



EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS
IRELAND



Building knowledge, awareness and capacity in evidence synthesis on the island of Ireland

Dr Nikita Burke
Programme Manager
Evidence Synthesis Ireland
Associate Director, Cochrane Ireland
University of Galway

www.evidencesynthesisireland.ie

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www.ireland.cochrane.org

 [@CochraneIreland](https://twitter.com/CochraneIreland) [#EvidenceSynthesis](https://twitter.com/EvidenceSynthesis)

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GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY
OF GALWAY

 Public Health
Agency
Research and Development



Evidence Synthesis

- Healthcare decisions should be based on a **synthesis** of the **global body of evidence** rather than relying on the convenient selection of one or more discrete studies
- Evidence synthesis methods establish the **overall balance of information on a given topic**, and are based on systematically identifying, assessing and examining all the available evidence on a given topic to **inform healthcare decisions**



EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS
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Our mission

To make evidence syntheses more usable in every sense of the word – better designed, conducted and reported, **more useable for decision makers** and more usable within healthcare **policy** and clinical **practice decision-making** across the island of Ireland and beyond.





EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS
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The team



Prof Declan Devane
Director ESI & Cochrane Ireland



Dr Nikita Burke
Programme Manager



Sheena Connolly
Business Support Manager



Dr Tom Conway
Training Support Officer



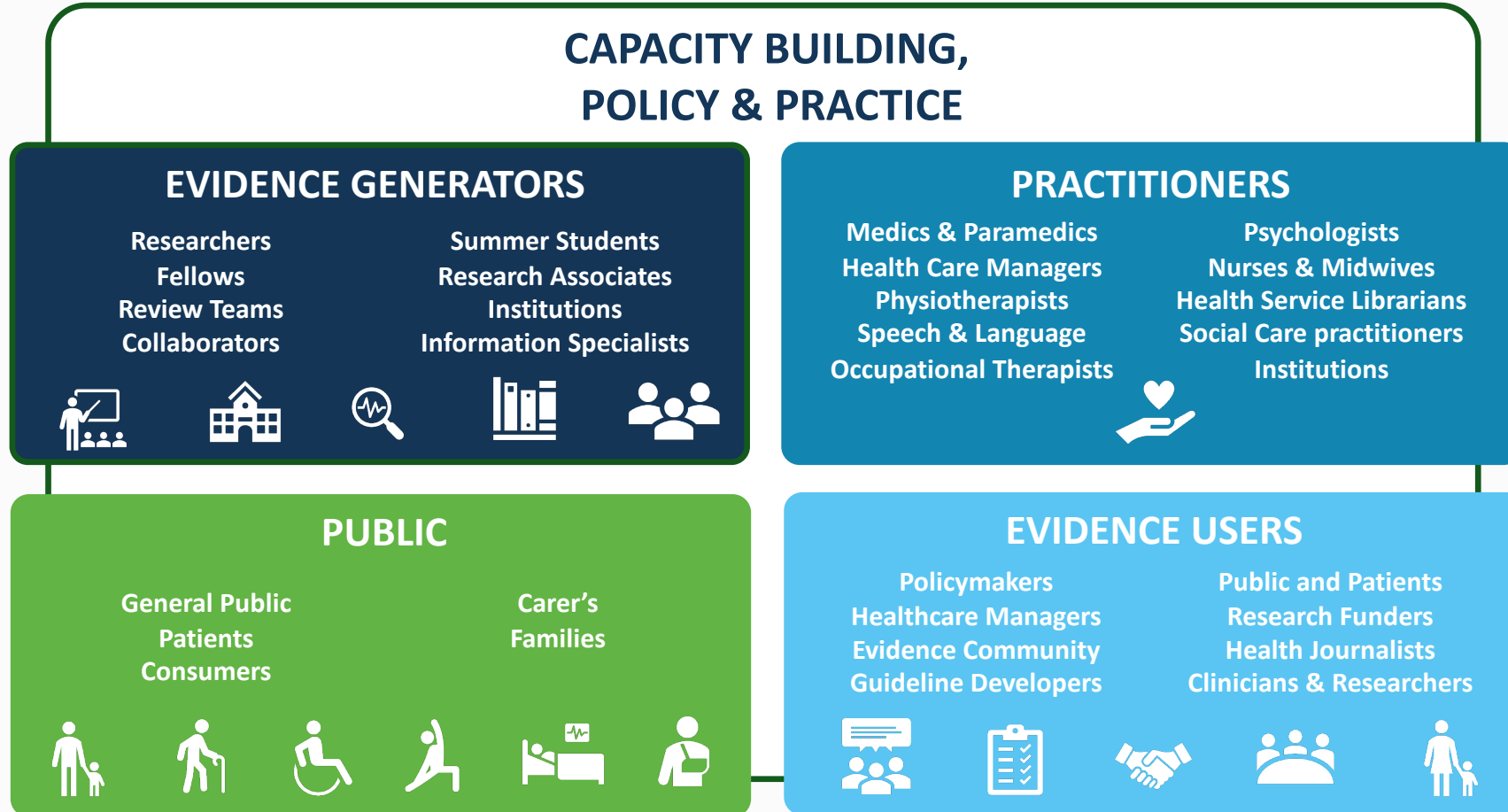
Dr. K.M. Saif-Ur-Rahman
Systematic Reviewer



