

Archibald Cochrane

Archibald Cochrane is one of those rare individuals who exert a profound influence on their times and live to see the effects of their work. Through his pioneering work in epidemiology in Great Britain he has influenced the rigorous evaluation of health care in highly positive ways.

Dr. Cochrane's longitudinal study of the health problems of a coal-mining population in South Wales was the classical investigation that set a pattern for other programs of its kind in prospective epidemiology. Dr. Cochrane followed random samples of the people of the Rhondda Valley, emphasizing especially the course of pneumoconiosis and of tuberculosis in combination with pneumoconiosis. Some of those sampled in Wales have migrated to London, and he has pursued his studies of these migrants in their new and markedly different way of life.

The basic significance of his work lies in applying high standards of methodological rigor to field epidemiological studies. He has insisted on the need for well-designed clinical trials as an essential step in allocating scarce resources for health care throughout Britain and indeed throughout the world.

Dr. Cochrane has the ability to stimulate and persuade, to bring others along with him, adopting and adapting his views to a wide variety of circumstances. He is sharp in attack but generous in his time and effort with other investigators. He has inspired investigators to extend their interests and activities in the direction of controlled trials and more rigorous protocols.

Dr. Cochrane has raised new standards, and by his example and teaching has permanently improved the quality of health care.

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