

From: **James E. Enstrom** <jenstrom@ucla.edu>
Date: Tue, Jul 27, 2021 at 6:00 PM
Subject: Grave Concerns About Misuse of US Medicare Records
To: Nature Editor <nature@nature.com>

July 27, 2021

Nature Editor
Nature Portfolio Journals
nature@nature.com

Re: Grave Concerns About Misuse of US Medicare Records

Dear Nature Editor,

I have grave concerns about a manuscript that is currently under consideration for publication by a Nature Portfolio Journal: "Long-term air pollution exposure and incident dementia in American elderly population: a national cohort study (2000-2018)" by Lihua Shi, et al. of Emory University (<https://www.researchsquare.com/article/rs-514522/v1>). I just conducted a detailed peer-review of a similar ES&T manuscript "Low-concentration air pollution and mortality in American older adults: A national cohort analysis (2001-2017)" by Lihua Shi, et al. My grave concerns about this now rejected ES&T manuscript are clearly stated in my 31-page July 8, 2021 Review (<http://scientificintegrityinstitute.org/ESTJEEAdd070821.pdf>). In spite of repeated requests during the past month, the Emory Institutional Review Board (<http://www.irb.emory.edu/>) has failed to confirm the validity of the authors' claim "This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Emory University and a waiver of informed consent was granted." This claim is contained in both manuscripts.

The authors possess massive personal and medical data on 69 million US Medicare beneficiaries, including myself. The authors never obtained permission from me or the other beneficiaries for release of their confidential medical information. Because the authors possess data on most Americans at least 65 years of age, I contend that individual subjects can be identified with this data, even if Medicare officials have not released their names and their street addresses. Thus, I request that you obtain proof that the authors have proper Emory IRB and US DHHS Human Subjects Protection access to the Medicare data used in their manuscripts. Also, I request that the authors release to me all the de-identified data that they possess on about 500 Medicare beneficiaries in a specific zip code. I want the opportunity to demonstrate that at least some of these beneficiaries can be personally identified, in direct violation of their Medicare privacy rights.

Please acknowledge that you have received this email message and will address my requests.

Thank you very much for your assistance regarding this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

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