Prof Bronagh Blackwood
Northern Ireland Lead



Stakeholders





What we do





Support & Network

Support

Communication

Network

Advocacy

Get the latest ESI news

SUBMIT

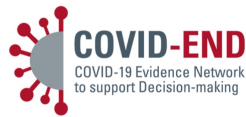
National



An Roinn Sláinte
Department of Health



International





Events

110



Attendees

11000



Fellows

79



Critical Appraisal

150



ESI Trainers

22



Publications

140



Cochrane reviews

15



WHO rapid reviews

3





Training and Education

Webinars

Workshops

Fellowships

Summer
Studentships

Communicating
with the Public



EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS IRELAND WEBINAR SERIES



Did you know that ESI hosts a webinar series?
Online webinars are **live, free, and held monthly.**

The series aims to share learning on hot topics and cutting-edge methodology in the field of evidence synthesis, from leading experts in methodology.



It's open to everyone

– we've hosted 50 webinars to 7000 attendees from over 90 countries worldwide. Our audience includes researchers, the public, healthcare practitioners, students and policymakers

Themes include:

- ✓ Methodological Advances in Evidence Synthesis
- ✓ Qualitative Evidence Synthesis
- ✓ Dissemination, Implementation, and Impact of Evidence Synthesis
- ✓ Stakeholder Engagement and Involvement
- ✓ Rapid Reviews
- ✓ Scoping Reviews
- ✓ Searching and Data Sources

Our **webinar recordings** are available on our website, and have been viewed

>30,000 times



Webinars are **1 hour**, including a live Q&A, with robust engagement from the audience

These recordings are used in teaching across the world



What people are saying:



Andrew Booth
@AndrewB007h



Almost 200 attendees at my "Who Framed Qualitative Synthesis" Webinar (almost a 50% turn up rate which is brilliant!). Thank you @EvidSynIRL for organising the best evidence synthesis CPD programme on the planet (today excepted!). I trust your funders recognise this!

4:51 PM • May 20, 2021 • Twitter Web App



The series represents an important map of key emerging/leading-edge considerations and shared expertise in evidence synthesis – **it has been on point on topic areas.**

RUAIRIDH HILL

You've done a great job in creating quality webinars that make people want to come back for more!

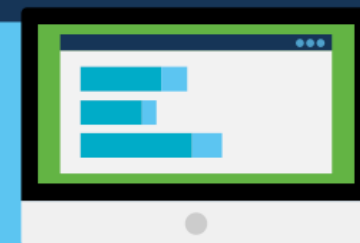
PUBLIC PARTNER



A really clear webinar - pitched at exactly the right level. Really informative.
You do a lovely job of choosing topics. I greatly appreciate the free webinar series!

RESEARCHER

Don't miss out on valuable insights and expert knowledge at the cutting edge of evidence synthesis research.





