

Request for advice

On 12 February 2002, the Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport wrote as follows to the President of the Health Council (letter reference GZB/GZ 2.250.678):

Following the recent appearance of articles in *The Lancet* and the *Nederlands Tijdschrift voor Geneeskunde* questioning the effectiveness of breast cancer screening, I hereby request that you prepare an advisory report for me regarding this issue within the Dutch context.

To be specific, I wish to know whether the findings of the meta-analysis published in the *Lancet* in October 2001 nullify the scientific basis for breast-cancer screening as it is organized in the Netherlands (with women over the age of fifty as the target group and annual evaluation).

(signed)

Dr E Borst-Eilers
