

Newsletter, Issue 1 July 2007

Thank you for expressing an interest in the Education Group presentations at the recent Campbell Colloquium in London. A special thank you to all those who also attended the Education Coordinating Group pre-Colloquium meeting on the Monday afternoon. It was a great turn out!

We hope that you have enjoyed a pleasant few months.

One of the aims of this Newsletter is to remind you that funds are available for Campbell reviews in STEM education; the closing date for submitting a tender is approaching (30th Sept.). We have included details of how to tender for these funds at the end of the newsletter. Feel free to forward the information to other colleagues who might be interested. In addition, the Newsletter also serves as a heads-up to let you know that we will be contacting you again in the near future solicit your opinions about an important issue for ECG: membership and voting rights.

In the meantime, enjoy the summer season. If you have any queries or comments, or if you simply want to get back in touch with us, please send along an e-mail.

With very best wishes,

Chad Nye cnye@mail.ucf.edu

Carole Torgerson cjt3@york.ac.uk

(Co-Chairs, Co-Managing Editors)

The Editorial Board of the ECG has been busy this past quarter! Since April, we have approved two titles (Selepec, et al.'s 'Behavioral interventions for improving cognitive, language, academic achievement, and socio-behavioral functioning of children and adolescents with acquired traumatic brain injury' and Schwartz, et al.'s 'The impact of the Hanen parent training program It Takes Two to Talk on the communication skills of young children with language delay'). In addition, we have recently received another title submission, two protocols, and one completed review. Topics include language development, literacy, peer assistance, and preparatory courses for university entrance exams. The range of these topics hints at the scope of the ECG. Mirroring the diversity of topics, primary authors are geographically varied as well, with Canada, the U.K., and the U. S. each being represented. The members of the Editorial Board are quite pleased with the number of submissions this quarter and with the level of author enthusiasm and commitment. We look forward to another productive quarter.

Julia Lavenberg (Assistant Managing Editor)

ECG Organizes 2 advisory groups

The ECG is in the process of identifying individuals to serve on the Advisory Panel (AP) and the Technical Working Group (TWG). These groups will serve as resources to members of the ECG team to advise on the establishment of policy, provide consulting support for reviewers, guide members of the ECG in the development, conducting, and dissemination of reviews, and assist the ECG in identifying potential sources for funding and networking.

We are also looking to identify people who are content experts and are interested in developing specialties in substantive areas.

We anticipate the names of the group members, their contact information, and a statement of responsibilities will be on the website in the next 3 weeks.

If you have an interest in participating in either of these groups, send an email to

Chad Nye cnye@mail.ucf.edu or

Carole Torgerson cjt2@york.ac.uk.



What follows is the first of what we hope will be a regular feature in the Newsletter, where members of the ECG Technical Working Group discuss an issue of interest to those conducting systematic reviews.

What is the role of economics in education systematic reviews?

Eric Eisenstein (ECG Technical Working Group)

Thirty five years ago, Archie Cochrane identified three tests for the evaluation of a health-care service: 1) Can it work under ideal circumstance (efficacy)? 2) Does it work under usual circumstances (effectiveness)? 3) Is it worth it (efficiency)? (Cochrane, 1972) The role of economics in an education systematic review is to answer the question of efficiency. Dr. Cochrane said that to do so, one must compare the benefits derived from the use of a service with the resources that the service consumes. An education economic evaluation begins with the benefits as defined by the systematic review, integrates these with estimates of the resources used and their costs, and is focused on how the educational intervention is implemented in actual practice. In upcoming issues of this newsletter, we will review the components of an economic analysis and provide tips for incorporating economic evaluation into you systematic review.

Reference List

Cochrane, A. L. (1972). *Effectiveness and Efficiency: Random Reflection on Health Services*. London: Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust.

In future issues Eric will also discuss

Why Economics?

- Why/when should I think about economics in my review?
- How can I begin to incorporate economics into my review?
- How can I get help with economics in my review?

What's happening with economics?

- What is the C2 economics methods group?
- How does it relate to education
- How can I learn about economics in education reviews?

Announcing The Education Coordinating Group

2007 Systematic Review Funding Initiative in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

Call for proposals

The C2 Education Coordination Group (ECG) invites review teams to submit scientific proposals for new systematic reviews for possible funding by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation of Kansas City, MO, USA (www.kauffman.org). Consideration will be given to proposals in any portion of science, technology and design, engineering or mathematics (STEM) education, but priority will be given to proposals addressing the following topics:

- Computer-aided tutoring in mathematics
- Modelling instruction approaches to professional development in science education
- Rapid acceleration of student learning in STEM (science, technology and design education, engineering, and mathematics)
- Case-based and/or problem-centered learning in STEM
- Inquiry learning in science education- Robotics as a vehicle for STEM learning
- Learning transfer to different problem contexts in STEM subjects
- Simulated learning environments for STEM education

Award Information

Awards through this funding initiative will be subject to availability of funds through a direct grant to the ECG. The ECG anticipates making 2-4 awards according to the following allocation:

- up to \$50,000 U.S. for a completed review

Applicant eligibility:

- Review teams may be international, but the PI or joint-PI must be affiliated to a US university
- Review teams should contain at least one member with experience of under

taking systematic reviews and/or meta-analyses

Award period:

- 12 months from award to completed review

Application format:

- Please submit a completed Education Co-ordination Group Title Registration form (see ECG website) together with an Executive Summary giving background, research question(s), detailed methods, CVs of applicants (max. 2 sides of A4 each) and a detailed budget. Whilst there is no specified upper limit for the budget, priority will be given to those proposals that make a good economic case for funding, and are cost-effective. All proposals will be independently peer reviewed using substantive, methodological and funding criteria.

Deliverables:

- A completed protocol 3 months after award date
- A completed review 12 months after award date
- Specific milestones for the review will be agreed and specified in the contract (e.g. 10% of budget for approved Title, further 25% for approved Protocol, final balance for completed review published on C2-RIPE)

Closing date for applications:

- Sept. 30th, 2007

We expect to make awards from November 1st 2007. Please send completed applications to: Chad Nye at cnye@mail.ucf.edu