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Evidence Synthesis Ireland Webinar Series



Large Language Models for health and evidence synthesis: can we trust what they say?

Prof. James Thomas
UCL Social Research Unit
University College London

2pm (UTC), 23rd November 2023

Register: evidencesynthesisireland.ie/training/



Evidence Synthesis Ireland Webinar Series



How to search PubMed effectively

Julie Glanville
Information Consultant in Information Retrieval

Tues 12th December, 2023 @ 13:00 (UTC)

Register: evidencesynthesisireland.ie/training/



→ **ESI Workshop Schedule 2023-2024**

TITLE	VENUE	DATE	PRESENTERS
Advanced Systematic Review Training	Online	20th, 21st, 27th, 28th November 2023	Prof. Valerie Smith, Dr Nuala Livingstone
Introduction to Systematic Reviews	Online	1st, 2nd, 8th, 9th February 2024	Prof. Declan Devane, Dr Julie Broderick
ROBINS-1	Online	5th March 2024	Leslie Choi, Dr Kerry Dwan
An Introduction to Systematic Reviews of Diagnostic Test Accuracy	Online	29th April 2024	Dr. Jac Dinnes
Designing Systematic Searches: Introductory	Durkan Theatre, St James's Hospital, Dublin	21st June 2024	Julie Glanville



Trainers

- ESI registered **Teaching Faculty** are responsible primarily for providing training and delivering on capacity building activities of ESI and Cochrane Ireland, and collectively have decades of evidence synthesis expertise across diverse topics and methods.
- Buddy system – pairing junior trainers with senior trainers
- Responsible for strands of ESI training
- **Requirement** – at least have at least completed a substantial systematic review (ideally Cochrane as the workshop follows Cochrane methodology).



Communicating with the Public Mentorship Scheme

We are pleased to launch the “**Communicating with the Public**” Mentorship Scheme for 2022

Mentees will receive team-based writing mentorships over a 6 month period from **Dr Claire O’Connell**, Science Journalist and Communicator; **Sarah Chapman** and **Selena Ryan-Vig**, Knowledge Brokers with Cochrane UK; and **Hon Prof Derek Stewart**, OBE, Patient Advocate.

This scheme aims to **improve skills in communicating the results of systematic reviews** and other evidence syntheses by writing for diverse audiences, through a facilitated mentorship programme.

Who is this scheme for?

- **Have you completed or are you close to completing a systematic review or other evidence synthesis product?**
- **Do you have a topic that is important to disseminate to the public?**
- **Do you feel you would benefit from professional guidance and feedback on your communication?**



Research & Innovation



Priority III
Setting priorities for rapid
review research

**Summer
Studentships**

Producing Evidence

**Studies within a
Review (SWARs)**

**EDI in Systematic
Reviews**



TRIAL FORGE

People's Review



PRO-EDI

 @ThePeoplesRev




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Module 1: Asking the right question Share

Key Steps in a Systematic Review



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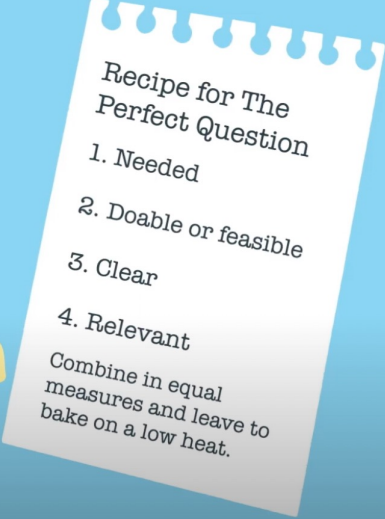

Cochrane
Crowd

MORE VIDEOS

0:04 / 2:54

YouTube

The right question needs to be...



