

**Rejection letter of the Cochrane review
“vitamin C for pneumonia” update of 2016**

From: Chris Del Mar <cdelmar@bond.edu.au>
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2017 09:21
To: Hemilä, Harri O; Louhiala, Pekka J
Cc: Ann Jones; Mark Jones; Justin Clark; Liz Dooley; David Tovey (dtovey@cochrane.org)
Subject: A105 - Vitamin C for preventing and treating pneumonia

Dear Harri and Pekka

I am writing to inform you that we are very reluctantly relieving you both from authorship of this review, which has stalled in the update phase. We are very sorry it has come to this, but this is too important a review to allow to stagnate, and I can't see that you are sufficiently motivated to address our reasonable editorial requests. Instead we have been subjected to a stream of unjustified and offensive comments usually in the form of *ad hominem* attacks, with a beguiling offer to fix whatever it is we want, although this is never done.

We will be advertising for, and offering the review to, a fresh group who is prepared to work with us to get this published in the Cochrane library.

You are of course free to take whatever work you have undertaken to date and find another journal to publish it. If you do that could you please do us the courtesy of acknowledging our editorial support.

You are also free to appeal this decision with the Editor-in-Chief in London, who is copied in.

Chris Del Mar
Cochrane ARI Group Coordinating Editor

Comments by Harri Hemilä 2017-3-10

“Instead we have been subjected to a stream of unjustified and offensive comments usually in the form of ad hominem attacks, with a beguiling offer to fix whatever it is we want, although this is never done.”

First, Chris did not give any examples of “*ad hominem attacks*”. Before Chris' email, I had sent responses to Mark Jones' comments on my vitamin C and pneumonia review. In my responses I described, for example, that some of Mark Jones' comments were inconsistent with the Cochrane Handbook.

http://www.mv.helsinki.fi/home/hemila/CP/MarkJones_pneu_responses.pdf

Is that kind of response the “ad hominem attack” that Chris Del Mar is writing about. Am I not allowed to write responses and point out problems in Mark Jones' comments. If Mark Jones has not done his homework, am I not allowed to point that out in my responses to his criticisms. This is not clear from Chris Del Mar's rejection email.

Second, Chris' statement “*although this is never done*” is simply false.

See our responses to June 2016 instructions from the ARI office.

We followed the majority of the instructions:

http://www.mv.helsinki.fi/home/hemila/CP/ARI_June2016_pneu_responses.pdf

There is no justification for Chris Del Mar's statement “*never done*”.

In his evaluation, Mark Jones did not point out any genuine scientific problems. Many of his comments reveal that he did not read our 2016 update carefully.