



Sainath Suryanarayanan <sainath@usrtk.org>

Questions regarding Liu et al. (2020) in PLoS Pathogens

Perlman, Stanley <stanley-perlman@uiowa.edu>
To: Sainath Suryanarayanan <sainath@usrtk.org>

Tue, Oct 27, 2020 at 7:27 PM

Dear Sainath,

Thank you for your email. I served as Editor on this manuscript but did not carefully analyze the sequence data (which I rarely do as an editor). PLoS Pathogens has also begun an investigation of the issues that you raise in your email. I suspect that PLoS Pathogens will independently respond to your comments and those of others on the same manuscript.

I asked the journal for a copy of the cover letter that accompanied the submission so that I can respond to your questions more precisely in terms of the information that I had in hand at the time of the submission. As you point out, these are important issues and I want to be sure that my answers are as accurate as possible.

Stanley

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Sainath Suryanarayanan <sainath@usrtk.org>

Questions regarding Liu et al. (2020) in PLoS Pathogens

Perlman, Stanley <stanley-perlman@uiowa.edu>
To: Sainath Suryanarayanan <sainath@usrtk.org>

Thu, Oct 29, 2020 at 3:17 AM

Sainath,

I finally received and reviewed the cover letter that accompanied the original submission. Also as I mentioned earlier, PLoS Pathogens is investigating this paper in more detail. This ongoing investigation is addressing many of the issues raised in your questions and further information will be available when the journal completes its work on this case. What I can tell you now is

1. The authors did not clarify the relationship between the data used in the PLOS Pathogens study versus the 2019 Viruses article in the PLOS Pathogens submission. That said, they cited the Viruses article in the Methods section describing the animals used for the PLOS Pathogens article.

2. I did not verify the veracity of the July 2019 sample during pre-publication peer review.

3. The Nature article was published after the PLOS Pathogens article had already been accepted and was being processed for publication. I did not know about the Nature paper until it was published. Concerns about similarities between the two studies came to light only after both studies had been published.

4. I did not see any amplicon data during peer review. The authors provided an accession number for the assembled genome (see the article's Results section), although after publication it came to light that the accession number listed in the article's Data Availability Statement is incorrect. This error and questions around the raw contig sequencing data are currently being addressed as part of the post-publication case. I regret that these issues were not discovered and addressed prior to publication.

I hope that this helps.

Stanley

Stanley Perlman, M.D., Ph.D.
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Department of Microbiology
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11/6/2020

USRTK Mail - Questions regarding Liu et al. (2020) in PLoS Pathogens

From: Sainath Suryanarayanan <sainath@usrtk.org>

Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2020 2:00 PM

To: Perlman, Stanley <stanley-perlman@uiowa.edu>

Subject: Re: Questions regarding Liu et al. (2020) in PLoS Pathogens

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