



COVID-19 Rapid Reviews: Cochrane's response so far

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Trusted evidence.
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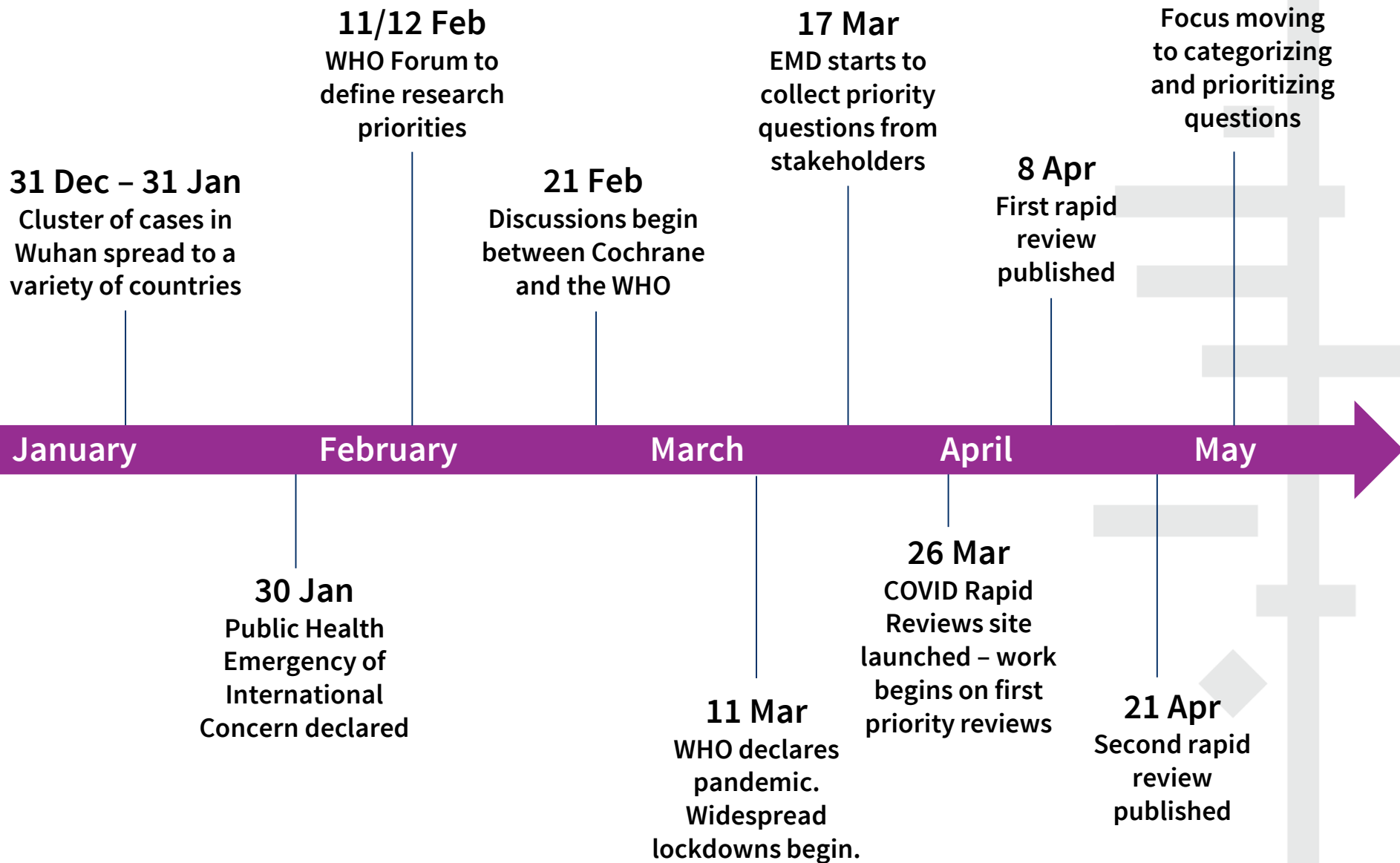
Poll

What is your main role?



Why now?

- The world is facing a large-scale public health crisis
- Large gaps in knowledge but health experts and clinicians have to make decisions on a daily basis
- Rapid proliferation of research creates an urgent need for evidence syntheses
- Cochrane is well placed to respond due to its international collaborative groups, reputation, and ability to update quickly
- Groups and Fields were receiving a large number of requests – had to act quickly to coordinate efforts and prevent duplication
- Huge number of offers from Cochrane Groups and author teams to donate their time – needed central coordination



What are we trying to achieve?

Provide rapid, high-quality evidence syntheses to inform the important decisions being made by clinicians, policy makers, and the public during the coronavirus pandemic.

