Cochrane Skin and COUSIN:
Linking core outcomes and systematic reviews

Background: Cochrane Skin Core Outcome Set Initiative (CS-COUSIN) is the Center for Evidence-based Healthcare in Dresden and Cochrane Skin collaboration to develop dermatology core outcome sets (COS) to standardise clinical trial outcome measures. Find out more on the website cs-cousin.org.

Key Messages:
- Clinical trials report outcomes of great variability, which impacts the capacity of systematic reviews to synthesise data into something useful and comparable.

CS-COUSIN:
- provides processes and documents to support COS development
- provides methods advice to COS groups (which other Cochrane Groups might wish to use)
- develops standards for instrument development
- advances patient involvement methods
- keeps abreast of methodological advances in COS

Currently there are 17 groups working on outcome sets in dermatology. There is a need to expand this initiative outside of Cochrane and focus on dissemination to ensure implementation.

Observations: Very often, predefined outcomes in skin reviews are not reported in included studies. Very few Cochrane Skin reviews include a meta-analysis, and when possible, it is usually only for a few trials. COS will aid comparability in systematic reviews.

HOME (Harmonising Outcome Measures for Eczema) Core Outcome Set:
- Clinical signs (Core Outcome Instrument: EASI)
- Symptoms (Core Outcome Instrument: POEM)
- Long term control
- Quality of Life

COS will aid comparability in systematic reviews.

Cartoon lampooning the many outcome measures for eczema (Hywel Williams)