
From: Scott, Robert L. (DCH) [mailto:ScottR9@michigan.gov]
Sent: Friday, September 25, 2015 12:44 PM
To: Marc Edwards
Cc: Mona Hanna-Attisha; Peeler, Nancy (DCH); Minicuci, Angela (DCH)
Subject: RE: Automatic reply: New DCH-1294, time-sensitive

Marc,

As you well know, the data you and Dr. Hanna-Attisha have requested are derived from personal health data, which of course is confidential. There are state and federal laws governing what can be shared, and how, with researchers or the public.

I worked with you earlier this month to get data to you relatively quickly, but we did not manage to complete the process before I went on annual leave for several days. I neglected to inform you that I'd be away. I returned on Wednesday and corresponded that day with Dr. Hanna-Attisha, providing her with the forms she'll need for her request.

Regarding your email from Monday, I think you'll be able to get approval for data with zip code identified. I'll edit your data use agreement accordingly, will adjust it to say "limited data set" instead of "de-identified," and will re-submit it to our Legal office. You will need to submit an MDHHS IRB review application (attached) because this is considered research. You should also submit a "HIPAA Waiver Request" (attached). (I wasn't aware of the Waiver Request when we talked earlier this month.) Send those documents to me, and I'll pass them on to our IRB contact. I don't know whether you'll need to go through an IRB review with your institution.

In short, both your request and Dr. Hanna-Attisha's are in process in accordance with departmental policies.

I've attached a PDF that includes the numbers behind the graphs you referred to, and I'm CC'ing Dr. Hanna-Attisha so that she has it as well.

Please keep in mind that I work for a very small program responsible for processing several thousand blood lead results every week—in order to get them out to the professionals working directly with children and families, which is the primary purpose and highest priority of our program.

Bob

Robert L. Scott
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From: Marc Edwards [mailto:edwardsm@vt.edu]
Sent: Thursday, September 24, 2015 8:14 PM
To: Scott, Robert L. (DCH) <ScottR9@michigan.gov>
Subject: RE: Automatic reply: New DCH-1294, time-sensitive

Dear Robert,

I just spoke to this young researcher at Hurley, and apparently, she has been unable to get access to the state blood lead records.

I have to say, it is very disturbing that the state keeps issuing these blood lead reports and statements in their press releases, and refuses to share the data backing them up with outside researchers.

Even worse, state reps are running around claiming that these reports are proof that Flint water is safe to drink.

Can you tell me why it is so difficult to get this data, and why your agency is raising so many obstacles to sharing it with everyone who asks? I note that I have been asking to see your data since MDEQ first sent it to reporters back in August, and I count 10 e-mails that I sent responding to all your questions. As of yet, you have given me nothing in response. Yet you have been sending reporters one report after another. It seems your agency is more interested in public relations than sound science.

In the meantime, can I at least be given the numbers of EBL cases and number of tests each month, that are the basis for the latest graph your agency is sending to the press...or is that top secret as well?

Marc

From: Scott, Robert L. (DCH) [<mailto:ScottR9@michigan.gov>]

Sent: Monday, September 21, 2015 1:21 PM

To: Marc Edwards

Subject: Automatic reply: New DCH-1294, time-sensitive

I'll be out of the office until Wednesday, Sept 23. I'll respond to your message when I return.