CONFERENCE REPORT

XII Cochrane Colloquium: "Bridging the Gaps"

Ottawa, Canada, October 2-6, 2004

Article 990118

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As indicated by the theme of "Bridging the Gaps", the focus of the 12th Cochrane Colloquium was to bridge some of the key gaps that have been identified between clinical practice and evidence based practice. Sessions at the Colloquium provided the opportunity for discussion of the gaps between the evidence produced by the Cochrane Collaboration and current clinical practices, as well as the gaps which exist between high and low-income countries and individuals, gaps between methodologists and reviewers, and gaps between producers and users of healthcare information. The busy scientific program of plenary sessions, oral presentations, posters, and workshops aimed to address many of these gaps and provided conference delegates with the opportunity to discuss potential solutions.

The Colloquium provided many sessions that were suitable for all levels of experience within the Cochrane Collaboration, from newcomers to experienced systematic reviewers, peer reviewers and consumers. General introduction sessions were available for those delegates with limited knowledge about the Cochrane Collaboration, while a wide range of challenging workshops were available for those delegates with specific needs and interests.

In addition to the many plenary sessions and workshops there was a wonderful social program which included a traditional "Curling Bonspiel" tournament as well as a welcome reception at the National Gallery of Canada, and a farewell dinner at the Canadian Museum of Civilization. The social events provided Colloquium delegates with a further opportunity to meet individuals from international Cochrane entities.

The Cochrane Prehospital and Emergency Health Field held its first Cochrane Colloquium workshop in Ottawa. The workshop involved presentations from members of the Field Advisory Board on the development of the Field and future objectives. The Colloquium also provided the opportunity for the international members of the Advisory Board to meet and discuss the progression of the Field. The Field will be holding another workshop and open meeting at the next Cochrane Colloquium.

The 13th Cochrane Colloquium will be held in Melbourne, Australia from October 22-26, 2005. At the Melbourne Colloquium the scientific program of plenaries, workshops, papers and posters will focus on the challenges that remain in advancing our understanding of how to prepare systematic reviews and promote them to a wide, international audience. Information on the 13th Colloquia can be found at: <http://www.colloquium.info>

The presentations from the 12th Cochrane Colloquium are available at:
<http://cochrane.mcmaster.ca/ottcolloquium.asp>