And how:

1. Coordinate efforts within Cochrane and with our partners to prevent duplication of effort
2. Compile a list of priority questions to show what work is underway and direct resources wisely
3. Provide clear methods guidance and offer fast-track editorial support for the highest priority questions



Question
Bank



Question
prioritisation



Submit a
question



Conducting a
COVID Rapid
Review



Resources for
author teams



Published
COVID Rapid
Reviews



Evolution of the question bank

- Originally sought questions from stakeholders and partners including the WHO, UK NIHR and the Brazilian Ministry of Health
 - Early prioritization allowed work to begin on the most urgent reviews
- Further questions submitted by Cochrane Groups, researchers, consumers and frontline staff
- Quickly grew from 10...to 60...to over 250 in 3 weeks
- Submissions currently closed to allow for time for refinement and prioritization to take place



Prioritization

- We want to focus resources on questions which are most important to stakeholders, particularly healthcare workers and those in low- and middle-income countries....
- ...however, we need to make sure the questions:
 - Are formatted in a way that can be answered by rapid reviews
 - Don't overlap with questions already in the question bank or in progress
 - Aren't already being undertaken by other organisations
- Currently using a process of working with stakeholders within each 'topic' area to identify the key questions.

Production

- Author registers in PROSPERO or Open Science Framework
- Authors complete the Standard Workflow to plan team composition, refine the review question, and plan timelines
- Prespecify methods using the Protocol template to maximise efficiency without compromising on quality
 - Not published in advanced but dated and published as an appendix to the full review
 - Designed to meet conduct and reporting standards and highlight RRMG-recommended methods
 - May require adaptation for some questions (e.g. qualitative, diagnostic)
- Review can be written up in the Word template and converted to a RevMan file by the editorial team

Editorial process (1/2)

1. Fast-track for questions identified as high priority
 - Discussion with CRG to refine question and agree capacity
 - On-hand methodological support (MSU and CIS)
 - Parallel processes for quality-assurance, peer review, consumer review, and copy editing
 - Aim to publish in 2-weeks
 - Prioritized for updating as new evidence emerges
2. EMD/CRG collaboration for CRG-identified priorities
 - Led or supported by the CRG
 - EMD provides process and methods guidance
 - CRG-defined timelines in discussion with author team



Editorial process (2/2)

3. All other questions (not yet refined or prioritized)

- Marked as ‘In development’ on Question Bank
- Title not registered and cannot provide central support
- Can be submitted for consideration if:
 - Prospectively registered (e.g. PROSPERO, Open Science)
 - Prepared in the protocol and full review templates
 - Conducted in accordance with RRMG interim guidance
- Central team can provide high-level protocol feedback only
- May be rejected or major revisions requested depending on topic and methodological rigor
- Editorial decision made upon submission with support of CRG

Published so far

1. Quarantine alone or in combination with other public health measures to control COVID-19
 - Submitted 24th March – published 8th April (15 days)
2. PPE for preventing highly infectious diseases due to exposure to contaminated body fluids in healthcare staff (rapid update)
 - Submitted 30st March – published 15th April (16 days)
3. Barriers and facilitators to healthcare workers' adherence with infection prevention and control (IPC) guidelines for respiratory infectious diseases: a rapid qualitative evidence synthesis
 - Submitted – published 21st April (11 days)

Examples in the pipeline

1. Hand cleaning with ash versus soap or other materials for interrupting or reducing the spread of viral and bacterial infections: a rapid review
2. Information and communication technology for reducing social isolation in older people
3. Laboratory based molecular tests for diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection
4. Rapid point-of-care tests for diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection
5. Antibody tests for identification of current and past infection with SARS-CoV-2.

Key messages to prospective authors

- The rapid process requires a range of on-hand specialist methodological and content expertise, access to resources, and dedicated time
- Not all questions on the bank are suitable for development as a rapid review
 - Need to check for overlap with existing Cochrane reviews, conduct scoping searches to inform suitable study designs and eligibility, and refine the question with content experts
- Submitting a question does not act as title registration
- Methods support and the speed of the editorial process will depend on whether the question has been identified as a priority

Key messages to Cochrane Groups

- Email covidrapidreviews@Cochrane.org if you are receiving proposals relevant to COVID-19 including:
 - whether it is from the Question Bank or a new question
 - the intention to pursue as a standard or rapid review
 - CRG capacity to support the review and/or editorial process
- Each CRG should decide their own balance between usual workload and COVID-19 work. The impact of COVID-19 will be different for each group.
- Let us know if:
 - you have capacity and want to help the central team move reviews forward
 - your usual workload is affected by reduced capacity or staff on the front line

Key message to anyone wanting to get involved

Please be patient

We have received a lot of requests and offers and are working on the best way to coordinate efforts to get the most important reviews done quickly and to a high standard.

- Individuals or teams not seeking to conduct a priority review can use [Cochrane TaskExchange](#) which now has a filter for COVID-19

More details about all the ways to get involved:

<https://www.cochrane.org/cochranes-work-rapid-reviews-response-covid-19>

Useful websites and resources

- [Templates and methods guidance for rapid reviews](#)
- [Updates about the wider Cochrane response to COVID-19](#)
- [Updates about Rapid Review development](#)
- [Overview of COVID-19 resources on the Cochrane Library](#)
- [Cochrane Rapid Reviews Methods Group website](#)
- [Cochrane COVID-19 Study Register](#)
- [Cochrane TaskExchange](#) which now has a filter for COVID-19



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