

Statement by Prof. Isabelle Boutron and Prof. Peter Jüni concerning the Report of the Expert Review Panel on the Canadian National Breast Screening Study (CNBSS)

We would like to express our sincere appreciation for the extensive work carried out by Prof. Mette Kalager in leading the Expert Review Panel on the Canadian National Breast Screening Study (CNBSS) and in preparing the final report.

After careful consideration, we have decided not to formally co-author the report, as we are unable to endorse it in its current form. We do not fully agree with the content and are not aligned with the framing of its conclusions.

Specifically, we would have preferred the conclusions to state the following:

After reviewing the complaint material, the previous review,¹ the published findings of the CNBSS, and 19 hours of interviews with individuals identified in the allegations - several of them with first-hand knowledge of the CNBSS - we believe that the evidence we found is concordant with what was previously known: that the randomization process in the CNBSS was vulnerable to subversion, but *“even if there had been acts of subversion, they could only have been few in number and (...) could have had only a trivial effect on the study findings.”*¹ No new evidence emerged regarding the quality of mammography compared to what was previously known.

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Reference

1. Bailar JC, MacMahon B. Randomization in the Canadian National Breast Screening Study: a review for evidence of subversion. *CMAJ*. 1997;156(2):193-199.