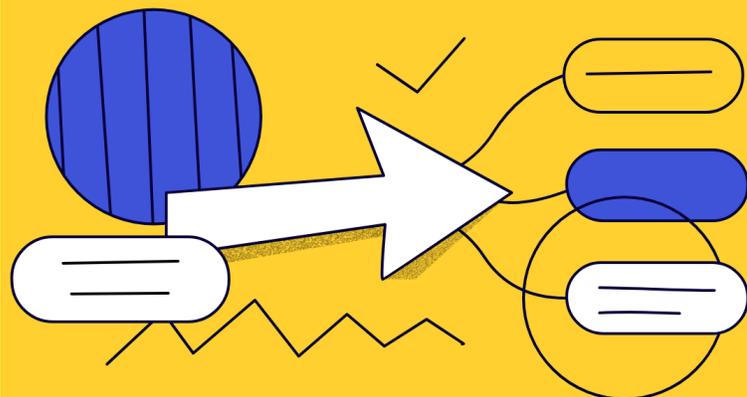


Mapping your KT Outcomes



This document describes how to use a simple Outcomes Map diagram to think through what you are trying to achieve from knowledge translation (KT) activities. This can be a useful step when planning how to evaluate your KT work.

Why map your KT activities and outcomes?



It is important to be clear about what you want to achieve from your KT work so you can plan how to measure your progress. You can use a simple diagram called an Outcomes Map (also called a Logic Model or Theory of Change) to help focus on the outcomes you want to achieve. This can help you identify what to measure.

An Outcomes Map will help you:

- be **clear about what you want to achieve** from your KT activities
- think about whether your activities will **really help make the difference** you want or whether other activities might need to be added
- consider the **resources** that you will need to create the KT activities, including time or skills.
- **decide what to measure** to see whether you're making progress – so you focus on your desired outcomes, not only your activities

Ideally, you would create an Outcomes Map when you first plan your KT activities. You could **build this in as part of the planning process for any new work**. But you can also create an Outcomes Map after the work has already started to help clarify what you're doing and to focus in on what you will evaluate.

What is included in an Outcomes Map?

