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Committee on Publication Ethics
22 Nelson Close
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Dear Mr Graf, Ms Pearson and Ms Pierson

Thank you for your letter of 15 April 2016. Having considered it carefully, we do not consider that our submission to COPE of 23 October 2014 has been dealt with appropriately due to flaws in COPE's review process. In particular:

- From a substantive perspective, the specific concerns that we drew to the attention of COPE in our letter (which was supported by detailed evidence through embedded links), and that we reiterated subsequently in our letter of 10 June 2015, have not been addressed; and
- From a procedural perspective, there has been an inappropriate delay and the Chair of COPE advised us only in September 2015 that she had decided that another member of COPE should handle the matter to ensure that the process was conducted independently (despite having adjudicated on it in January 2015), and then advised us again in March 2016 that it was being handed to someone else for a similar reason.

Consequently, we should like the matter to be considered by COPE's Ombudsman. Please confirm when this matter has been drawn to the attention of the Ombudsman, and do let us know if any additional information is required from us.

Given that it is now 18 months since this matter was drawn to the attention of COPE, and increasing evidence is emerging that the BMJ's failure to deal properly with misleading claims that it published and has not corrected is impacting adversely on public health, we hope that this matter will be dealt with more expeditiously.

Yours sincerely

Jane Armitage

Colin Baigent

Rory Collins