

## **CSBI Position Statement on the Canadian National Breast Screening Study (CNBSS)**

**March 29, 2022**

The Canadian National Breast Screening Study (CNBSS) has long been the subject of considerable debate over the possibility of non-random allocation to screening or control, the appropriateness or otherwise of design aspects of the studies, and the quality of mammography. In an invited editorial in the Journal of Breast Imaging, Dr Stephen Duffy assesses the evidence in the light of two new papers. In the first, a survey of professionals involved in the CNBSS, the responses clearly show that the quality of mammography was often inadequate, and that symptomatic women were not excluded from the CNBSS. The second paper discusses the possibility that the randomization procedure in the CNBSS was violated to preferentially include women with a suspicion of breast cancer in the screening arm, evidenced by an excess of advanced tumours at initiation in this arm and an eyewitness statement that such preferential allocation took place. It also notes the inclusion/exclusion policy which allowed recruitment of symptomatic women, as well as poor quality of mammography. Both papers conclude that the CNBSS can no longer be considered safe as evidence to inform screening policy, and Professor Duffy reaches the same conclusion. Noting that the CNBSS are still cited prominently as evidence against breast cancer screening, particularly in the age 40-49 subgroup, the CSBI calls for an urgent re-review of the evidence, excluding CNBSS data, particularly in terms of target age groups for screening.

### **Links:**

#### **Errors in Conduct of the CNBSS Trials of Breast Cancer Screening Observed by Research Personnel**

- <https://academic.oup.com/jbi/advance-article/doi/10.1093/jbi/wbac009/6555326?searchresult=1>
- <https://academic.oup.com/jbi/advance-article-abstract/doi/10.1093/jbi/wbac009/6555326?redirectedFrom=fulltext>

#### **The Fundamental Flaws of the CNBSS Trials: A Scientific Review**

- <https://academic.oup.com/jbi/advance-article/doi/10.1093/jbi/wbab099/6555324?searchresult=1>

#### **Problems With the Canadian National Breast Screening Studies**

- <https://academic.oup.com/jbi/advance-article/doi/10.1093/jbi/wbac004/6555325?searchresult=1>