Foreword

Four decades ago, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) published the first volumes in the seminal Statistical Methods in Cancer Research series. Volumes I and II, edited by Dr Norman E. Breslow and Dr Nicholas E. Day, encapsulated the growing statistical methodology for case–control studies and cohort studies – the workhorse study designs (then and now) in observational epidemiology. These two volumes were instrumental in the training and education of several generations of epidemiologists, providing essential research methodologies for the study of cancer and other chronic diseases. Studies carried out using the methods outlined by Breslow and Day have formed the basis of much of our understanding about the preventable causes of cancer in humans, as evidenced in the evaluations carried out by the *IARC Monographs* programme over the decades.

Today, researchers and those involved in evidence synthesis are increasingly called upon to formally examine sources of bias in observational epidemiology studies. Although methodologies in assessing the direction and magnitude of such biases have advanced since the initial publication, there has been a dearth of accessible information available to the research and evidence synthesis communities.

In this new volume of the IARC Statistical Methods in Cancer Research series, Dr Amy Berrington de González, Dr David B. Richardson, and Dr Mary K. Schubauer-Berigan, together with their colleagues, provide a comprehensive compendium of approaches and methods with many worked examples to examine the impacts of biases in epidemiological studies. The authors are to be commended for creating a volume that lives up to the spirit and scope of its predecessors. This new volume will undoubtedly serve as a useful resource for forthcoming generations of epidemiologists and the *IARC Monographs* programme.

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