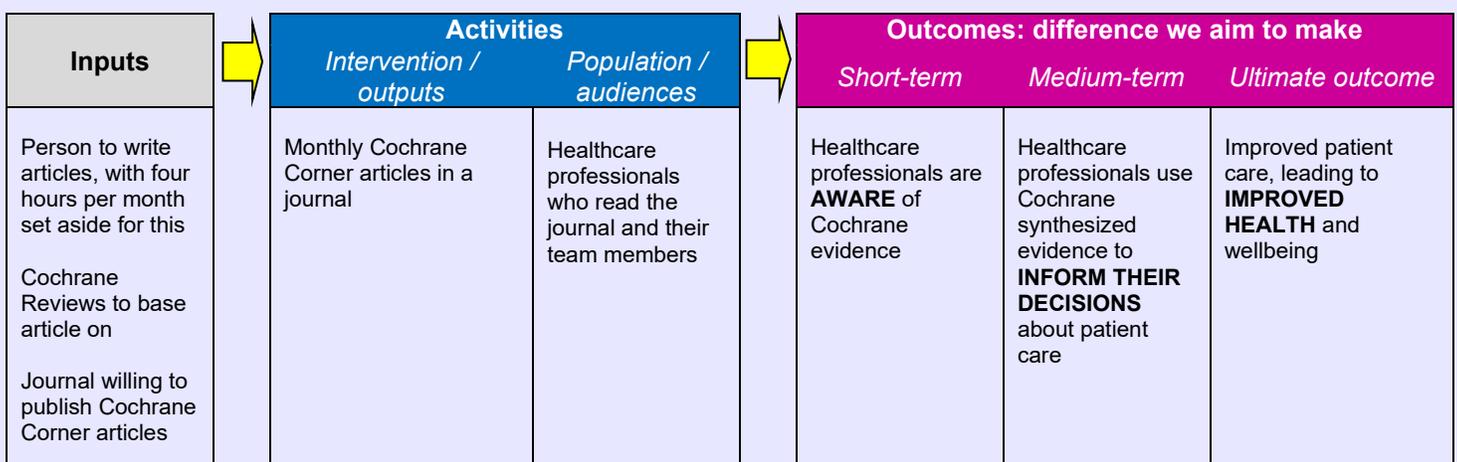


The **process** of creating an Outcomes Map is as important as the final diagram you develop. Involving Cochrane team members and possibly funders, audience members and other stakeholders (for example publishers) in talking through the desired outcomes of your KT activity will help everyone get on the 'same page'. This can also lead to richer and more diverse ideas. You can identify your stakeholders using [Stakeholder Mapping](#).

The main components of an Outcomes Map are:

- **Inputs:** all the things that are needed to create or support the KT activity.
- **Activities:** the KT tasks or outputs that you do or create. These could include translations, Plain Language Summaries, workshops, blogshots etc. These are like the 'intervention' in a PICO statement.
- **Audiences:** group(s) or populations that the KT activities aim to reach, such as healthcare consumers, healthcare practitioners, policy makers, researchers, funders, librarians or the media.
- **Outcomes:** the difference that you hope to make from your KT activity. These include things that we hope will happen immediately (short-term outcomes) and things that we may contribute to in the longer-term. Examples of common KT outcomes include increasing access to evidence; raising awareness; increasing knowledge and confidence; inclusion in guidelines; and behaviour change.

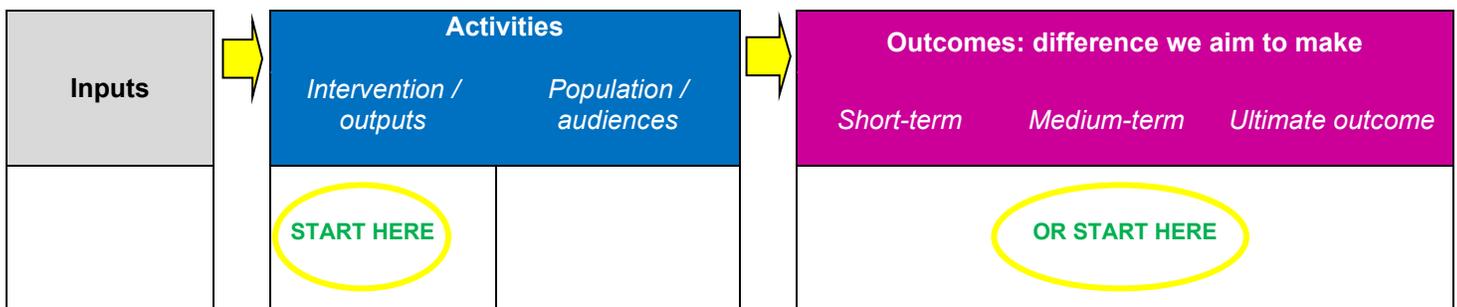
Example: The Outcomes Map example below describes producing 'Cochrane Corner' journal articles to summarise Cochrane evidence. In this example, we are hoping that publishing Cochrane Corner articles will raise awareness about Cochrane evidence amongst healthcare professionals, which will in turn help those professionals make evidence-informed decisions to improve patient care. This is just a simple example to illustrate the principles.



How to map your KT outcomes

Step 1: Consider the best way to involve stakeholders in creating an Outcomes Map. This could be using an online meeting, by circulating a draft by email or generating ideas via Slack, for instance. You can identify your stakeholders using [Stakeholder Mapping](#).

Step 2: Start with either an outcome you are trying to achieve or the KT activity that you are doing, whichever you have thought of first.



Step 3: Fill in the other parts of the diagram related to inputs, activities, audience and other outcomes.

