

# Time interval for first publishing and updating systematic reviews under Cochrane Multiple Sclerosis and Rare Disease Group.

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## The Problem

Cochrane systematic reviews (CSR), as a source of evidence synthesis, is supposed to be a living publication, which continually incorporates findings from primary studies, by keeping the review updated every two years. Approximately a quarter of all CSR remain unpublished after eight years.

## Methods

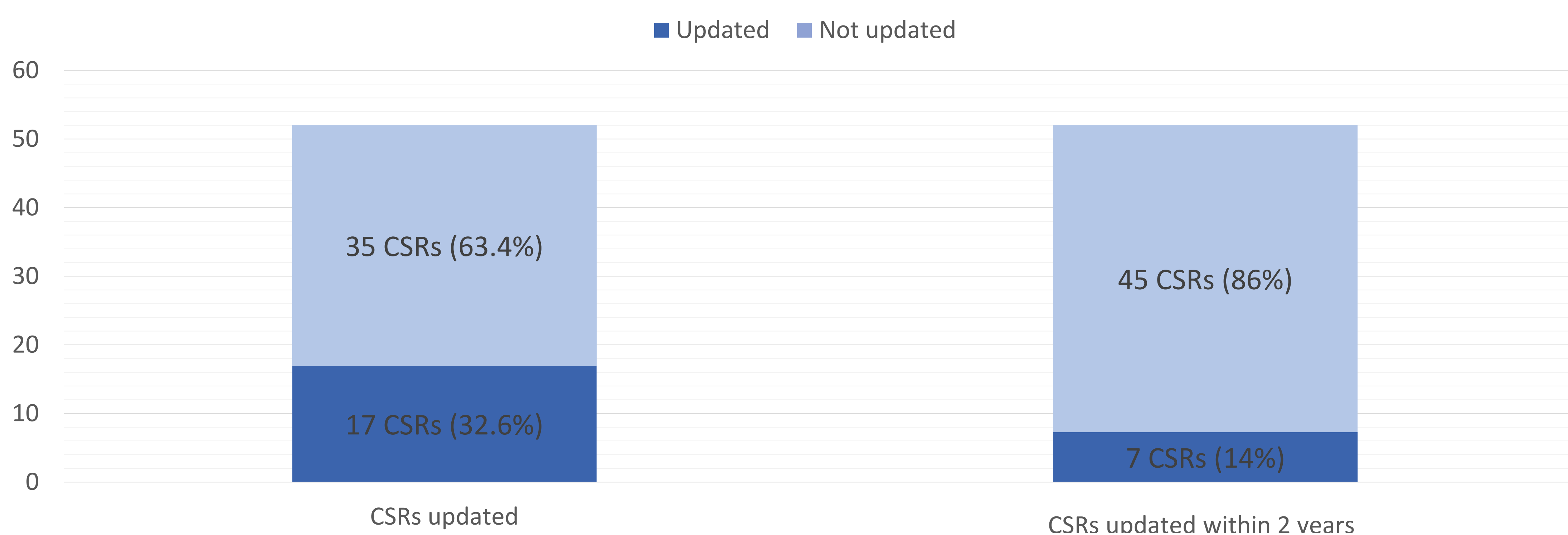
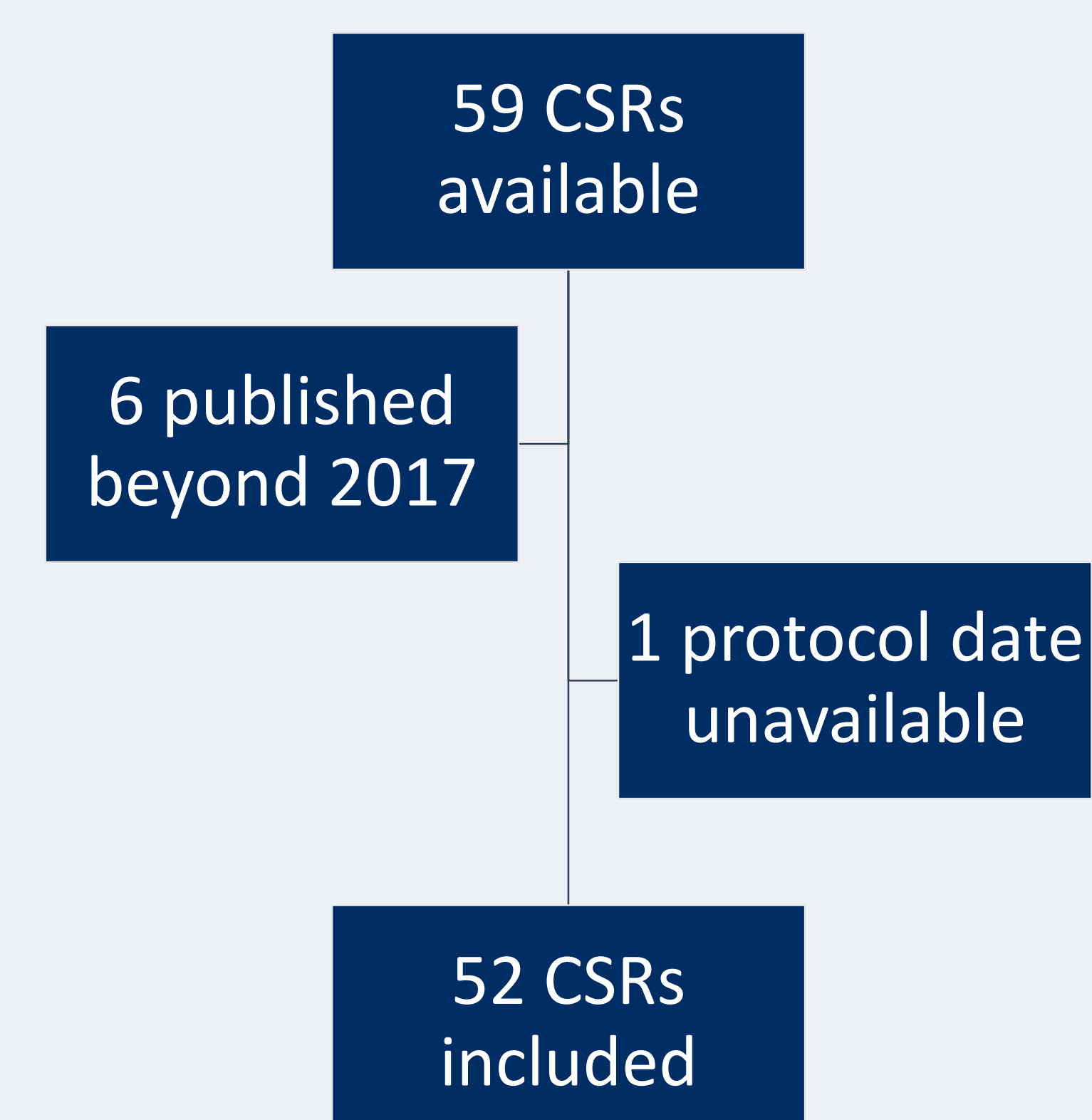
1. N = 59 CSRs published under CMSRD-CNS Group and available at Cochrane Library (edition 3, 2019)
2. All records were screened and evaluated independently by two researchers to confirm their eligibility
3. Time interval for **first publishing** was defined as the interval **from protocol to first publication of full-review**.
4. Time interval for **updating** was defined as the interval **from immediately previous version to last version of full-review**.

## Key Results

- Seven CSRs were excluded:
  - Six because they were published beyond 2017 (so they are still susceptible to being updated)
  - One because the publication date of the protocol was unavailable
- mean interval time of 2.1 years for first publication
- The mean interval time for updating was 3.4 years.
- 32.6% of CSR that should have been updated were in fact updated
- 14% were updated within two years

## Patient or healthcare consumer involvement:

Cochrane systematic reviews are assumed as the gold standard for informing health professionals and patients about the effects of healthcare interventions, because they are methodologically rigorous, updated and available. Unfinished or outdated reviews limit Cochrane's impact on health care.



## References:

1. Runjic E, Behmen D, Pieper D, Mathes T, Tricco AC, Moher D, et al. Following Cochrane review protocols to completion ten years later: a retrospective cohort study and author survey. J Clin Epidemiol. 2019



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