

Edinburgh, September 15, 2018

Dear Cochrane Colleagues,

This week, the Cochrane Governing Board [decided with a vote of 6 in favour, 5 opposed, and one abstention, to expel Peter Gotzsche](#) from his membership in Cochrane because he has been "causing disrepute" to Cochrane.

Four of us who opposed this decision have resigned from the Board as a result. We consider the Board's use of its authority to expel Peter from Cochrane to be disproportionate. The general public, consumers, students, and researchers involved in Cochrane value the plurality of opinions, views, and perspectives Cochrane has worked hard to give voice to since its foundation. We believe that the expulsion of inconvenient members from the Collaboration goes against Cochrane ethos and neither reflects its founding spirit nor promotes the Collaboration's best interests. We are concerned that these actions might cause great damage to the reputation of the Collaboration.

Governing Board members are expected to publicly uphold and defend all decisions taken. We could not adhere to this obligation in this case in good conscience. We also believe that those of you, who placed your trust in us to represent you on the Board, would not wish us to do so. For this reason, we have unfortunately felt the need to resign from the Cochrane Governing Board and have done so the day after the decision was taken.

It is our hope and deepest desire that this event will encourage all Cochrane members and the wider community to reflect upon where we currently find ourselves and give serious consideration to what we want for the future of Cochrane and its principles, objectives, and ethos.

Gerald Gartlehner, David Hammerstein, Joerg Meerpohl, Nancy Santesso