Recipe for The Perfect Question

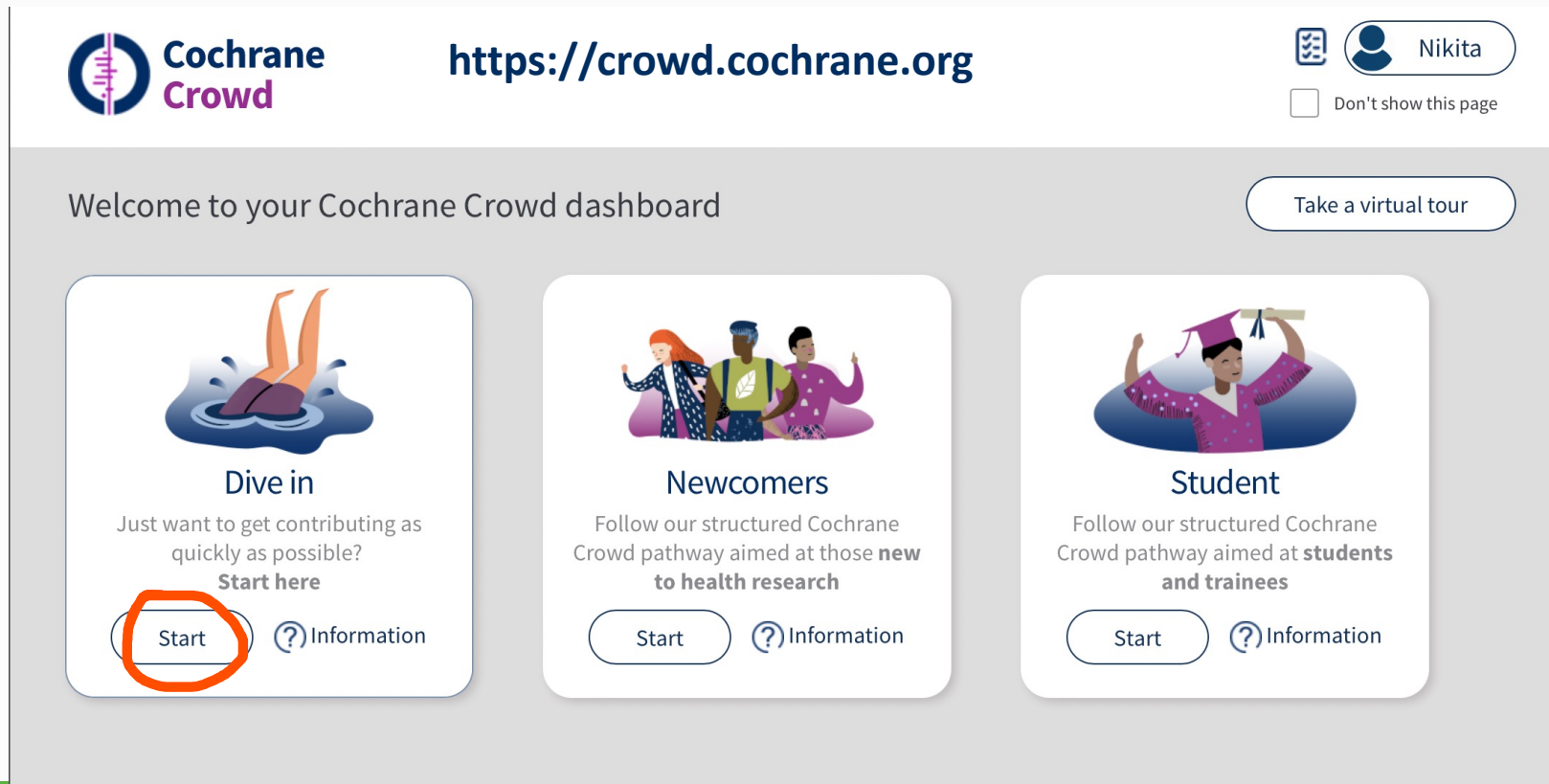
1. Needed
2. Doable or feasible
3. Clear
4. Relevant



Combine in equal measures and leave to bake on a low heat.

