

Workflow pilot: Stage 2

Introduction

The introduction of a workflow and tracking component in Archie is part of the third and final phase in the development of the original vision of the Cochrane Information Management System (IMS). This component of the IMS is based on a series of workflow templates prepared by the Editorial Management Advisory Group (EMAG) (see www.cc-ims.net/Projects/newIMS/workflows for details). Before the start of the formal workflow pilot, these templates were deployed to the Archie Test Server for testing by the IMS Support team, the Convenor of EMAG and the members of EMAG responsible for the development of the individual workflows.

Following the successful completion of this pre-pilot testing, the formal pilot of the workflow system began on 30 September 2008. There are three stages to the workflow pilot: Stage 1, which included eight pilot Groups and involved RGCs only; Stage 2, which will include a larger number of Groups and involve all editorial base staff, Co-ordinating Editors, Editors, Contact Persons on reviews and Copy Editors. Stage 3 will open the pilot to all interested CRGs and involve Feedback Editors and Referees in addition to those listed above. With each new Stage of the pilot, new workflow features and functionality will also be introduced, and the documentation available to users will be expanded and improved.

The eight CRGs involved in Stage 1 (which will continue until Stage 2 begins) included two IMS Support CRGs (Acute Respiratory Infections and Pregnancy and Childbirth Group) and six other CRGs (Anaesthesia, Hypertension, Dementia and Cognitive Improvement, Multiple Sclerosis, Peripheral Vascular Diseases and Renal), with at least one CRG from each geographical region supported by IMS Support. The aims of the Stage 1 pilot were to identify problems with the everyday use of the system and to draw on the experience of the pilot RGCs to agree on further improvements to the system's functionality and the workflow templates. RGCs were asked to provide feedback on their experiences of using the workflows through Archie's feedback system or by informal communication with their IMS Support person.

By 9 January 2009, a total of 336 workflows had been initiated as part of Stage 1 of the pilot. The RGCs involved in the pilot were asked to prioritise three items that they would like the system to be able to do or do better. Their responses to this direct request, in addition to the feedback they submitted during the pilot, were discussed at a meeting of the IMS Developers and the IMS Support team on 11-13 December 2008. During this meeting it was decided to progress to Stage 2 of the workflow pilot once a number of agreed improvements had been made to the system.

The new Stage 2 functionality will focus on closer integration of the workflow system with other parts of Archie, customizing generic workflow templates at the CRG level, generating reports to gain a quick overview of the current work

of a CRG and communicating with people who do not use Archie on a daily basis (using what is referred to as the 'ticketing' system).

This document explains how Stage 2 of the pilot will proceed and the responsibilities of the various parties involved.

Stage 2 objectives

Objectives of Stage 2 of the workflow pilot are:

- To identify problems with the everyday use of the workflows by RGCs, other staff who work at editorial bases, Co-ordinating Editors, Editors, Contact Persons on reviews, and Copy Editors.
- To refine the system, if necessary, in response to feedback from the Stage 2 pilot CRGs.
- To provide IMS Support with experience in supporting RGCs in the use of the system, when more members of CRG editorial teams are involved.
- To identify training materials and additional training needed before the workflow system goes on general release.

Pilot environment

The number of CRGs involved in Stage 2 of the pilot will be extended beyond the original eight. In a message to Adminors and the Co-Eds mailing list (dated 18 December 2008), Monica Kjeldstrøm, IMS Director, asked CRGs to contact her if they were interested, or still interested, in joining Stage 2 of the workflow pilot. IMS Support will follow up CRG expressions of interest with the relevant RGCs before the number and identity of CRGs joining the Stage 2 pilot is confirmed, at which time this document will be updated. Before discussions with their IMS Support person, interested RGCs must discuss with their Co-ordinating Editors the criteria for involvement in Stage 2 (see 'What it means to be a Stage 2 pilot CRG' and 'Responsibilities of participants' below), and what they want to get out of the workflow system.

Given the high number of CRGs who have already expressed an interest in joining Stage 2 of the pilot, we plan to divide Stage 2 into two parts. Following discussions with all CRGs who have expressed an interest in joining during Stage 2, we intend to invite three CRGs from each of the four regions supported by IMS Support to become involved beginning in March 2009. (This will be called Stage 2a.) Approximately three months later (after the May module submission deadline), we will consider inviting another three CRGs from the list of volunteers from each region (Stage 2b). This staggering of the number of CRGs joining the pilot at any one time will allow IMS Support to provide better individual support to RGCs.

What it means to be a Stage 2 pilot CRG

The RGCs of the CRGs involved in Stage 2 of the pilot must be the Workflow Managers for their CRGs and must use the Archie workflows to manage the registration of all new titles, and the editorial processing of all new protocols,

reviews and updates. Pilot RGCs should also start workflows for all drafts currently in the editorial process the next time they need to work on these drafts; in such cases, RGCs can skip the workflow tasks that have already been completed and begin the workflow with the task they need to perform next.

RGCs should allocate workflow tasks to other members of the editorial team in accordance with CRG policy, using the ticketing system as needed. People who log into Archie on a daily basis (for example, editorial base staff) do not need to be sent tickets; instead they will be expected to check their Archie Organizers to identify their current tasks.

The RGCs of Stage 2 pilot CRGs are advised to maintain their existing tracking systems in conjunction with using the Archie workflows.

Responsibilities of participants

RGCs of Stage 2 pilot CRGs

RGCs must:

- Use the Archie workflows to track the progress of all new titles, and all draft and new protocols, reviews and updates as described under 'What it means to be a Stage 2 pilot CRG', above.
- Provide guidance to the other members of their CRG involved in the pilot with support from their IMS Support person.
- Contact their IMS Support person if they experience difficulties when using the system.
- Provide feedback to the IMS Development team via their IMS Support person or by completing the feedback form in Archie (Help > Feedback).
- Advise on the practicalities of implementing the system across all CRGs, including the training materials and additional training needed.

Co-ordinating Editors of Stage 2 pilot CRGs

Co-ordinating Editors must:

- Agree to their CRG's involvement in Stage 2 of the pilot as described in this document.
- Agree to use the ticketing system (or, if they log into Archie daily, to check the Organizer for their current tasks).
- Provide feedback to the IMS Development team via their RGC or their IMS Support person.
- Advise on the practicalities of implementing the system to all CRGs from the perspective of a Co-ordinating Editor.

Other participants (Editors, Contact Persons on reviews and Copy Editors identified by the RGC/Co-ordinating Editor in advance of the start of the pilot)

Other participants must:

- Use the ticketing system.
- Provide feedback to the IMS Development team via their RGC.

IMS Support team

The IMS Support team must:

- Provide basic documentation to the Stage 2 pilot CRGs on how to use the workflow system.
- Provide training to the RGCs of the Stage 2 pilot CRGs.
- Provide ongoing support to their Stage 2 pilot CRGs, responding to queries and providing advice, as required.
- Work with the IMS Development team to advise and prepare for rollout of the system to all CRGs.

IMS Development team

The IMS Development team must:

- Assist with technical difficulties that may arise during the pilot or as a result of the pilot, or both.
- At the end of the pilot, collate and respond to the feedback from the RGCs in order to prepare for rollout of the system to all CRGs.

After Stage 2 of the pilot

Following the successful completion of Stage 2 of the workflow pilot, preparations will be made for the start of Stage 3. These preparations will include further refinements to the workflow system based on the experiences and feedback of the Stage 2 CRGs; and expanding and improving the documentation to support the rollout of the system to Stage 3 CRGs.