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To build up a high quality database of intervention studies for the Cochrane Occupational Health Field

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The purpose of the international Cochrane Collaboration is to produce systematic reviews of the effectiveness of interventions in medicine. Many of the entities within the Collaboration, the Cochrane Review Groups and the Cochrane Fields are preparing their own subject-specific registers or databases on intervention studies to serve as sources of references relevant to systematic reviews or sources of high quality studies for the professionals.

One of the tasks of the Cochrane Occupational Health Field, established in 2004, is to construct bibliographic databases on occupational health topics, one of intervention studies and one of systematic reviews not included in the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews. Classification and corresponding criteria are proposed both of the type of study design and of the type of intervention outcome in occupational health care. The classification and the criteria of the references, which will be included, form the starting point of the database. Study design is classified in five groups with decreasing strength of evidence starting with randomised control trials. The six intervention outcome groups include reducing exposure, preventing injuries and occupational accidents, affecting workers behaviour, preventing and treating work related diseases and disability, increasing return to work after sick leave, and quality of occupational health services.

For the search of relevant references from electronic databases, such as PubMed, search strategies with maximum sensitivity and specificity are developed. For that purpose relevant intervention studies were hand searched from two successive annual volumes of 2000 and 2001 of 17 high quality journals, of both occupational medicine and medicine in general. The occurrence of the text words in abstracts and descriptors in some 140 relevant articles were computed for maximum sensitivity and specificity. The search strategies based on these sensitive and specific search words will be used for collecting references for this database. They will be supplemented with hand searching in occupational health and other journals.

Ref: Verbeek J, Husman K, van Dijk F, Jauhiainen M, Pasternack I, Vainio H: Building an evidence base for occupational health interventions. *Scand J Work Environ Health* 2004;30(2)164-168.