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Dear Professor,

I appreciate once again your timely reply.

Your suggestion regarding testing of new samples in a confirmatory manner with others in the United States is already underway at two separate laboratories. Those studies are ongoing and I am certain that the results will be shared when the studies are complete.

What we offered in our collaboration with you was to have you conduct new tests using our methods and materials which have successfully positively identified XMRV in a patient's blood sample. Testing of new samples with your methods without first clinically validating the testing method only brings us back to the point where we stand today.

Today, we have one group of tests that positively detects XMRV in ME/CFS patients and one method of testing which does not. It makes no sense to do a larger study using the methods which have already failed to detect XMRV. Once we are certain that your laboratory is employing methods that can detect the virus in a small set of patient samples that includes XMRV positive samples, we can then move to the next step and share a larger and broader range of samples. In all cases, we must each agree to use the same scientific protocols to insure the integrity of this study.

This is a simple and straightforward way to better understand XMRV in your population of patients. It may well be that the samples you were given were negative for XMRV. It may also be that your new results on fresh blood samples from individuals with ME/CFS will reveal the presence of XMRV.

Our true interest lies in helping you find those in the UK who may be infected with XMRV.

Most Sincerely,

Annette Whittemore