Step 4: Look at your diagram and question whether the ‘outcomes’ you have inserted really focus on the difference that you want to make.

Often people mistake ‘outputs’ for ‘outcomes’.

- An **output** is a ‘thing’ we will produce or do (KT activities like webpages, blogs or training). Focusing only how many people visit or view our ‘outputs’, doesn’t tell us whether we’re having an impact.
- An **outcome** is the difference, change or impact we hope will happen as a result of our work (like people choosing to use an evidence-based treatment or using a Review to inform a clinical guideline).

You might want to consider the **assumptions** you are making about what is needed in order for your outcomes to happen. These might be things Cochrane can influence or things outside of the control of your Cochrane Group. Writing down the assumptions will help you decide whether they are realistic. These are also things you might want to measure. For instance, you might assume that after you create a review or blog that people will view it. So you could measure website or blog views.

Step 5: Use your Outcomes Map to check whether the thinking behind your approach is logical, whether you are likely to achieve the outcomes you hope for from your activities, and whether you have all the resources you need to complete your activities. A good Outcomes Map might raise questions about what you are doing.



Remember that **the end goal is not just to have a nice diagram, but to have worked with team members to agree what you are trying to achieve and how**. This can start discussions about how you will know if you succeed.

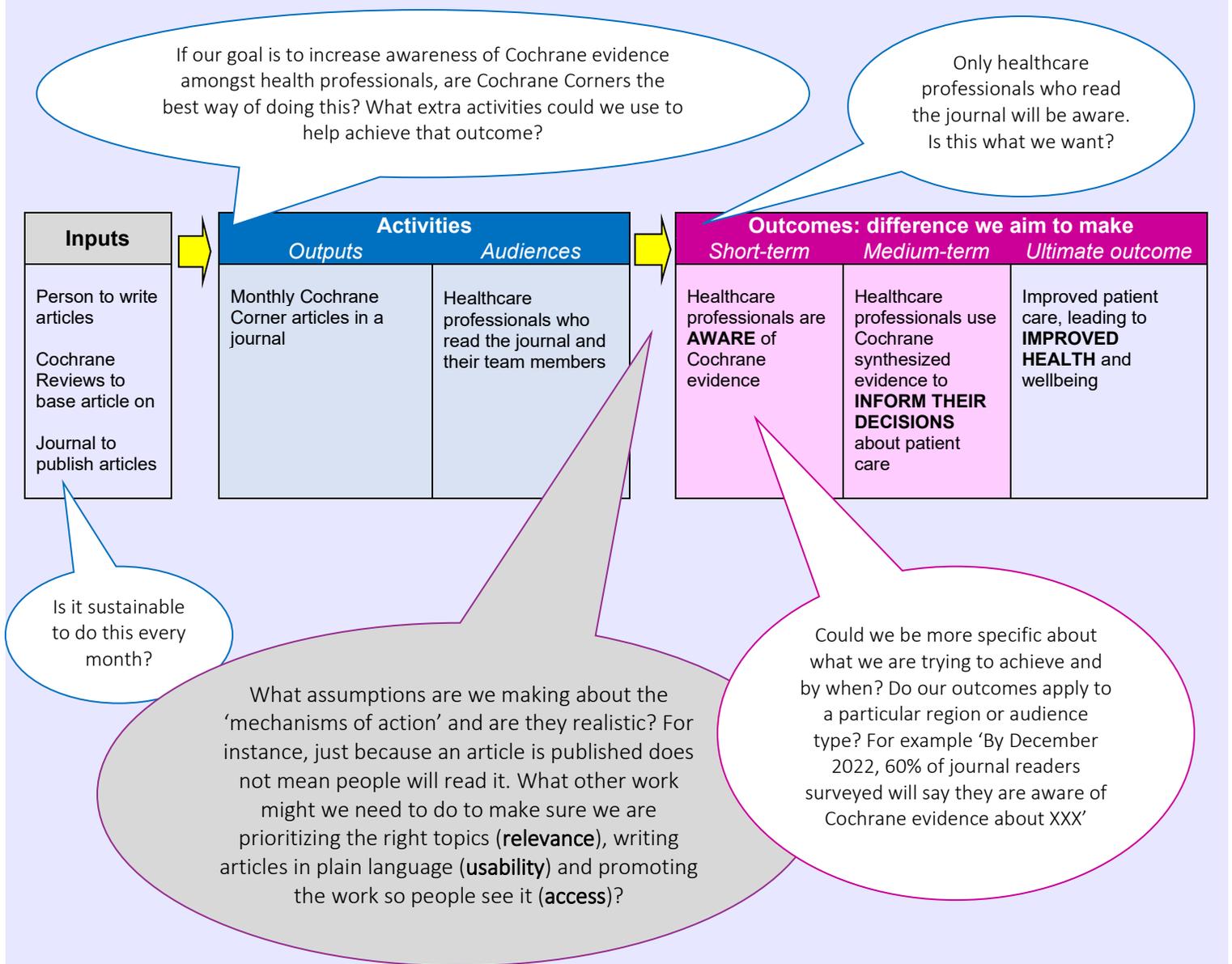
Ways to use your Outcomes Map

Having an Outcomes Map helps to summarise what you are trying to achieve. This can be helpful for team members and funders.