0:40 / 2:30





Study Design modules




 <https://crowd.cochrane.org>  Nikita Don't show this page

Welcome to your Cochrane Crowd dashboard [Take a virtual tour](#)


Dive in
Just want to get contributing as quickly as possible?
Start here
[Start](#) [? Information](#)


Newcomers
Follow our structured Cochrane Crowd pathway aimed at those **new to health research**
[Start](#) [? Information](#)


Student
Follow our structured Cochrane Crowd pathway aimed at **students and trainees**
[Start](#) [? Information](#)



Burke *et al.*
Research Involvement and Engagement (2023) 9:29
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s40900-023-00438-1>

Research Involvement
and Engagement

RESEARCH

Open Access

Sharing space at the research table: exploring public and patient involvement in a methodology priority setting partnership



Nikita N. Burke^{1,2*}, Derek Stewart³, Theresa Tierney⁴, Andrew Worrall⁵, Maureen Smith⁶, Jim Elliott⁷,
Claire Beecher^{1,2}, Declan Devane^{1,2,8} and Linda Biesty²



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ESI Study Within A Review Award



Studies Within A Review (SWARs)

- There remain uncertainties on many methodological aspects of how we plan, do and share evidence syntheses.
- Designing studies that **evaluate evidence synthesis methodology** is necessary to ensure that evidence synthesis is efficient and sustainable.
- Our SWAR Award is an exciting way to evaluate alternative options when conducting a review process to provide much-needed evidence about how these steps in the review processes can be improved.
- This has the potential to **reduce research waste** and **improve the usefulness of systematic reviews**.



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SWAR Award



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Evidence Synthesis Ireland SWAR Award Scheme

A SWAR is a research study that can help provide evidence to inform decisions about how we plan, do and share the findings of future reviews.

This funding scheme aims to support research teams to conduct a SWAR.

Up to €6250 is available per award.

Next call open – January 2024

Find out more here:

<https://evidencesynthesisireland.ie/swar>



Priority III

- The Priority III study identified research priorities about how to improve how we plan, do and share the results of rapid reviews in the context of healthcare.

Q1

What are the best approaches to identify people or groups who will use the results of a rapid review (e.g., stakeholders such as patients and the public, clinicians, policy makers), and how can they have meaningful (i.e., purposeful, relevant) involvement in planning and doing a rapid review, and in reporting and sharing the findings?

Q2

Do rapid reviews generate similar findings to full systematic reviews, and should the findings from all rapid reviews be considered at lower certainty compared to full systematic reviews?



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I R E L A N D



ESI Fellowships

What is the Fellowship Scheme?



Scheme involves **placing Fellows** virtually with **experienced review teams**



Fellows gain **hands-on evidence synthesis experience** in a high-quality environment.



Fellows receive **one-to-one mentorship** from a designated mentor from the review group.



Why this model?

- Need for **greater capacity** within Ireland to support the evidence training requirements of the health and social care system.
- **Changes** within Cochrane e.g. how Cochrane Review Groups are structured, review titles are prioritised and allocated and the increasing complexity of reviews
- Support capacity building **beyond Cochrane** reviews
- **Challenges** leading first Cochrane review and team and committing 2 days per week of role to review



The numbers

Fellows

79 Fellows placed since Jan 2019



41 completed to date

50% placed on Cochrane Reviews

Publications

Publications

70



Cochrane Protocols

7



Cochrane Reviews

12



WHO Rapid Review

2





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The mentors



Luke
Wolfenden



Valerie
Smith



Andrea
Tricco



Jeremy
Grimshaw



Rebecca
Ryan



James
Thomas

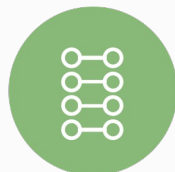
& more!



What's in it for Fellows?



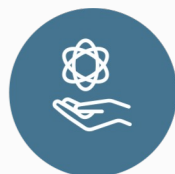
Hands-on evidence synthesis experience in quality environment



Virtual & flexible, allows those working full-time (& part-time) to take part



Participate in a high-quality impactful review, without need to lead



One-to-one mentorship



Free attendance at ESI & Cochrane Ireland workshops



Covidence Software



€1000 Travel Bursary



Networking with national/international experts



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Structured Training & Workshops

- Free access to high quality and comprehensive training
- *“The opportunity to attend a range of training sessions, hosted by Evidence Synthesis Ireland, have been invaluable also as it has built my knowledge and expertise beyond the specific review that I was involved in.”*





ESI Fellows value...



