



Deutsches Netzwerk Evidenzbasierte Medizin e. V.
Kuno-Fischer-Straße 8 • 14057 Berlin

Mr. Mark Wilson, CEO Cochrane, UK
Dr. David Tovey, Cochrane, Editor in Chief
(by email)

Cc Prof. Gerd Antes, Prof. Jörg Meerpohl, Prof.
Gerald Gartlehner

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Dear Mr. Wilson,
dear Dr. Tovey,

The German Network of Evidence-based Medicine is the competence and reference center for all aspects of evidence-based medicine and has been founded to spread and develop the concepts and methods of evidence-based medicine in practice, teaching and research in the German-speaking region.

As members of the Network's board we are deeply concerned about what happened in the Cochrane governing board. We notice a significant lack of transparency in the communication of the irritating events during the last weeks.

We do not understand the argument of "bad behavior" as reason to expel one of the most respected scientists and Cochrane founders, Peter C. Gøtzsche, who was chosen to be member of the board by voting in a democratic election. We are also worried about the resignation of two further members of the board, Jörg Meerpohl and Gerald Gartlehner, who are prominent members of our Network.

Many experts from our Network in Germany, Austria and Switzerland have contributed and continue to contribute as experts and reviewers to Cochrane reviews. In Germany, the Cochrane Centre at the University of Freiburg and two further Cochrane centers in Cologne and Düsseldorf are publicly financed. Thus, the public and the research community have a deep trust in the independence and honesty of Cochrane which in return is expected to produce high quality reviews free from commercial interests and conflicts of interest.

We highly esteem the contribution of Peter C. Gøtzsche to the development of Cochrane and his support for our objectives to implement evidence-based medicine. Members of our network have voted for Peter C. Gøtzsche to become a leading member of the board because he is considered a person who is known for free speech and a strong character, for courage and his merits to a non-corruptible medicine. We do not understand how a minority of the board members can now be authorized to expel him.



We do not understand the up to now not transparently stated concerns justifying that Peter C. Gøtzsche should be dismissed from Cochrane. In contrary, Peter C. Gøtzsche is one of the key players in a trustful future development of Cochrane. Cochrane is an organization that lives from transparency. We miss this transparency and are deeply concerned about the democratic basis of this decision.

We strongly recommend to rethink the decision and especially to transparently unveil all arguments which have guided the governing board's decision.

We are looking forward not only to your answer but to clarifying activities.

With kind regards,
Yours sincerely,

Dr. Dagmar Lüthmann
Chair

Prof. Dr. med. Andreas Sönnichsen
Vice-Chair

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Ingrid Mühlhauser
Vice-Chair

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Gabriele Meyer
Scientific Secretary