



AAO-HNSF and the Cochrane Collaboration

The AAO-HNSF recently sponsored eight members and staff to attend the Cochrane Colloquium in Dublin, Ireland, October 23–26, 2006. Established in 1993, the Cochrane Collaboration is an international, nonprofit, independent organization, established to ensure that up-to-date, accurate information about the effects of healthcare interventions is readily available worldwide. It produces and disseminates systematic reviews of healthcare interventions, and promotes the search for evidence in the form of clinical trials and other studies of the effects of interventions. Although the Dublin event was the 14th annual meeting of the collaboration, this was the first with representation from AAO-HNS members and staff.



L to R Front: Louanne Wheeler, David Witsell, Richard Rosenfeld, Jenny Bellorini, Sir Iain Chalmers, Stephanie Joe. **Back:** Ian Williamson, Brian Blakley, John Rhee, Jorgen Lous, Martin Burton, Anthony Magit, Ian Chamberlin, Stacie Jones.

Traditional literature reviews and consensus statements are prone to bias, and therefore unsuitable for creating evidence-based practice guidelines and performance measures. In contrast, systematic review is a research process whereby articles are identified, summarized, and assessed for quality, using explicit methods to reduce bias. Meta-analysis is a type of systematic review that uses statistics to summarize data, control for chance fluctuations, and detect potential heterogeneity among studies. Unfortunately, few otolaryngologists have any experience in conducting systematic reviews or meta-analyses, and there are limited mechanisms to identify and train additional clinicians.

To help familiarize otolaryngologists with systematic review methodology, the AAO-HNSF, with support from Elsevier Publishing, offered travel grants to four Academy members to attend the Cochrane Colloquium. After review of 27 completed applications, grants were awarded to Brian Blakley, MD, Stephanie Joe, MD, Anthony E. Magit, MD, and John S. Rhee, MD, MPH. Recipients must conduct a systematic review and submit it for publication in *Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery* within one year. Also attending the meeting were David Witsell, MD, Acting Coordinator for Research; Richard Rosenfeld, MD, MPH, Journal Editor; Louanne Wheeler, Journal

Managing Editor; and Stacie Jones, quality improvement analyst. The four-day colloquium was a superb immersion into the world of systematic review, its evolving methodology, and the expansive scope of Cochrane activity.

A highlight of the colloquium was the interaction between our group and the Cochrane ENT Disorders Group, headed by Martin J. Burton, DM, FRCS, from Oxford, as coordinating editor. This included meetings with Sir Iain Chalmers, founder of the Cochrane Collaboration; Drummond Rennie, Deputy Editor of JAMA; and other ENT group members and support staff. Dr. Burton is also collaborating actively with *Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery* in a new quarterly feature, the Cochrane Corner, and as editor of an upcoming supplement to the Journal on evidence-based otolaryngology and systematic review.

Information about the Cochrane ENT Disorders group, which currently has more than 500 members worldwide, can be found at www.cochrane-ent.org. Please be sure to click on the "getting involved" link to find out how you can benefit from the group's activities, and to get a free electronic subscription to their incredibly informative quarterly newsletter.

Richard M. Rosenfeld, MD, MPH, Journal Editor

Newsmakers

Jordan S. Josephson, MD, Director of the New York Nasal and Sinus Center, has just authored a new book, published by Penguin Books, titled *Sinus Relief Now: The Ground-Breaking 5-Step Program for Sinus, Allergy, and Asthma Sufferers*. This book also focuses on snoring, sleep apnea and GERD as Dr. Josephson coins the term Chronic Airway Digestive Inflammatory Disease (CAID), to define all of these diseases. The book is a good tool for patients and primary care physicians, simply explaining these problems and the treatment so that it may be easily understood.

KJ Lee, MD, Coordinator for International Affairs and International Editor of *Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery*, has been appointed to the Editorial Advisory Board of the Philippine Journal of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery. The Philippine Society of ORL-HNS, an International Corresponding Society, will celebrate its 50th Anniversary at its Congress November 30–December 2, 2007.

As part of Operation QH MASH (mobile air surgical hospital), Bernard Whitfield, MD, recently flew to Bamaga, a remote part of Australia, to head a medical team operating on area children with hearing problems. Because hearing problems are spreading throughout this area, plans are in place to bring the program to four other remote north Queensland communities over the next 12 months.