Methods skills



Teamwork



Topic knowledge



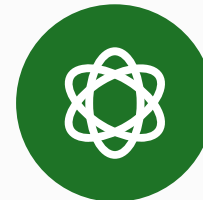
Confidence



Mentorship



Collaboration



Expanded network



Training & workshops



Who are ESI Fellows?

- **Over half have never completed a systematic review**
- Fellows are mostly female (64%)
- 35% are in the early-career stage.
- Fellows are **academics (30%), healthcare professionals (40%), or both (3%) postdoctoral researchers (24%), policymakers (3%)**





Who should apply?

- Fellows may be in full or part time employment, be clinicians or clinician-academic trainees, researchers, academics and/or postgraduate students working in health and/or social care areas
- Applicants must be resident of the **Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland** at the time of application
- The Fellowships are **not** paid, which allows those working full-time to apply¹

What's involved?

- Fellows are expected to commit to a minimum of 8 hours per week working on the review (may vary throughout the review process and flexibility is required).





Building capacity in LMICs

- We fund one Fellow from an LMIC per annum
- We are looking for **expressions of interest** from individuals from LMIC's who are affiliated with a Cochrane or Campbell group **looking to be a Fellow**
- **Expressions of interest** from **Host Centres** willing to **host Fellows** from Ireland and an LMIC

esi@universityofgalway.ie



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Jeremy Grimshaw
@GrimshawJeremy

Finally got to meet [@PrawnFryan](#) after 3 years. As an [@EvidSynIRL](#) fellow he contributed to our MASSIVE Cochrane review on diabetes QI strategies for adult populations and is now doing his own review of diabetes QI strategies for paediatric populations! [@decdevane](#) [@NikitaNBurke](#)



7:11 PM · Nov 4, 2022



Sinéad Hynes
@sineadnieidhin

We're somehow at the end of [#ECTRIMS2022](#) Thanks to [@EvidSynIRL](#) for the bursary that facilitated Ciara to come and network with fellow researchers in the field and meet with two of the co-authors of the Cochrane review. Great to have to opportunity to all meet in person!



Ciara Gleeson
@ccass2000

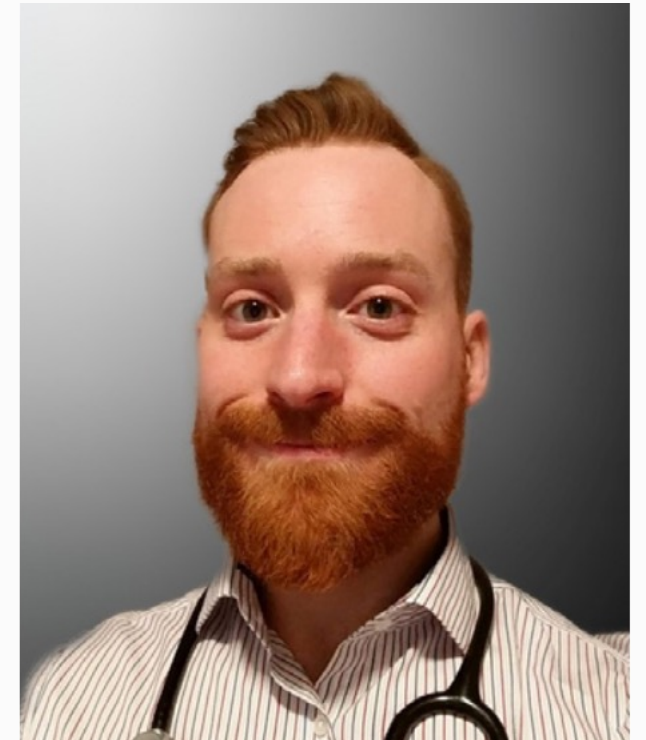
Sharing results of our [@CochraneAirways](#) review at this years [@irishthoracicS](#). Good to be back at in-person conference and a local venue to boot! [@COsadnik](#) [@EvidSynIRL](#) [@CochraneIreland](#)





Capacity Building

- 2019 - Placed as Fellow with Jeremy Grimshaw in Cochrane EPOC
- 2021 - Paul is **leading a sister review** on quality improvement strategies in children with type-1 diabetes (Cochrane Metabolic and Endocrine Disorders)
- 2022 – Paul is now a **Mentor** for new ESI Fellow on *“Effectiveness of quality improvement strategies for type 1 diabetes in children and adolescents”*



Dr Paul MacDaragh Ryan
Sick Kids, Toronto



Benefits of the Fellowship

“**Evidence synthesis and interpretation** plays a significant role in my **clinical duties** as a resident rotating through subspecialties.

