

From: Cathy Harwood **On Behalf Of** Rory Collins

Sent: 19 May 2014 18:52

To: iona.heath22@yahoo.co.uk

Subject: RE: Papers for the panel considering the retraction of papers misrepresenting the evidence on statin side-effects

Dear Dr Heath

In light of some of the statements in the BMJ's Editorial dated 17 May 2014, I am submitting additional materials for consideration by the panel.

1. The detailed set of slides that I went through with Dr Godlee on 2 December 2013, which refutes the assertion that the extent of the problems with these two articles was not drawn to the attention of the BMJ before March 2014 (leaving aside the reviewers' comments and the letters from Huffman et al and Takhar). I have added notes to these slides in order to indicate what points were being made about which parts of the 2 articles.
2. A supplementary note which includes:
 - Comments about the peer review process since, by contrast with what was written in the Editorial, it has now become clear that the peer reviewers never saw the reference to Zhang et al and its misinterpretation in the paper by Abramson et al, although they did draw attention to other serious errors that were not corrected during the subsequent editorial process. (As previously requested, it would be useful to have the reviewers' comments on the paper by Malhotra made available for public scrutiny in order to determine whether similar problems occurred with respect to that paper.)
 - An additional comment about the misrepresentation of the evidence on the efficacy of statin therapy in the papers by Abramson et al and by Malhotra, which appears to have occurred as the result of much the same failure to reflect necessary caveats that led to retraction of the misleading claims about side-effects based on the paper by Zhang et al.
3. Annotated copies of the two papers with notes linking my notes and the slides with particular parts of each of the papers in order to help the panel identify the extent of the problems with both of these papers.

Best wishes,

Rory

From: Cathy Harwood **On Behalf Of** Rory Collins

Sent: 19 May 2014 17:04

To: 'iona.heath22@yahoo.co.uk'

Subject: FW: Papers for the panel considering the retraction of papers misrepresenting the evidence on statin side-effects

Dear Dr Heath

I am enclosing the initial note that I had agreed to provide to Fiona Godlee when I met with her on Thursday 8 May and sent to her on Thursday 15 May along with details of my potential conflicts of interest.

In light of the contents of the BMJ's editorial and material that has subsequently become available, I am preparing a supplementary note for consideration by the panel which I shall endeavour to provide to you by midday tomorrow.

Best wishes,

Rory

From: Cathy Harwood **On Behalf Of** Rory Collins

Sent: 30 May 2014 11:23

To: 'Iona Heath'

Subject: RE: Papers for the panel considering the retraction of papers misrepresenting the evidence on statin side-effects

Dear Dr Heath

I should be most grateful if, as requested previously, you would make available for public scrutiny the peer reviewers' comments on the paper by Malhotra. (As indicated in the email accompanying my supplementary note, the release of the peer reviewers' comments for the paper by Abramson et al has already highlighted serious failures in the editorial process.) If, however, the BMJ's previous statement that it was peer reviewed is not correct then please could you confirm now that that is the case?

With regard to all of the materials that I have submitted to the panel for review (including the set of slides that I went through with the Editor at my meeting with her on 2 December in order to explain the extent of the problems with these two papers, a fact which has been denied in the editorial of 15 May), I would wish to await the conclusion of this review process – which is supposed to be independent of the BMJ – before these materials are made public. In particular, for the reasons that I repeatedly made to the Editor (i.e. that it would provide an opportunity for the authors of these misleading claims to repeat them and cause further confusion and harm to public health, which the BMJ did indeed allow to happen), I do not wish these materials to be placed on the BMJ website as Rapid Responses. Nor does it seem at all appropriate if, as is said to be the case, this review is truly independent of the BMJ and its Editor.

Best wishes,

Rory