**The Cochrane Hepato-Biliary Review Group**

**PROTOCOLS – THE EDITORIAL PROCESS**

1. A checklist has been created to help you ensure that the first draft of the protocol you submit to the editorial base is in ‘good shape’. The first thing that will happen when you submit your draft protocol is that our Managing Editor, Dimitrinka Nikolova, will check both documents to see that all sections have been properly completed. If there are gaps in the protocol, Dimitrinka will return the protocol and ask you to address these issues.

2. Complete drafts are then sent to one or more editors for internal review. This may include statistical review. The Trials Search Co-ordinator (Sarah Klinkenberg) will check/comment on the search strategy and identify any problems with the formatting of references.

3. If the drafts were submitted on the due date, the editor(s) will endeavour to provide comments within four weeks. If the draft is received later than the due date, comments will be provided at the earliest opportunity, but this may take some time because we schedule our work well in advance.

4. When we return the protocol to you with editors’ comments and comments from the TSC we will give you a resubmission date in maximum three weeks time.

5. Steps 2 to 4 will be repeated until the editors are confident that the protocol is ready for external review. This can sometimes take several iterations, so please do not be despondent if you find yourself in this position. It is worth it in the end!

6. Once the draft is ready for external peer review, we will endeavour to ensure we have comments from 2 peer reviewers (and if possible by a statistician) within a month. Clearly, we have less leverage on external peer reviewers.

7. External peer reviewers’ feedback will be reviewed by the Contact Editor and the Co-ordinating editor and, if needed, a summary of actions required will be sent to you, together with a date for resubmission with a view to publication.

8. If all issues have been satisfactorily addressed, the protocol will be copy-edited and submitted for publication. When the final draft review is submitted, all authors will be asked to sign a ‘permission to publish’ form.

9. Authors will in addition have to respond to an email to check all information supplied in ‘Declaration of interest’ forms returned at time of title registration is still accurate and up-to-date.

**REVIEWS – THE EDITORIAL PROCESS**

The editorial process for reviews is essentially the same as for the protocol, but the time scales are somewhat longer and there are some other requirements. These are as follows:

1. When the first draft review is submitted, review authors may be asked to submit copies of their data extraction forms. They are also asked to complete another checklist covering key issues that can otherwise cause delay, eg, ‘Does the review follow the protocol in reporting results?’.
2. When the final draft review is submitted, all authors will be asked to sign a ‘permission to publish’ form and again, to alert the Managing Editor to any changes to the original ‘Declaration of interest’ form.
3. A review is commented by at least one CHBG Editor and receives final approval for publication by The Co-ordinating editor, Christian Gluud.

Fore more detailed procedures, please read relevant text in The CHBG Module as well as the information on this CHBG website.