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| **PLEASE NOTE: This document was used as a plan at the start of the process. As the project progressed, changes were made based on steering group feedback and in response to the broad nature of the priorities the group was generating. To learn more about the final approach that was used, you can read the publications about this project on the** [**Centre for Health Communication and Participation’s priority setting webpage**](https://cccrg.cochrane.org/about-us/priority-reviews)**.** |

**Consumers and Communication: Cochrane Review prioritisation project outline**

The [Cochrane Consumers and Communication Review Group](http://cccrg.cochrane.org/) (CC&CRG) is part of the international Cochrane Collaboration. The Group coordinates the preparation and publication of systematic reviews of interventions that affect the way people interact with healthcare professionals, services and researchers. The Group operates within the [Centre for Health Communication and Participation](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/aipca/about/chcp) based at La Trobe University, Melbourne.

The strategic focus of the Centre includes:

* building the evidence for interventions for communication and participation
* working with consumer and carer groups, clinicians and policy-makers to increase awareness of and skills in evidence-based research and practice.

We also have a strategic commitment to ensuring the Centre is responsive to the issues and problems associated with consumer engagement in health.

With this in mind, and to ensure we produce reviews that are of the highest relevance to our stakeholders, we are undertaking a research priority-setting activity in 2015. Using established research priority-setting frameworks, the project has two aims:

1. To identify priority topics for systematic reviews of interventions for communication and participation as judged by Australian and international stakeholders.
2. To identify the top five Australian priorities, for new Cochrane reviews within the scope of the CC&CRG.

This project will be led by Annie Synnot, Research Fellow at the Centre for Health Communication and Participation, joined by Sophie Hill, Head of the Centre and Coordinating Editor of the CC&CRG, and Molly O’Sullivan, a La Trobe postgraduate student.

This outline sets out the seven stages of the 10-month project.

1. **Convene steering group**

Members: CC&CRG, representatives from consumer groups or committees, health service staff, researchers, policy makers (including Victorian Department of Health staff) (< 15 members)

Timeframe: March 2015

1. **Define the scope**

Stakeholders: CC&CRG, steering group

Process: The following methods will be used to by the steering group to categorise and confirm broad topic areas within the CC&CRG scope on which to focus the prioritisation exercise:

* Scan of relevant policy documents
* develop an evidence map of recent trials conducted within consumers and communication topics
* identify the questions related to consumers and communication in published research priority setting exercises

Timeframe: March - April 2015

1. **Generate a broad list of research priorities**

Stakeholders: Victorian, Australian and international policy makers, consumers, health service staff, researchers and clinicians.

Process: Widely disseminate an online survey to Australian and international audiences inviting them to nominate the topics/questions they would most like to see answered in systematic reviews of interventions in the area of consumers and communication. We anticipate this process may identify several hundred potential review questions. The CC&CRG project team will collate these questions and ensure they are posed as answerable questions. With input from the steering group the question list will be reduced to a manageable number for the prioritisation workshop using explicit criteria (reducing to approximately 100 or less).

Timeframe: May - June 2015

1. **Prioritise potential Cochrane Review topics**

Stakeholders: Victorian and Australian policy makers, consumers, health service staff, researchers and clinicians

Process: Approximately 30 people will be invited to attend a prioritisation workshop to be held in Melbourne. Using a process based on the nominal group technique, attendees will be asked to refine and prioritise the list of potential Cochrane review topics and questions into a shorter list (approximately 10).

Timeframe: July 2015

1. **Identify evidence gaps**

Stakeholders: CC&CRG staff

Process: For each of the top 10 questions, we will conduct a thorough search of the evidence that exists to answer that question (i.e. Cochrane reviews, systematic reviews and primary research). We will create an evidence map for each question and, using a specially developed decision matrix, we will recommend whether each question is appropriate for a Cochrane review, or not.

Timeframe: August-September 2015

1. **Select top 5 review questions**

Stakeholders: Steering group

Process: The steering group will consider the top 10 questions and associated evidence maps and come up with a recommendation for the top five or so questions to be developed into Cochrane reviews. Participants from the prioritisation workshop will be invited to comment on or appeal the final top five questions via an email invitation.

Timeframe: September - October 2015

1. **Dissemination**

Stakeholders: CC&CRG staff, steering group

Process: We will set up a research prioritisation page on our web site to keep stakeholders informed of our progress and will actively disseminate the results of every stage to those involved in or potentially interested in the project, such as research funders, consumer groups, researchers, health service staff etc.

Timeframe: November 2015

**Next steps**

In 2016, we will invite review teams to undertake our high-priority reviews. We are currently exploring funding and partnership avenues that will allow us to trial novel review production and participation approaches as part of the development of these reviews.

**Contact:**

For more information or to get involved please contact Annie Synnot at [a.synnot@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:a.synnot@latrobe.edu.au) or 03 9479 1086

**Deliverables and key milestones**

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| **Component** | **Start** | **Finish** |
| Preparatory research: meet with experts, undertake policy scan, evidence map, previous priority setting research | Jan 2015 | Mar 2015 |
| Convene steering group | Feb 2015 | Mar 2015 |
| ***Steering group meeting 1*** | / | Mar 2015 |
| Define the scope of the project | Mar 2015 | Apr 2015 |
| Prepare and submit ethics application | Mar 2015 | Apr 2015 |
| Preparation and piloting of online survey | Mar 2015 | Apr 2015 |
| ***Conduct online survey*** | / | Apr 2015 |
| Analysis and synthesis of online survey results | Apr 2015 | May 2015 |
| ***Steering group meeting 2*** | / | May 2015 |
| Disseminate the survey results to stakeholders | / | Jun 2015 |
| Preparation for workshop | Apr 2015 | Jun 2015 |
| Recruitment for workshop | May 2015 | Jun 2015 |
| ***Conduct face-to-face workshop*** | / | July 2015 |
| Analysis and synthesis of workshop results | / | Aug 2015 |
| Disseminate workshop results to stakeholders |  | Sept 2015 |
| Conduct evidence mapping of top 10 priority questions | Aug 2015 | Sept 2015 |
| ***Steering group meeting 3*** | / | Sept 2015 |
| Decide on five questions to be delivered as Cochrane reviews | Sept 2015 | Oct 2015 |
| Disseminate the final results to stakeholders | / | Nov 2015 |
| Preparation of formal academic outputs (peer reviewed publications and conference presentations) | Jun 2015 | Mar 2016 |