

From: Nancy love
Sent: 1 Dec 2016 23:41:52 -0500
To: Beach, Michael J. (CDC/OID/NCEZID);Strockbine, Nancy (CDC/OID/NCEZID)
Cc: Shawn Patrick McElmurry;Paul Evan Kilgore;laura Sullivan;Terese Olson;masten@egr.msu.edu
Subject: Incident associated with October 28th conversation

Dear Michael and Nancy:

I wanted to alert you to an incident that has occurred as an outcome of the conversation we had with your lab on October 28 that I believe you should be aware of. You may recall that the intent of the meeting was to get feedback from your lab on our data and approach, and I considered the conversation to be confidential among those of us on the call. Indeed, I had written "CONFIDENTIAL-DO NOT SHARE" across the top of the slides sent to you. Unfortunately, a member of your lab did not heed this request and has taken information (incorrect information, I might add) from the confidential conversation and shared information about the work we discussed with a faculty member at another university who is not involved with this study at all.

I recently traveled to the university where the faculty member who was contacted resides. Shortly after being picked up from the airport, I was surprised to have this faculty member tell me that they knew I was working on analyzing enteric indicators in Flint water (and additional details I will not repeat here) because they had been called by someone they know who works in your lab and was asked questions about the methods we are using and shared my name with the faculty member. The information the faculty member gave me indicated that the information shared was technically inaccurate as well.

I have no intention of telling you who either of these people are. I do ask, however, that you redouble your efforts to remind your staff that when something confidential is shared with them, it is appropriate to honor such requests (unless legally required otherwise). Over the last few months, I have been surprised at the number of times people in government and outside of my research team have talked about our data or results surrounding our Flint studies in an inaccurate or inappropriate way. It has been more than frustrating and, frankly, disappointing to see how many times we've had to deal with such breeches. I believe Federal agencies like the CDC have ethics policies in place to prevent such incidents and I suggest you review them with your staff.

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