The Fellowship played a key role in strengthening my CV when applying for my **academic internship** and **subsequent paediatrics residency** in Canada.

I have benefitted enormously from the **professional connections** which it has opened in both Ireland and Canada.”



Dr Paul MacDaragh Ryan
Sick Kids, Toronto



“The Fellowship was a fantastic opportunity for me as a **clinician** to become more engaged with **evidence-based medicine** and assist in generating a **higher quality of evidence**.”



The findings have directly influenced my **clinical practice** in terms of being able to **better explain to patients** and referrers how pulmonary rehabilitation is **likely to benefit** this cohort.”



Ciara Gleeson,
Physiotherapist,
St James’s Hospital, Dublin



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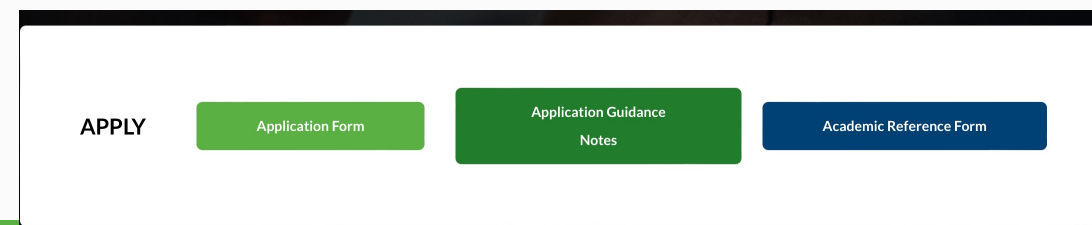
Cochrane
Ireland

Evidence Synthesis Ireland Fellow Ciara O'Meara shares her experience



How can you get involved?

- Apply for an ESI Fellowship
 - Ring-fenced Fellowships for those applying from Northern Ireland
 - Next call is expected in Jan/Feb 2024
 - Sign up to our newsletter to be notified first
 - If at first you don't succeed...
- How to apply – www.evidencesynthesisireland.ie/fellowships





Top tips

1. Having loads of experience is not needed
2. Can have experience in one method and have a gap for training in another method – justify
3. Will this fellowship ‘fit’ within existing commitments
4. Read the questions and scoring criteria, clearly articulate your answers and justify
5. Emphasise skills/knowledge you will accrue, and how you will share this learning
6. Explore the ‘type of review’
7. Look up information on the mentor/host centre
8. Attention to detail makes good impression

iHealthfacts



Passionate about health research?

iHealthfacts is looking for experienced systematic reviewers to volunteer & produce health info for the public. More info [here](#).

<https://ihealthfacts.ie/>

Every day, we hear claims about things that can help or harm our health. But how do we know if these claims are reliable?

iHealthFacts can help.

Our team of researchers from @iHealthFacts1 investigates the evidence behind health claims. Submit your question now at [ihealthfacts.ie!](https://ihealthfacts.ie/)





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To celebrate the launch of our new website, we're holding a competition to

**WIN 1 of 10 FREE
places at ESI workshops**

**How to enter? Sign up to our newsletter
here: <http://eepurl.com/dGKBmD>**



T&C's:

Open to those based in the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland
Online or in person, at a workshop of your choice in 2024
Entries valid until Nov 30th at 17:00

email: esi@universityofgalway.ie **X** [@EvidSynIRL](https://twitter.com/EvidSynIRL) [#evidencesynthesis](https://hashtag.evidencesynthesis.com) www.evidencesynthesisireland.ie





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Thank you

www.evidencesynthesisireland.ie

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www.ireland.cochrane.org

 [@CochraneIreland](https://twitter.com/CochraneIreland)



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