jørgensen KJ, Gøtzsche PC. Do protocols for new randomised trials take previous similar trials into account? Cohort study of contemporary trial protocols. *BMJ Open*. 2019 nov 10;9(11):e026661. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2018-026661>

Sharma T, Guski LS, Freund N, Meng DM, Gøtzsche PC. Drop-out rates in placebo-controlled trials of antidepressant drugs: A systematic review and meta-analysis based on clinical study reports. *Int J Risk Saf Med* 2019;30(4):217-232. <https://doi.org/10.3233/JRS-195041>

Other

Laursen DRT, Paludan-Müller AS, Hróbjartsson A. Active placebo versus standard placebo control interventions in pharmacological randomised trials: a systematic review. In: Abstracts of the 26th Cochrane Colloquium, Santiago, Chile. Vol 1 Suppl 1. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews; 2020:307. doi:10.1002/14651858.CD201901

Johansson M, Zahl PH, Siersma V, Jørgensen KJ, Marklund B, Brodersen J. Screening for abdominal aortic aneurysm - Authors' reply. *Lancet* 2019 jan 5;393(10166):28. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(18\)32742-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)32742-9)

Jørgensen KJ, Munkholm K. Åbenhed er godt, men ikke nok. *Dagens Medicin*. 2019 mar 4.

Jørgensen L, Gøtzsche PC, Jefferson T. Increased incidence of cervical cancer in Sweden: an unlikely link with human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination. *BMJ Sex Reprod Health*. 2019;45(4):303-304. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjsex-2018-200245>

Munkholm K. Caution should be advised when recommending increased use of ECT based on low-quality evidence. *Acta Psychiatr Scand* 2019 maj;139(5):485-486. <https://doi.org/10.1111/acps.13025>

Munkholm K, Jørgensen KJ, Paludan-Müller AS. Continuing Antipsychotic Medication for Patients With Psychotic Depression in Remission. *JAMA* 2019 dec 24;322(24):2443. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2019.17691>

Munkholm K, Boesen K, Paludan-Müller AS. Pharmacological treatments for generalised anxiety disorder. *Lancet*. 2019;394(10205):1229. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(19\)31626-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(19)31626-5)

Soraas L, Haug EG, Jørgensen L. Methodology Flaws and Implications of a Complementary Medicine Study. *JAMA Oncol* 2019 mar 1;5(3):431-432. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamaoncol.2018.6628>

Cochrane Nordic team

An overview of our core team and associated team in 2019

Acting Director	Karsten Juhl Jørgensen (FTF 1)
Senior Researchers	Klaus Munkholm (FTF 1) Tom Jefferson (FTF 0,50) Maryanne Demasi (FTF 0,50)
PhD Students	Anders Klokmose (FTF 1) Asger S. Paludan Müller (FTF 1) Kim Boesen (FTF 1) Marie Solitander Jensen (på barsel, FTF 0,81) Lars Jørgensen (FTF 0,83) David Laursen (FTF 0,25) Camilla Hansen (FTF 0,19)
Administration	Jannie Hedegaard (FTF 0,86) Frihild Askham (FTF 1)
Communications Consultant	Dina Muscat Meng (FTE 0,43)
Associated Team	Marinos Ioannides (visiting scholar) Kristine Rasmussen (external researcher) Ingrid Rose Maclean Nyegaard (student assistant)