



COVID-19 SHORT REPORT

COVID-NMA: a collaborative COVID-19 living evidence project

Authors: Isabelle Boutron^{1,2}, David Tovey², Laura De Nale², Anna Chaimani^{1,2}, Declan Devane³, Joerg J Meerpohl^{4,5}, Gabriel Rada⁶, Asbjørn Hróbjartsson⁷, Giacomo Grasselli^{8,9}, Philippe Ravaud¹, for the COVID-NMA Consortium

Participating groups: Cochrane France, Cochrane Germany, Cochrane Chile, Cochrane Ireland, Cochrane Bias Methods Group, Cochrane South Africa, Cochrane Response, Cochrane Central Executive, Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine Odense, Epistemonikos Foundation, University of Milan, French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS)

Corresponding Author: Isabelle Boutron: isabelle.boutron@aphp.fr

Introduction and background

COVID-19 has been challenging healthcare and welfare systems all over the world. A huge amount of new research has been initiated, with heterogeneous and frequently small, short trials, limited co-ordination and a rapidly evolving evidence base. In this context, healthcare professionals, policymakers, politicians, and guidelines developers have to make decisions that have a direct impact on the health of millions of individuals. The COVID-NMA project aims to help them face this emerging situation by producing up-to-date, trustworthy evidence.

The project provides a living mapping of ongoing randomized controlled trials (RCTs) as well as a comprehensive, critical, up-to-date synthesis of all available evidence about the efficacy and safety of interventions for the prevention and treatment of COVID-19. All our data are made publicly available on a platform (covid-nma.com), updated weekly.

COVID-NMA is an international initiative working in conjunction with the World Health Organization (WHO) and led by a team of researchers from Cochrane. In particular:

- Cochrane France: Professors Isabelle Boutron and Philippe Ravaud lead the programme and supervise the various activities. With the support of the Editor in Chief of the Cochrane Library, they initiated the important collaboration with the WHO.
- The Directors of Cochrane Germany, Cochrane Chile, and Cochrane Ireland, the ex-Editor in Chief of the Cochrane Library and convenors from the Cochrane Bias Methods Group are members of the Steering Committee.
- A team based at Cochrane Germany and the Institute for Evidence in Medicine at the University of Freiburg are

responsible for grading the overall certainty of the evidence for each outcome using the GRADE classification.[1]

- The search for relevant studies is based on the L-OVE Platform (app.iloveevidence.com/loves/5e6fdb9669c00e4ac072701d), which is managed by the Director of Cochrane Chile.
- A team from Cochrane South Africa is involved in the registration and screening tasks.
- A team from Cochrane Response provides its support for data extraction.
- A team from the Cochrane Bias Methods Group is involved in the quality control process for extracted data.

Other research teams from the Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine Odense (Denmark), the Epistemonikos Foundation (Chile), the University of Milan (Italy), and the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS; France) are also essential members of the consortium (covid-nma.com/team).

Key activities and strategies

Our project relies on three main pillars: a living mapping of all registered trial evidence to help funders and researchers planning future trials; a living systematic review of trial evidence to support healthcare decision making; and a living monitoring/feedback of trial transparency to improve future research.

Living mapping of registered trials

Every week we search and extract data from the WHO International Clinical Trials Registry Platform (ICTRP; who.int/clinical-trials-registry-platform) to identify all RCTs evaluating the effectiveness of interventions for preventing and treating COVID-19 (including rehabilitation) and trials assessing vaccines. We record registered

¹Centre of Research Epidemiology and Statistics, University of Paris, France; ²Cochrane France, France; ³National University of Ireland Galway, Ireland; ⁴University of Freiburg, Germany; ⁵Cochrane Germany, Cochrane Germany Foundation, Germany; ⁶Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Chile; ⁷University of Southern Denmark and Odense University Hospital, Denmark; ⁸University of Milan, Italy; ⁹Fondazione IRCCS Cà Granda Ospedale Maggiore Policlinico, Italy