



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

June 11, 2021

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance  
#A3343-01 (OLAW Case 2Z)

Dr. Giulio Draetta  
Chief Scientific Officer  
University of Texas MD Anderson Center  
1515 Halcombe Boulevard – (b) (4)  
Houston, Texas 77030

Dear Dr. Draetta,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your June 4, 2021 letter reporting an instance of noncompliance with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals at the MD Anderson Cancer Center. This letter had not been preceded by a preliminary report to OLAW.

According to the information provided, this Office understands that the MD Anderson Cancer Center Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC) determined that instances of noncompliance occurred with respect to: failure to adhere to institutional policies/procedures. The final report states on April 27, 2021, a staff member discovered a cage of 5 mice that had not been completely pushed back into its housing slot resulting in lack of access to the water valve. It is also stated that 4 mice were found dead, and the remaining animal was moribund and required euthanasia. It was concluded that the cage had not been returned to the appropriate position during a health check on April 24<sup>th</sup> and three staff members did not detect the issue during subsequent health checks performed on April 25-26, 2021.

In response to the incident, the staff members received verbal counseling to address their failure to meet performance expectations in their health care checks. The report states the IACUC reviewed the matter and determined the corrective actions were sufficient.

It is noted that these animals were supported by PHS funds. Based on its assessment of this explanation, OLAW understands that the MD Anderson Cancer Center 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,

Jacquelyn  
T. Tubbs -S

Digitally signed by  
Jacquelyn T. Tubbs -S  
Date: 2021.06.11  
13:28:30 -04'00'

Jacquelyn Tubbs, DVM, DACLAM  
Animal Welfare Program Specialist  
Division of Compliance Oversight  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

cc: IACUC Contact

June 4, 2021

**VIA ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION**[olawdco@mail.nih.gov](mailto:olawdco@mail.nih.gov)

Brent C. Morse, DVM. DACLAM  
 Director, Division of Compliance Oversight  
 Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
 6700B Rockledge Drive, Suite 2500, MSC 6910  
 Bethesda, MD 20892-6910

Re: Reportable Incident; Animal Assurance # A3343-01  
 MDA internal reference #SMain3-0421-001  
 Funding: NIH RO1 GM126421-14A1 (AWD00001355)

Dear Dr. Morse,

I am writing to provide a report of The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center (MD Anderson) Institutional Care and Use Committee's (IACUC) finding of a serious deviation from the provisions of the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*. A full explanation of the circumstances as well as actions taken is provided below.

**Mice lost access to water resulting in failure of health and death.**

On Tuesday, April 27, 2021 a staff member at MD Anderson's Science Park campus located in Smithville, Texas found a cage containing 5 mice that had not been completely pushed back into its housing slot resulting in loss of access to the water valve. Four of the mice were dead and the remaining mouse was moribund requiring euthanasia. It was determined that the cage had not been returned to the appropriate position during a health check on Saturday, April 24, 2021 and that three staff members had not observed the issue during subsequent health care checks conducted on April 25, 2021 and April 26, 2021. The impact to PHS supported activity was the loss of the 5 mice and the related data that would have been acquired from those mice.

The corrective action included verbal counselling to address the staff members lack of due diligence and failure to meet performance expectations in their health care checks. The employees acknowledged their errors and are remorseful for not performing to expectations.

The IACUC reviewed the incident and related corrective action at its fully convened meeting on May 18, 2021. The IACUC determined that the corrective action was sufficient to address the above-listed serious deviation from the provisions of the *Guide*.

MD Anderson is committed to assuring compliance with the PHS policy and the *Guide*, and to maintaining proper measures and procedures to ensure the appropriate care and use of all animals involved in research. I will be happy to respond to any additional questions you may have regarding this report.

Regards,

(b) (6)

Giulio Draetta, M.D., Ph.D.  
Chief Scientific Officer  
MD Anderson Cancer Center  
1515 Holcombe Blvd.

(b) (4)

Houston, TX 77030

(b) (6)

cc: Jim Bankson, Ph.D., Professor and IACUC Chair

(b) (6)

Gaylen Howell, Director, Research Oversight & Integrity

## Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]

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**From:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Sent:** Monday, June 7, 2021 7:12 AM  
**To:** Howell, Gaylen W  
**Cc:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Subject:** RE: MD Anderson Cancer Center (A3343-01) SMain3-0421-001

Thank you for this report. We will send a response soon.

Axel Wolff, M.S., D.V.M.  
Deputy Director, OLAW

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**From:** Howell, Gaylen W <gwhowell@mdanderson.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 4, 2021 6:59 PM  
**To:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>  
**Cc:** Draetta, Giulio <GDraetta@mdanderson.org>; (b) (6)  
(b) (6) Howell, Gaylen W <gwhowell@mdanderson.org>  
**Subject:** MD Anderson Cancer Center (A3343-01) SMain3-0421-001

Dear Dr. Morse:

Please find attached our final report for an incident that occurred at MD Anderson Cancer Center (A3343-01). Please contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Gaylen

**Gaylen Howell, MA, MBA**  
Director, Research Oversight & Integrity  
Institutional Compliance  
[gwhowell@mdanderson.org](mailto:gwhowell@mdanderson.org)  
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**MD Anderson**  
**Cancer Center**  
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