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Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP
Science and Technology Committee
House of Commons
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RECEIVED
29 JAN 2019

25 January 2019

Dear Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP and Dr Sarah Wollaston

Many thanks for your inquiry. As you know, The Lancet is a member of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors and we take our ethical responsibilities concerning research very seriously indeed. That commitment includes our responsibilities to authors, as well as our responsibilities to readers and the public.

You may also know that we have already retracted two of Paulo Macchiarini's papers. On the issue of the papers cited by Peter Wilmshurst, the advice we have received from the Committee on Publication Ethics recommends that we must not assume that evidence of past misconduct always indicates misconduct in other cases. Each case, and in this instance each paper, must be subject to its own consideration and investigation.

Regarding the papers Dr Wilmshurst refers to we are, of course, unable to access the patient records ourselves. As is usual practice in such situations, we asked the host institution to investigate the allegations. They have reported back to us that all ethical requirements for the clinical aspects of the work have been appropriately fulfilled. Dr Wilmshurst has been informed of the conclusion from this report.

Based on the evidence we have received so far, we believe that there is insufficient grounds to retract these papers.

Yours Sincerely



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