



November 16, 2018

Ellen Trane Nørby  
Minister of Health  
Denmark

Re Peter Gøtzsche – Nordic Cochrane Centre - Rigshospitalet

Dear Minister

I write this letter to express my unconditional support for maintaining Professor Peter Gøtzsche as chief physician at the Nordic Cochrane Centre in the Rigshospitalet, which I am aware that Cochrane rules allow even though he is no longer a member of Cochrane. I am a tenured professor at Stanford University and the current rate of citations of my work in the scientific literature (>3,000 times per month) is the highest among all physicians in the world and among the 10 highest across all scientists in the world. I have unconditional admiration for Peter Gøtzsche. Peter is undoubtedly a giant, one of the greatest scientists of our times and one of the most influential, impactful, and useful voices in medicine at large. I cherish enormously his contributions. I believe he is the most recognizable and prominent scientist that Denmark currently has. His dismissal from the Cochrane board two months ago came as a total shock to me. The possibility of compounding this shock with his dismissal also from the Rigshospitalet would deal a severe blow to medicine, democracy, freedom of thought, and justice.

I do not agree with Peter Gøtzsche on everything that he says and publishes. I have found myself several times on the opposite side of multiple arguments. However, I believe that basic respect for scientific discourse requires that you do not eliminate your opponents through administrative machinations. Ousting Peter from the Rigshospitalet damages the reputation of Denmark as a free country. Conversely, supporting him will demonstrate forcefully that not all is lost for human dignity.

I trust that you will decide not to be on the wrong side of history and that you will take pride that your ministry continues to support one of the greatest investigators of our times.

Sincerely,

John P.A. Ioannidis, MD, DSc  
C.F. Rehnberg Professor in Disease Prevention  
Professor of Medicine, of Health Research and Policy, and (by courtesy) of Biomedical Data Science  
Stanford University School of Medicine  
Professor (by courtesy) of Statistics  
Stanford University School of Humanities and Sciences  
Co-Director, Meta-Research Innovation Center at Stanford (METRICS)  
Director, PhD Program in epidemiology and clinical research