

Changes In Knowledge And Utilisation Of The Cochrane Collaboration By Primary Health Care Workers In Argentina From 2002 To 2005

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Objective:

To explore changes in the level of knowledge and utilisation of the Cochrane Collaboration (CC) by primary health care workers (PHCW) in Argentina, and their demographic characteristics and practice from 2002 to 2005.

Methods:

Cross sectional study. A survey by e-mail was sent at 2002 and 2005 to more than 5000 PHCW included in the mailing of the Family and Preventive Medicine Division, Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires, an academic primary care centre. The e-mails answers were recollected by the K-Form programme and analysed with Stata 8.0.

Results:

411 PHCW were the early respondents (2 weeks) of the survey in 2002 and 186 in 2005 (Table). Demography and practice characteristics were quite similar. Knowledge of CC and utilisation the Cochrane Library/Plus (CL/CLP) increased over time. Among Cochrane users, CL/CLP solved problems more completely. Obgyn disappeared as a source of access to CL, and appeared Bireme and CLP. We dichotomised the use in "frequent user" (15% of the population in 2002 and 36% in 2005) if the use was more than monthly and the utility to Cochrane users in "highly useful" (46 and 52% respectively) if the Cochrane solves problems more than enough. We explore the association between these variables with demographic and practice variables mentioned above. In 2002 younger age was the only variable significantly associated with frequent use (3.5 years difference, 95%CI 0.07-6.8, p=0.045), and there was a tendency (p=0.073) to a more frequent use in academic centres than in the others (18% vs. 10%). This pattern didn't change a lot in 2005.

Conclusions:

Knowledge, utilisation, and utility of the Cochrane Collaboration rose throughout the time. The rate of subscribers continued very low. New free sources of access as Cochrane Library Plus and CL provided by Bireme appeared. Other disappeared since it was no longer free. As this is a selected sample, the results probably overestimate users population and utilisation pattern in argentine PHCW.

Variables	2002 (n=411)	2005 (n=486)
Male sex / Age (mean ± SD)	66% / 41.7 ± 9.9 years	62% / 39.3 ± 7.7 years
Physicians / Nurses / Others	71% / 1% / 28%	80% / 3% / 17%
Did residency programs / Academic Centre work	84% / 64%	72% / 56%
Public / Private work setting	54% / 46%	43% / 57%
Knowledge of: the CC / Argentine Cochrane Centre	51% / 23%	81% / 65%
CL use: never last year/< monthly/monthly/2-3 times per month/weekly	59% / 18% / 8% / 11% / 4%	19% / 23% / 22% / 14% / 22%
CL utility solving problems: little/enough/very much/completely	8% / 46% / 42% / 4%	8% / 40% / 47% / 5%
CL access: subscription/Obgyn/OVID/Medline/libraries/multiple sources/other/Bireme/CLP	3% / 10% / 4% / 23% / 12% / 21% / 31% / 0% / 0%	3% / 0% / 4% / 15% / 2% / 13% / 9% / 22% / 9%