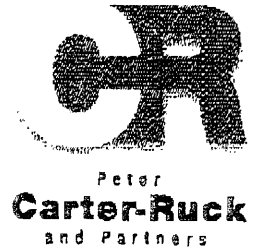


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Our Ref : AS/JS/12967.1

Date : 27 February 2004



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Dear Sir

We have been consulted by our client, Dr Andrew Wakefield, with regard to the statement which you issued on 20 February which, together with interviews you have given, has received widespread media attention, as was only to be expected.

Our client, as you will know, entirely rejects your assertion that his work for the Legal Aid Board gave rise to a conflict of interest in relation to the paper published in the Lancet in February 1998, let alone that it left our client's work "fatally flawed" as you have alleged. This, however, is a matter which our client considers may best be resolved through a GMC enquiry, which has been proposed and which our client welcomes.

There can, however, be no dispute concerning our client's good faith. The plain implication of the statements you have made is that our client, for nearly six years, withheld not only from the Lancet but also his colleagues the fact that he had also been engaged by the Legal Aid Board to conduct research. This, as you know, is not true. There was no secret and our client made no secret of his work for the Legal Aid Board. Indeed, the letter from our client published in the Lancet on 2 May 1998 makes crystal clear not only that the fact that our client was engaged in other research was publicly available on the internet but also that the very issue of an alleged conflict was raised and refuted by our client at the time, in a letter which, as Editor, you were responsible for passing for publication in the Lancet. It is in these circumstances a matter of grave concern, that, six years after all the relevant facts were within your knowledge, you choose not only to dismiss our client's work but also to cast doubt on his honesty.

The purpose of this letter, whilst reserving all our client's legal rights, is to invite you to agree promptly to publish a full apology to our client, in a form, manner and terms to be approved by him. We trust we shall hear from you within seven days.

Yours faithfully

Peter Carter-Ruck and Partners

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