



National Institutes of Health
National Institute on Drug Abuse
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

August 1, 2014

Meghan Maury
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
1325 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Suite 600, Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Maury,

Thank you for your thoughtful comments regarding the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) contract study: Rapid Throughput Standardized Evaluation of Transmissible Risk for Substance Use Disorder in Youth (Document Number 2014-06728). I write in response.

The overall goal of this project is to advance the Transmissible Liability Index (TLI) instrument from a research tool into a practical instrument for detecting youths at elevated risk for substance use disorders (SUD). During the first stage of this project, a computer adaptive testing (CAT) prototype of the research tool TLI was developed. The current stage of the project will transition the TLI prototype into a practical instrument ready for general use by performing two major tasks: (1) standardization, including generation of age, gender and ethnic-specific norms; and (2) psychometric validation, demonstrating that the TLI measures what it purports to measure, using classical and item response theory validation methods. At this stage in the research project, it is not possible to change item wording or to add additional items to the CAT TLI.

This study is not intended to measure actual rates of incidence or prevalence of substance use or other behavioral disorders. However, once the validity of and the norms for the CAT TLI have been established, future research projects would be able to survey vulnerable populations, such as LGBT youth and children of LGBT parents, in order to accurately assess their risks for SUDs, suicidality, and other behavioral health problems.

We greatly appreciate your interest in the present study and thank you again for your comments.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harold I. Perl, PhD".

Harold I Perl, PhD
Chief, Prevention Research Branch
National Institute on Drug Abuse
National Institutes of Health