

PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

July 21, 2021

Sunil Eappen, M.D., M.B.A.
Chief Medical Officer
Brigham and Women's Hospital

Via e-mail: seappen@bwh.harvard.edu

Dear Dr. Eappen:

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our more than 6.5 million members and supporters to ask that you address chronic and egregious animal welfare violations in the laboratories of Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) by prohibiting those responsible from working with live animals and by modernizing the hospital's laboratories with sophisticated, non-animal, human-relevant research methodologies.

PETA has obtained a trove of government reports through a Freedom of Information Act request. The 55 case reports from February 2018 to April 2021 reveal that negligence, incompetence, and disregard have caused unimaginable pain, misery, and death for vulnerable animals in BWH's laboratories. BWH experimenters failed to provide animals who had undergone surgical procedures with adequate analgesia; failed to ensure that animals had access to food and water—resulting in agonizing deaths by starvation and thirst; failed to euthanize animals in a timely manner; and failed to ensure that animals were actually dead before tossing their bodies in a refrigerator intended for dead animals. Some experimenters deviated from the protocols that had been approved by BWH's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee—effectively undermining the entire oversight system of experiments on animals and stripping animals of their last line of defense.

It appears to us that experimenters at BWH are either incapable of complying with minimal animal welfare standards, as required by federal law and policy, or are not interested in complying with the standards required by the federal government—which supports BWH's laboratories with public funds. The majority of Americans oppose the use of animals in experimentation, and when they are footing the bill for cruel and deadly experiments on animals through their tax dollars, there is an expectation for a modicum of humane consideration.

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Studies show that [90% of all basic research, most of which involves animals, fails to lead to treatments for humans](#). PETA urges BWH to adopt its new [Research Modernization Deal](#), which offers a strategy for replacing cruel and pointless experiments on animals with human-relevant methods.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this important subject with you. I can be reached at MagnoliaM@peta.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Magnolia Martinez", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Magnolia Martinez, Ph.D.
Special Projects Manager
Laboratory Investigations Department