



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Dr Susan Maastricht

Director, Research Integrity and Ethics Administration

15 May 2023

Mr Rory Robertson

By email: strathburnstation1@gmail.com

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Mr Robertson,

Concerns raised relating to Professor Emeritus Stephen Colagiuri

I am writing in relation to your email correspondence received by the University on 29 October, 3 November, 8 December 2022 and 16 February 2023 regarding Professor Emeritus Stephen Colagiuri.

As you will know from Ms Kate Organ's email to you dated 7 December 2022, the concerns you raised have been referred to the Research Integrity Office for consideration in accordance with the University's *Research Code of Conduct 2019* (the **University Research Code**), a further copy of which is enclosed with this letter.

In my capacity as a Designated Officer under the University Research Code, I have considered the information you have provided in your emails and the various documents and videos to which you provided embedded links. This included previous correspondence between yourself and the University, book extracts, video links, documentation published by Diabetes Australia, links to two peer reviewed academic publications, a Medicines Australia report on payments made to practitioners and your correspondence with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (**ACCC**) and the Australian Parliament.

Australian Paradox Paper

At the outset, I should note that I have not considered any matters you have raised in relation to the 2011 paper "*The Australian Paradox: A Substantial Decline in Sugars Intake over the Same Timeframe that Overweight and Obesity Have Increased*" by Professor Jennie Brand-Miller and Dr Alan Barclay. Your concerns about that paper have been the subject of a previous investigation and I have not found any additional information or evidence in the material you have provided in 2022-23 that would warrant any revisiting of the matters that were examined in the earlier investigation.

Diabetes Australia Position Statement

The Diabetes Australia Position Statement on Type 2 diabetes remission (the **Position Statement**) to which you have referred includes an acknowledgement that it was "*prepared with the support of an expert advisory group*", whose membership is stated to include Professor Colagiuri and seven other named individuals. The Position Statement is not a paper to which authorship can be attributed to Professor Colagiuri in the sense contemplated by the University Research Code. Your concerns about the Position Statement are therefore outside the scope of the University Research Code, and should



you wish to pursue these matters further, you may wish to raise them with Diabetes Australia.

Possible undisclosed conflicts of interest

As outlined above, the Diabetes Australia Position Statement is not a document to which the University Research Code applies, and should you wish to pursue your concerns about possible conflicts of interest that should have been disclosed in connection with that document, you will need to raise the matters with Diabetes Australia.

The document you have provided which I understand is an extract from Appendix 2 to the “*Case for action- Proposal to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) A comprehensive type 2 diabetes prevention program*” lists relevant interests held by Professor Colagiuri and there is no evidence of him having failed to meet his disclosure obligations to either the University or NHMRC.

Nor is there any evidence that Professor Colagiuri may have received payments from pharmaceutical companies that he did not disclose. I note that information about payments made by pharmaceutical companies to researchers and health professionals is widely available via the ARDC Research Data Australia and Medicines Australia (disclosureaustralia.com.au) websites. An examination of these websites has disclosed no evidence of any failure by Professor Colagiuri to make appropriate disclosures.

Issues raised with the ACCC in relation to Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment Tool and Australian National Diabetes Strategy

The Australian Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment Tool is attributed to the “*Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute on behalf of the Australian, State and Territory Governments as part of the COAG initiative to reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes.*” Professor Colagiuri is not named as an author of the document.

Similarly, neither the Australian National Diabetes Strategy 2016-2020 nor its successor document, the Australian National Diabetes Strategy 2021-2030, name Professor Colagiuri as an author. While Professor Colagiuri has been a member of the Expert Advisory Group that advised on each of the documents, he was one of eleven members of group that advised on the 2016-2020 document and one of over 20 members of the 2021-2030 advisory group.

The Risk Assessment Tool and the National Diabetes Strategies are not documents to which authorship can be attributed to Professor Colagiuri in the sense contemplated by the University Research Code, and accordingly there is no basis for any investigation of alleged breaches of the Code in connection with their development or content.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, I do not consider that the information you have provided in your email and accompanying documentation discloses any possible breach of the University Research Code by Professor Colagiuri. Accordingly, I have determined that no further action is warranted in relation to the matters you have raised and therefore consider the matter to be closed.

Please contact the Research Integrity Office at research.integrity@sydney.edu.au if you have any questions in relation to this matter.



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Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Susan Maastricht'.

Dr Susan Maastricht

Director, Research Integrity and Ethics Administration

CC: Research Integrity Office

Attachment: University of Sydney Research Code of Conduct 2019