DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

FOR US POSTAL SERVICE DELIVERY:
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
6700B Rockledge Drive, Suite 2500, MSC 6910
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-6910
Home Page: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm

FOR EXPRESS MAIL:
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
6700B Rockledge Drive, Suite 2500
Bethesda, Maryland 20817
Telephone: (301) 496-7163
Facsimile: (301) 480-3387

April 3, 2020

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance
A3944-01 [OLAW Case 1Q]

Dr. Sandra Harris-Hooker
Vice President and Executive Vice Dean
For Research and Academic Administration
Morehouse School of Medicine –
Atlanta University Center
720 Westview Drive - SW
Atlanta, GA 30310

Dear Dr. Harris-Hooker,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your March 19, 2020 letter reporting an instance of noncompliance with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals at the Morehouse School of Medicine following up on an initial February 21, 2020 notification by email.

According to the information provided, this Office understands that the Morehouse School of Medicine Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC) determined that instances of noncompliance occurred with respect to: the deaths of two sentinel rats. The final report states that on February 15, 2020 one of two sentinel rats in the same cage was found dead due to dehydration. The remaining animal was severely dehydrated, and the lixit valve attached to the automatic water rack was found to be faulty. The animal care staff member responsible for that room had not observed the animals the prior day. The observation failure was determined to be the result of staffing shortages and a communication error. Despite the provision of water and supportive care, the remaining rat was found dead the following morning. The following corrective actions to prevent recurrence were approved by the IACUC:

- The animal care technician responsible for the room was retrained on how to properly check the automatic water system daily to ensure every single cage is getting water supply. The technician was also retrained on how to identify signs of distress and dehydration in rats.

- Training on the standard operating procedure for daily checks of the automatic water system was provided to staff.

- In the event of short staff or unusual activities in the animal facility, the Manager and/or Director will assign rooms and will follow up during the day with individuals assigned to ensure completion. A check list of rooms will be generated and checked off before the end of the workday to avoid leaving areas unchecked, especially those that house animals.

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It is noted that these animals were not supported by PHS funds. Based on its assessment of this explanation, OLAW understands that the Morehouse School of Medicine has implemented appropriate measures to correct and prevent recurrences of these problems and is now compliant with provisions of the PHS Policy. We appreciate being informed of these matters and find no cause for further action by this Office.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Jacquelyn T. Tubbs, DVM
Veterinary Medical Officer
Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

cc: IACUC Contact

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MOREHOUSE
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Office of Sponsored Research Administration

March 19, 2020

Brent Morse, DVM
Director, Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
National Institutes of Health
Rockledge 1, Suite 360
6705 Rockledge Drive
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dear Dr. Morse:

Morehouse School of Medicine, in accordance with Assurance A3944-01 and PHS Policy IV.F.3., provides this final report of noncompliance regarding an adverse event in which two sentinel rats died of dehydration due to a faulty lixit valve on the automatic water rack where the cage was housed. This incident was first reported to Dr. Jacquelyn Tubbs, OLAW, via a phone call on February 21, 2020.

Situation and Assessment

On Saturday February 15, 2020, one sentinel rat in a cage of two animals was found dead due to dehydration. The remaining animal was severely dehydrated. The lixit valve attached to the automatic water rack for this cage was found to be faulty, and the animal care staff responsible for the room had not observed the animals the prior day. This observation failure was determined to have been the result of staffing shortages and a communication error. Despite the provision of water and supportive care, the remaining rat was found dead the following morning.

The corrective actions to prevent recurrences and approved by the IACUC are detailed as follows:

1. The animal care technician in charge of the room was retrained on how to properly check the automatic water system daily to ensure every single cage is getting water supply. Additionally, the technician was retrained on how to identify signs of distress and dehydration in rats.

2. Staff were trained on the standard operating procedure (SOP) for daily checks of the automatic water system.

3. In the event of short staff or unusual activities in the animal facility, the Manager and/or Director will assign rooms and will follow up during the day with the individuals assigned to ensure completion. A check list of rooms will be generated and checked off before the end of the workday to avoid leaving areas unchecked, especially those that house animals.

The Morehouse School of Medicine Institutional Care and Use Committee believes its investigation was thorough and the corrective actions were appropriate to prevent a similar occurrence. Should you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Sharon Francis, PhD, IACUC Chair.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Sandra Harris-Hooker, PhD
Executive Vice Dean for Research and Academic Administration
Institutional Official
Morehouse School of Medicine

720 Westview Dr. S.W. • Atlanta, Georgia 30310-1495 • Telephone (404) 752-1725 • Fax (404) 752-1103 • Email: osra@msm.edu

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Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E]

From: Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E]
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2020 12:02 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: Harris-Hooker, Sandra; Francis, Sharon; (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Morehouse School of Medicine (Assurance #D16-00537) - Report of Noncompliance (Sentinel)

Thank you for providing this final report. We will send an official response soon.

Best regards, Brent Morse

Brent C. Morse, DVM, DACLAM
Director
Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
National Institutes of Health

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From: (b) (6)
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2020 11:46 AM
To: Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E] <morseb@mail.nih.gov>
Cc: Harris-Hooker, Sandra <sharris-hooker@msm.edu>; Francis, Sharon <sfrancis@msm.edu>; (b) (6) (b) (6)
Subject: Morehouse School of Medicine (Assurance #D16-00537) - Report of Noncompliance (Sentinel)

Good morning Dr. Morse,

I am submitting the attached report on behalf of the Morehouse School of Medicine.

Let us know if you need anything else.

Thank you and have a great day.

ATTENTION: I am working remotely. If immediate assistance is needed please call (b) (6)

Warm Regards,
(b) (6)

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A3944-1Q

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

OLAW

Initial Report of Noncompliance

By: Tubbs

Date: 02/21/2020

Time: 1:30P

Name of Person reporting: [redacted] (b) (6)
Telephone #: [redacted] (b) (6)
Fax #:
Email:

Name of Institution: Marchase College
Assurance number: A3944

Did incident involve PHS funded activity? N
Funding component: N/A
Was funding component contacted (if necessary): _____

What happened?

2 rats died over weekend, putting cage on autoH2O, lix'it not functional, not seen by husbandry (sentinels), FD

Species involved:
Personnel involved: Animal Care Staff
Dates and times:
Animal deaths: 2

Projected plan and schedule for correction/prevention (if known): _____

TBD

Projected submission to OLAW of final report from Institutional Official:

OFFICE USE ONLY
Case #_____

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