Incorporating economic perspectives and evidence into Cochrane reviews

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Health care decision making

- Finite constraints and scarce resources
- Trade-offs between competing interventions
- Aim: to maximise health benefits given the resources available
- Is this achievable without consideration of economic outcomes??
Health care decision making

• Cochrane reviews aim to inform decision making

• Health care decisions should be informed by the best available evidence
  • But does that mean only best available effectiveness data??

• Historically effectiveness alone may have been the main focus

• Now and in the future ‘necessary but insufficient’
Cochrane reviews

• Do they only tell half of the story?

• End-users of Cochrane reviews increasingly point to the lack of economic evidence as a major gap in most current Collaboration outputs products

• Unless the Collaboration starts to get serious about addressing this ‘evidence gap’ it risks failing to achieve its aim

• Researchers need to consider if economics is relevant to their review question
Stroke....

- Stroke is the leading cause of sustained disability in the world today, placing a huge economic burden on health systems and society

- Anticoagulants have been shown to be an effective treatment

- Which anticoagulant would you select?

- What evidence will inform the decision?
Relevant evidence

- Intervention A compared with Intervention B
  - relative risk of stroke
    - 0.73 (0.68 to 1.2)
  - relative risk of major bleed
    - 0.80 (0.69 to 1.3)

- Other relevant effectiveness outcomes are similar to these
- There is no significant difference when comparing adverse effects
- How can the reader make a decision?
What about other factors?

- Intervention A requires monitoring at a weekly or monthly clinic
- Cost of £26 per patient (£10 to £40)
- One small piece of addition relevant evidence allows a more informed decision to be made
- Why not include the additional economic evidence?
The current rationale behind the incorporation of economics

- To summarize what is known from different settings about economic aspects of interventions
  - to help end-users understand key economic trade-offs

- Summary of resource use for different interventions, different settings

- The number of working days lost is greatly reduced with one intervention?? Would your review highlight this?
The current rationale behind the incorporation of economics

- To provide a framework for Cochrane reviews to present clinical and economic data in a format that facilitates their use in subsequent, or parallel, economic analyses

- It would be inappropriate to develop cost-effectiveness models as an integrated component of a Cochrane review

- Sometimes it will be inappropriate to consider economics at all

- What evidence is relevant must be considered carefully alongside the review question
Current position

- Current capacity to incorporate economic evidence into Cochrane reviews continues to lag behind its increasing importance to end-users

- The Handbook clearly outlines step-by-step methods for the inclusion of economics in your review
Where next?

- Incorporating economic evidence can enhance the usefulness and applicability of reviews for use in health care decision-making.

- Conducting a full systematic review and synthesis of evidence collected from numbers of economic evaluations requires specialist support and can be a very time intensive process.

- The economics methods group has produced guidance to help.

- Needs to be a collaborative effort.
Options…

- Limited experience and limited resources
- Start at the beginning
  - Are economic outcomes relevant to the question?
  - Can you identify and signpost?
- Making the end-user aware of the available economic evidence is useful
Options….

www.c-cemg.com

- The Cochrane Handbook
- NHS Economic Evaluation Database www.crd.york.ac.uk/crdweb
- A new edition of *Evidence-Based Decisions and Economics*, edited by CCEMG co-convenors
- HEED is now available to all Cochrane reviewers
- Training and workshops at every colloquium
- Supplementary guidance: ‘How to develop brief economic commentaries for Cochrane intervention reviews’.
The Campbell Cochrane Economic Methods Group

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- Health care decision-making without consideration of economics is a thing of the past
- Economics has been knocking at the door for a long time
- It can no longer be ignored, if Cochrane reviews wish to remain relevant
Gracias por su atención/Thank-you for your attention

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