

2013 Unorthodox Prize goes to Evidence Aid

Disasters affect millions of people and cost billions of dollars, but people affected and those trying to help them don't always have good access to the best information on what they might do. Evidence Aid will change this. It has just been awarded the 2013 Unorthodox Prize, for an extraordinary and innovative approach to improving the lives of the world's most disadvantaged people.

Evidence Aid was established by members of one of the world's largest organisations in evidence based health care, The Cochrane Collaboration, and seed funded by the Collaboration and the scientific publisher Wiley. It now works with many humanitarian agencies across the world.

Evidence Aid makes it easier for people in the disaster and humanitarian sector to find reliable, independent information on interventions and strategies that might help, as well as identifying those that are ineffective or might even be harmful. Professor Mike Clarke, one of the founders of Evidence Aid who is based at Queen's University Belfast in Northern Ireland said, *"People affected by disasters deserve the best care and those making decisions need the best evidence on what works, doesn't work and is unproven. Evidence Aid will meet that need."*

Evidence Aid helps planners, policy makers, doctors, nurses, charity workers and others before, during and after natural disasters and other humanitarian emergencies. The Unorthodox Prize of \$10,000 and potential for follow-on funding will support this work and help Evidence Aid reach its full potential. Evidence Aid was selected from more than 250 entries from around the world.

Evidence Aid was established following the tsunami in the Indian Ocean in December 2004. It uses knowledge from systematic reviews to provide reliable, up-to-date evidence on interventions that might be considered in the context of natural disasters and other major healthcare emergencies. It seeks to provide this information to agencies and people planning for, or responding to, disasters, humanitarian crises and major healthcare emergencies. It already provides free access to more than 100 Cochrane systematic reviews and the collection of relevant reviews is expected to more than double in the next year.

Evidence Aid currently has just two staff, but is supported by a small group of volunteers and lots of good will around the world. It has bases in Oxford, the Centre for Global Health in Trinity College Dublin in Ireland and the Centre for Public Health at Queen's University Belfast. Professor James McElroy, acting Vice Chancellor at Queen's University Belfast said *"We are delighted with this recognition for Evidence Aid. It is a core component in the University's work to connect evidence, practice, practitioners and the public and we look forward to its continued growth and impact."*

"Congratulations to Evidence Aid on this award. It recognises the contribution it makes to planners, policy makers and responders before, during and after natural disasters and other humanitarian emergencies through the provision of critical content to help save lives," said Deborah Dixon, VP & Publishing Director, Health Sciences, Wiley. *"As publishers of The Cochrane Library, we are proud to be a founding partner of Evidence Aid."*

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Notes to editors: The Unorthodox Prize is sponsored by a San Francisco-based family foundation. For more information about the prize: www.unorthodoxprize.org/index.html. For more information

about Evidence Aid: www.EvidenceAid.org. Follow Evidence Aid on Twitter (@EvidenceAid) or the Facebook Group (EvidenceAid).