---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: Susan Gapstur <susan.gapstur@cancer.org>
Date: 31 January 2014 12:40
Subject: RE: ACS Data Proposal
To: Matt Briggs <mattstat@gmail.com>

Dear Dr. Briggs,

I apologize for my delay in responding you.

Your email indicates that you are interested in collaborating with us on a study of the relationship of fine particulate air pollution (PM2.5) and mortality among the California subjects in the CPS II cohort. We understand that you would like access to a de-identified dataset that was used to generate the results published in the September 2013 Jerrett et al. paper "Spatial Analysis of Air Pollution and Mortality in California", and would like to "use them in a predictive sense."

As you can imagine, we receive many external requests for collaborations and we cannot approve all of them. Therefore, as described in our Data Access Policies and Procedures, we assess proposals in terms of overlap with existing collaborations, and importance of the question posed. We also assess the proposal in terms of staff burden.

As you already know, we have an existing collaboration on studies of air pollution and it is not clear how the additional analyses of individual level data you appear to be proposing will provide additional information about the health effects of pollutants. We also feel that other competing demands on our time outweigh approval of this proposal.

While we appreciate your interest in collaborating with us, we have decided not to move forward with this project.

I wish you the best on your research,

Sue

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-----Original Message-----

>From: Matt Briggs [mailto:mattstat@gmail.com]
>Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2014 11:51 AM
>To: Susan Gapstur
>Subject: Re: ACS Data Proposal
>
>Dr Gapstur,
>
>I was wondering what the status of this request is.
>
>Thanks very much,
>
>W. Matt Briggs
>
>On 6 November 2013 17:09, Matt Briggs <mattstat@gmail.com> wrote:
>> Dear Dr. Gapstur,
>>
>> As per the ACS data access policy, I'm writing to propose an analysis
>> of the relationship of fine particulate air pollution (PM2.5) and
>> mortality among the California subjects in the ACS CPS II cohort.
>>
>> SHORT BIO
>> I'm an Adjunct Professor of Statistics at Cornell University, have
>> been an Assistant Professor of Biostatistics at Cornell Medical
>> School, and am now a consulting and research biostatistician at
>> several New York City hospitals. My research interest is in Bayesian
>> predictive inference, which is to say, forecasting and the
>> verification of forecasts based on statistical models. I am also a
>> past Associate Editor of Monthly Weather Review and member of the
>> American Meteorological Society's Probability and Statistics Committee
>> and am interested in the climatological and medical aspects of air
>> pollution. I have sixty-some peer-reviewed journal papers in these
>> fields.
>>
>> RESEARCH IDEA

>> The gist of my proposal is simple: to take the model and the
>> de-identified data used in the September 2013 Jerrett et al. paper
>> (which you co-authored) "Spatial Analysis of Air Pollution and
>> Mortality in California", and use them in a predictive sense. This
>> paper identified PM2.5, NO2, and ozone as being associated with total
>> (all cause) deaths among California subjects in the ACS CPS II cohort.
>> This paper also found that these pollutants are associated with deaths
>> caused by cardiovascular disease, ischemic heart disease, stroke,
>> respiratory disease, and lung cancer. The difficulty lies in the term
>> "associated with." This usually means, and meant in the Jerrett et
>> al. paper, a classic hypothesis test. While this test can provide
>> useful information, it cannot assess the findings in terms of their
>> practical effects. What decision makers really want to know is what
>> the results mean for the entire population (in this case, California).
>> Bayesian predictive models can answer these questions. In technical
>> terms, the first step is to recreate the existing model. The second
>> step is to "integrate out" the parameters of that model; in other
>> words, average out all the assumptions and "what ifs" so that we are
>> left with a picture of the true uncertainty of the relationship
>> between air pollutants and mortality in new populations. I would do
>> the actual calculations, and all I need is the actual de-identified
>> data used in the Jerrett et al. paper, as described in Tables 1, 2, 4,
>> & 5. As stated previously, I do not request any personal data that
>> would allow me to identify individual CPS II subjects.
>>
>> I will be glad to answer any questions you might have regarding my
>> research idea. If you approve this research idea, I will provide
>> complete details in my full proposal.
>>
>> Sincerely,
>>
>>
>> Matt Briggs