

## Collaborative Discussion 2 - Peer response 1 (Ketan)

Ketan and Dalbir present compelling arguments that significantly enhance the ethical analysis of Abi's dilemma. Ketan establishes the foundational tension between statistical objectivity and commercial interests, correctly emphasising that research integrity demands transparent reporting when public health implications are involved (Dawson, 2015). Dalbir builds upon this by distinguishing between technical validity and ethical integrity, arguing that principles alone are insufficient without active safeguards against selective interpretation (Mittelstadt, 2022). His reference to the Menlo Report introduces crucial concepts of systemic accountability through governance frameworks (Finn and Shilton, 2023).

Both colleagues' arguments align with established professional obligations whilst extending the analysis meaningfully. Ketan's reference to UK consumer protection law complements legal frameworks, while Dalbir's emphasis on institutional oversight through research ethics committees addresses structural solutions. However, their focus on governance frameworks could benefit from greater emphasis on immediate practical steps. The American Statistical Association's requirement for "honest and objective" presentation of findings (ASA, 2018) supports their arguments about transparency obligations, whilst whistleblower protection legislation (Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998) provides more direct pathways for regulatory notification when necessary.

The synthesis reveals that Abi's ethical obligations operate across multiple interconnected levels: individual professional integrity, institutional governance, legal compliance, and societal welfare. Dalbir's question about formal obligations to disclose harmful findings is particularly pertinent, suggesting the profession may need clearer mandatory reporting requirements for public health risks. All analyses converge on the fundamental principle that statistical professionals cannot remain neutral but must actively engage with ethical implications, ensuring technical competence serves broader societal interests rather than narrow commercial objectives.

### References:

- American Statistical Association. (2018). *Ethical Guidelines for Statistical Practice*. ASA.
- Dawson, C. (2015). *Projects in Computing and Information Systems: A Student's Guide*. 3rd edn. Harlow: Pearson.
- Finn, M. and Shilton, K. (2023). Ethics governance development: The case of the Menlo Report. *Social Studies of Science*, 53(3), 315-340.
- Mittelstadt, B.D. (2022). Principles alone cannot guarantee ethical AI. *Nature Machine Intelligence*, 4(8), 659-670.
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. c.23. London: HMSO.