

# Establishment of Cochrane Nutrition Field in South Africa

The [Cochrane Nutrition Field](#) has been established under the leadership of [Cochrane South Africa](#), the South African Medical Research Council, and the [Centre for Evidence-based Health Care](#) (CEBHC), Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Stellenbosch University, along with international partners.



The field will be led by co-directors Solange Durão of Cochrane SA and Celeste Naude of the CEBHC, with guidance from an international advisory board comprising representatives from multiple stakeholder and partner groups.

“The vision of Cochrane Nutrition is that Cochrane will be the independent, globally recognised go-to place for nutrition systematic reviews,” said Durão. “Cochrane Nutrition will support and enable evidence-informed decision-making for nutrition policy and practice by advancing the production and use of high-quality, globally relevant nutrition-related Cochrane reviews,” she continued.

The objectives of Cochrane Nutrition will include:

1. increasing the coverage, quality and relevance of Cochrane nutrition reviews;
2. increasing the impact of Cochrane nutrition reviews across all stakeholders; and,
3. contributing to strengthen methods for conducting Cochrane nutrition-related systematic reviews.

A Cochrane Field is responsible for disseminating evidence related to the field's topic area, building relationships with relevant stakeholders within and outside of Cochrane, coordinating methods research for conducting reviews, and supporting authors of relevant reviews, among other activities. The topic area usually focuses on a cross-cutting dimension

of healthcare not specific to a certain body system or healthcare condition.

“The decision to create Cochrane Nutrition was based on research conducted by Cochrane SA and the CEBHC assessing the scope and quality of Cochrane nutrition reviews which found that these reviews are produced by a large number of Cochrane Review Groups without consistent guidance on how to deal with methodological and reporting challenges specific to nutrition reviews,” said Jimmy Volmink, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Stellenbosch University. “The research also indicated a gap in currently available Cochrane Reviews addressing upstream public health nutrition problems.”

“Cochrane Nutrition will aim to coordinate activities related to nutrition reviews within Cochrane; to ensure that priority nutrition reviews are conducted with rigorous methodological approaches; and, to promote the use of evidence from nutrition systematic reviews to inform healthcare decision-making,” said Naude.

“An exploratory meeting with interested stakeholders held in Cape Town in 2015 established that there is broad-based support for such a field from both Cochrane and external stakeholders,” she continued.

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