# Russian translations for Cochrane

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**BACKGROUND**: Cochrane collaboration has made a huge contribution to the development of evidence-based medicine; Cochrane work is the international gold standard of independent, credible and reliable high-quality information in medicine. Over the past 20 years the Cochrane Collaboration helped transforming decision-making in health and reforming it significantly, saving lives and contributing to longevity [1]. Until recently, Cochrane evidence were available only in English, which represents a significant barrier to their wider use in non-English speaking countries. To provide access to evidence, obtained from Cochrane Reviews, for health professionals and general public (from non-English-speaking countries), bypassing language barriers, Cochrane collaboration in 2014 initiated an international project of translating Plain language summaries of Cochrane Reviews into other languages [2, 3]. Russian translations of Plain language summaries were started in May 2014 by the team from Kazan Federal University (Department of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology; 2014-2015 as an Affiliated Centre in Tatarstan of the Nordic Cochrane Centre, since August 2015 as Cochrane Russia, a Russian branch of Cochrane Nordic, Head – Liliya Eugenevna Ziganshina) on a voluntary basis.

**OBJECTIVE:** To assess the quality of Russian translations of Cochrane Plain Language Summaries (PLS) and their potential impact on the Russian speaking community through user feedback with the overarching aim of furthering the translations project.

**METHODS:** We conducted the continuous online survey via Google Docs. We invited respondents through the electronic Russian language discussion forum on Essential Medicines (E-lek), links to survey on the Russian Cochrane.org website, invitations to Cochrane contributors registered in Archie from potential Russian-speaking countries. We set up the survey in Russian and English. The respondents were asked to respond to the questionnaire regarding the relevance and potential impact of the Cochrane Russian translations project, topics of interest in the field of health and health care, the quality and clarity of translated content, the preferred style of presentation and suggestions to improve the quality of translations of Plain language summaries of Cochrane Reviews.

**RESULTS**: Currently the team of translators includes volunteers from the staff, Masters and PhD students of the Department of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology of the Kazan Federal University, and Kazan Medical University, our colleagues from Kazan and other cities of Russia, from the Republic of Armenia and the USA. By September 20th 2015, 446 Plain language summaries of Cochrane Reviews were translated into Russian and published on the web-site http://www.cochrane.org/ru/evidence. Our project "Russian translations for Cochrane" has already covered a wide range of health priority areas with translations of Plain language summaries and abstracts of the most topical and priority Cochrane reviews. During the period from 03.03.2015 to 20.09.2015 we received 113 answers from our respondents (103 answers in Russian and 10 answers in English). These were representatives of the medical and pharmaceutical professions (60%), representatives of non-medical professions (17%), students/graduate

students (16%), retirees (4%) and others categories of citizens among the respondents. Half of the respondents (50%) belonged to the age group of 36–60 years, followed by the group of 18–35 years (41%). According to the survey the vast majority of respondents consider that the Cochrane Russian translations project is needed for Russia and Russian speaking countries (94%; $n=106$), it is needed for their work, studies, and life in general (91%; $n=103$). Nobody answered "No" to the question: "Do you think that this project is needed for Russia and Russian-speaking countries?" Information from the Cochrane evidence can affect (change) individual practice and/or attitude to drugs or diagnostic procedures of 87% ($n=98$) of respondents. Only two people answered negatively to this question. However, only one third of respondents would like to become volunteer members of the translations project. The Russian texts of translations of Cochrane summaries and their main message were completely understandable or mostly clear to the vast majority of respondents (92%; $n=104$). Respondents, proficient in English ($n=61$), answered that the Russian-language translations fully complied (43%; $n=26$) or in general corresponded to (57%; $n=35$) the original English text. The majority of respondents (85%, $n=96$) rated the quality of the translated texts as excellent and good. "More than half of respondents (61%; $n=69$) would prefer the translations to be adapted to the usual style of presentation in Russian. The respondents agreed that mistakes, or typos or both very few. Our respondents provided valuable suggestions for further improvement of the Russian translations project. We would like to present here some of these: "More translations needed", "The ultimate goal… is to try to adapt the summaries to Russian language style as much as possible. This is a very challenging task, however and at present format the summaries are already great", "Go great as you do!" "Move forward and be efficient!" "Distribute information about the project through social networks and different means of social media", "Studying Cochrane Database should be included in the Russian medical school's curriculum at a much larger extent than it is included (if at all) now. It would be beneficial for high school students as well."

**CONCLUSIONS**: The survey provided positive feedback on the Russian translations project concerning the clarity and quality of Russian texts and overall satisfaction of the readers. It confirmed the importance and relevance of the Russian translations project for Russian speaking audience, representing various professions and age groups. The survey results with detailed feedback contribute to further improvement of the Russian translations project.

**Limitations:** Selective and subjective evaluation of translations by the respondents, difficulties with clear criteria for the objective evaluation. Further quality improvement of original PLS texts would contribute to higher translation quality.

**Conflict of Interest Statement**: We declare that we have no conflicts of interest.

### References

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