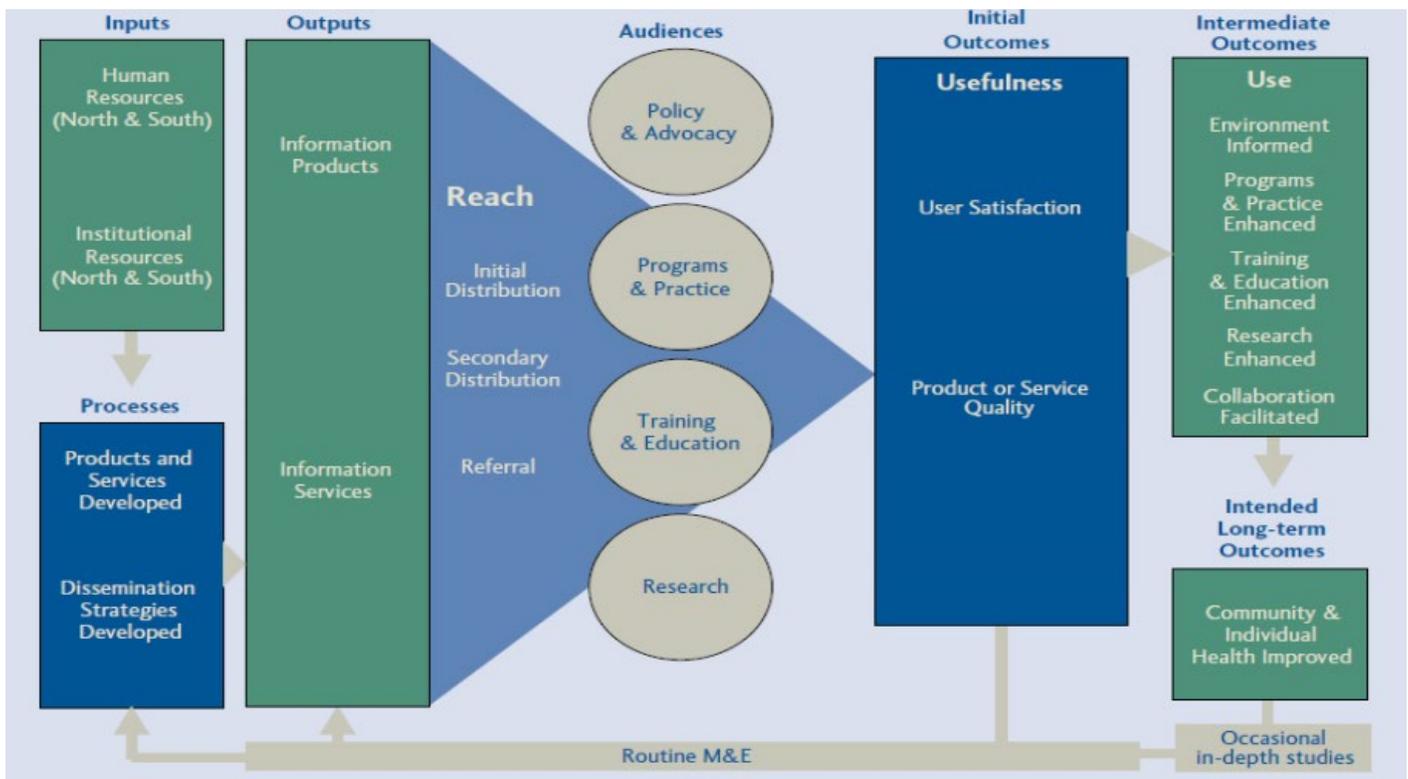
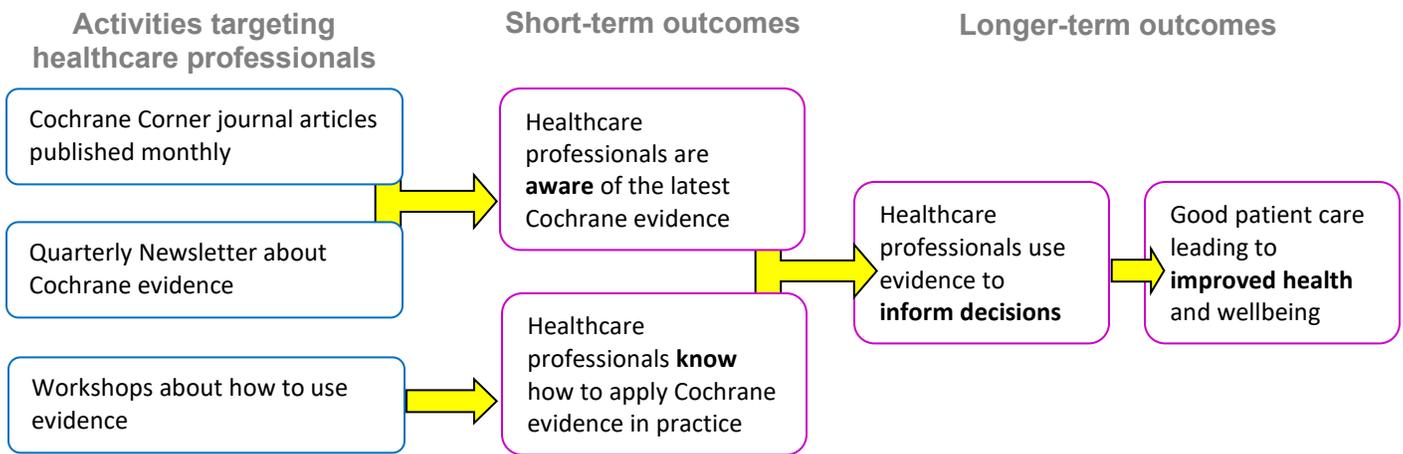
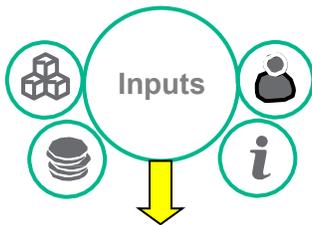
You can also use your Outcomes Map to ask yourself questions to improve your work and check that your KT activities will achieve your goals. This might lead you to revise or add to your activities or challenge yourself in other ways.

Using **very specific wording** for your outcomes can help when it comes to measuring your progress.

Example: To illustrate, below is our Outcomes Map about producing Cochrane Corner journal articles and some questions our Outcomes Map might raise.



