

Statement

External analysis conclusions regarding the issues raised by a set of data published by the laboratory of Dr. Manel Esteller

Barcelona, January 20th, 2017. In reference to the **information published in PubPeer**, a website that allows users to discuss and review scientific research, **expressing some concerns regarding a series of journal articles led by Dr. Manel Esteller**, the Bellvitge Biomedical Research Institute (IDIBELL) would like to make the following statement:

- Although **no internal or external formal and clearly identified accusation has been made, in accordance with the Good Research Practices of IDIBELL**, Ombudsman **Dr. Xavier Bosch** required the creation and meeting of an external **ad hoc expert commission** in order to evaluate different data sets published in the aforementioned research papers. This commission reviewed a series of journal articles led by Dr. Esteller as senior and corresponding author.
- **Dr. Manel Esteller met voluntarily and in good will** to clarify the situation and comment the information published in the website PubPeer, which was cited and reproduced in other online sites.
- A series of documents, lab results and raw data addressing each of the points posed by the commission was presented, **showing that conclusions presented in the analyzed manuscripts were essentially unaffected by the mistakes detected**. Furthermore, the author offered to the journals involved **the publication of a correction** for these figures. Finally, those authors responsible for the editing of the scientific figures discussed have assumed responsibility for the generation of errors.
- After reviewing the information provided, **the panel of experts forming the commission has concluded that there is no sign of scientific fraud or data manipulation** besides technical negligence in figure assembling by the authors. Although Dr. Esteller, as corresponding author and supervisor, has the final responsibility for the quality of the results published, **no deliberated intention of fabricating results was observed so the case presented cannot be related in any form with research misconduct**.

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About IDIBELL

The Bellvitge Institute of Biomedical Research (IDIBELL) is a biomedical research center founded in 2004. It is participated by Bellvitge University Hospital and Viladecans Hospital of the Catalan Institute of Health, the Catalan Institute of Oncology, the University of Barcelona and Hospitalet de Llobregat's Town Hall.

IDIBELL is located in L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, south of Barcelona. IT is a member of the International Campus of Excellence of the University of Barcelona HUBc and is part of the CERCA institution of the Generalitat of Catalonia. In 2009, it became one of the first five Spanish research centers accredited as a health research institute by the Carlos III Institute of Health.

Since last October, **Dr. Francesc Xavier Bosch was presented and accepted by IDIBELL's Internal Scientific Committee as Ombudsman of the institution. The Ombudsman in research is a figure created in order to act as mediator among researchers** in scientific conflicts, ensuring the research integrity of the institution and acting as a confidential advisor for questions related to science and career management. **His position mainly guarantees independence from other institutional bodies**, confidentiality of proceedings, and proven experience in the scientific world and its management.