

The University of Sheffield

Bone metabolism Group



Bone metabolism Laboratory
Clinical Sciences Centre
Northern General Hospital
Herries Road, Sheffield
S5 7AU, UK
Tel: (0114) 271-4705
Fax: (0114) 261-8775
E✉ : ablumsohn@sheffield.ac.uk

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Professor Robert Boucher
Vice-Chancellor's Office
Firth Court
Western Bank
Sheffield
S10 2TN

Dear Professor Boucher

Re: Medical School research

Dear Professor Boucher

We communicated previously about several serious and obvious problems involving Professor Richard Eastell, a pharmaceutical company and the Bone Metabolism Unit. I am disappointed that we have not yet met.

It is now 23 months since an urgent and obvious aspect of these problems was raised formally by myself. It is I am afraid obvious that the University is not dealing with these matters in a plausible manner. Given the status and governance roles of Professor Eastell within the University and NHS appropriate action should have been quick, appropriate and truthful. I also don't believe that the seriousness of the situation was properly assessed.

A matter of research probity involving pharmaceutical trials (McKay LAW Law letter to you of 25/5/2005 and my email of 9/6/2005 to your office) has now been raised with the Lancet and with the BBC who are assisting to take the matter forward based on their own investigations. It is in my view regrettable that the University chose to send me a letter threatening disciplinary action (13/7/2005) for doing what is essentially my job as a responsible and honest scientist. This is particularly so given the public safety and obvious academic freedom aspects.

As you may know I withdrew from engagement with the internal process after 19 months later following innumerable odd procedural problems and seeming endless attempts by the University to prevent and delay due process. I have received no reply to any of the issues raised. A recent letter from Professor Peter Fleming (8/8/2005) purports to deal with one procedural issue (hiding of various damaging documents) but is simply a misstatement of evident facts. I have also had no proper response to my letter discussing the contents of these documents following their partial release under the Data Protection Act.

In the course of this sorry saga, the University has attempted to hide an undesired report of a misconduct panel, has failed itself to deal with an issue of racism, ignored inappropriate use of NHS patient resources, told an evident untruth to an employment tribunal about the absence of previous race related grievances, and provided delayed and misleading

information to grant agencies. A grievance set up in October 2004 to explore some of these procedural matters failed to mention in their report the very specific worrying evidence of procedural obfuscation brought to their attention. The grievance panel also deflected an issue of racism through the simple expedient of choosing an inappropriate respondent, and then acquitting her on the basis that she was not responsible, while failing to deal with the problem. In the light of this I find it upsetting to hear information (presumably told in confidence) that one or possibly two members of this grievance panel had some difficulty agreeing with the report produced. A further problem raised by two academics in July 2004 has also not yet been reported. This matter is related to the allegation that an external examiner was misled about a thesis, but more importantly that University procedures failed and that the problem was hidden.

There is by now complete breakdown in trust and confidence. From a personal point of view, the University is in fundamental breach of my implied and actual contract of employment.

I find this all deeply upsetting, and I believe that there needs to be some external appraisal of the manner in which the University have dealt with this matter. I do believe we should meet before I decide how to proceed.

Kind wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Blumsohn', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr Aubrey Blumsohn BSc(hons), MSc, PhD, MBBCh, MRCPATH

Senior Lecturer in Metabolic Bone Disease

Honorary Clinical Consultant in Metabolic Bone Disease