We have used a simple example for illustration, but an Outcomes Map can include a number of different activities and outcomes, like in the examples below. You don't have to be limited to one format or focus only one on KT activity at a time. You could have one Outcomes Map for all of your KT activities. You can be creative in how you display your Outcomes Map. It is just a tool to help you think about the links between what you are doing (KT work) and what you want to achieve (outcomes).



Using your Map to think about evaluation



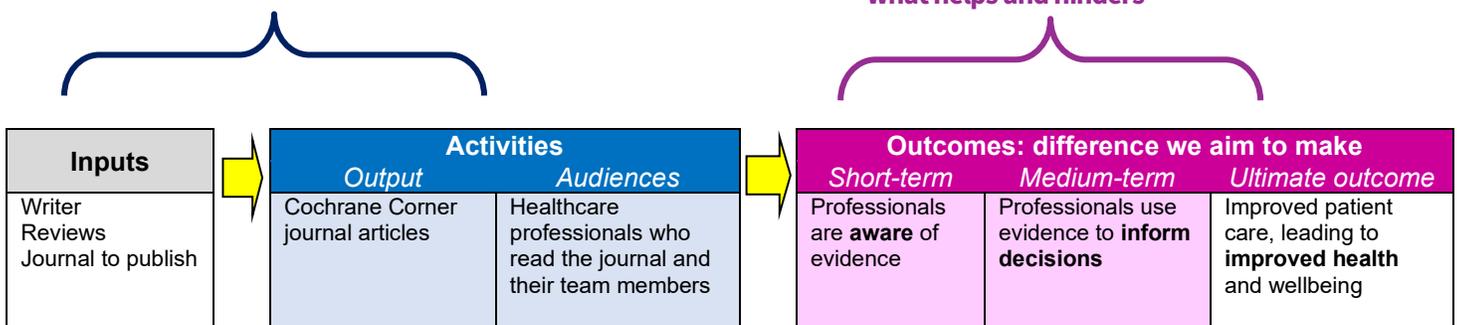
An Outcomes Map can help you think about how to evaluate your progress and the difference you're making. You might be tempted to focus on measuring your activities (blue part of the diagram below), such as how many times someone visits your webpage. An Outcomes Map can remind you to direct some of your attention to looking at the outcomes you want to achieve (pink part of diagram).

The part of the diagram that we want to measure will influence the type of evaluation we do and the methods we use.

- A **process evaluation** looks at how we are creating and implementing our KT activities. It focuses on our inputs, outputs and audiences. Common KT measures here include number of website visits or downloads.
- An **outcomes evaluation** looks at the difference we are making and what helps and what gets in the way. Common KT measures here include whether people think or evidence is relevant and useful.

Process evaluation looks at inputs and outputs

Outcomes evaluation looks at our impact and what helps and hinders



Example: In our example about Cochrane Corner articles, our Outcomes Map helps us think about how we will know whether:

- healthcare professionals are **aware** of Cochrane evidence
- whether they are **using it** to inform their decisions (the outcomes we identified).

These things might all influence whether health professionals use our evidence, so we might want to measure them too:

- whether they have *access* to our evidence
- whether they think it is *relevant*
- whether they think it is *easy to understand*

We could use a survey, discussion group or interviews to do this.

Usually we wouldn't be able to measure our 'ultimate' longer-term outcome because this 'big impact' would probably be influenced by lots of things and would be difficult to measure within our resources. Dividing what we're trying to achieve into short, medium and longer-term outcomes in our Outcomes Map helps us be clear about the 'big picture' that we are ultimately working towards whilst also thinking about what it is most feasible to measure to check on our progress. So we might not be able to measure 'improved patient care', but we can evaluate whether people use our evidence when they make decisions about healthcare.

You can use the Word document template in the [Outcome Mapping](#) section of the Learning Pages to create your own Outcomes Map.