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Official Statement from the Whittemore Peterson Institute Regarding UK Study

The Whittemore Peterson Institute (WPI) has reviewed the paper entitled “Failure to Detect the Novel Retrovirus XMRV in Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.” This study did not duplicate the rigorous scientific techniques used by WPI, the National Cancer Institute and the Cleveland Clinic, therefore it cannot be considered a replication study nor can the results claim to be anything other than a failure not just to detect XMRV, but also a failure to suggest meaningful results.

The scientific methods used by WPI are very exact and require specific techniques to ensure accuracy. Differences in techniques employed by Erlwein et al. not only explain their failure to replicate the WPI study, but also render the conclusions meaningless. These differences

include, but are not limited to the following:

- 1) blood sample volumes and processing;
- 2) patient criteria/population differences;
- 3) number and type of tests done to assure accurate results, including white blood cell culture;
- 4) use of a molecular plasmid control in water versus a positive blood sample; and
- 5) different primer sequences and amplification protocol used to find the virus, which were not validated by a clinical control.

The WPI study was published after six months of rigorous review and three independent lab confirmations, proving that contamination had not taken place and that infectious XMRV was present in 67 percent of CFS patients diagnosed according to the Canadian and Fukuda criteria.

In contrast, this latest study was published online after only three days of review. Significant and critical questions remain as to the status of patient samples used in the UK study as those samples may have been confused with fatigued psychiatric patients, since the UK has relegated “CFS” patients to psychiatric care and not traditional medical practices.

“Little is known about the prevalence of XMRV world-wide, much less the incidence of XMRV in ME/CFS or prostate cancer” emphasizes Dr. Judy Mikovits. “WPI and its NCI collaborators are actively engaged with international research teams to investigate these important questions.”

WPI does not recommend the use of anti-retroviral drugs that have yet to be proven to be effective in treating XMRV infection. However, several large pharmaceutical companies have expressed interest in developing anti-retroviral and immune modulating drugs that will effectively treat XMRV associated diseases.

WPI looks forward to the results of other scientific groups around the world, serious about replicating its scientific results, by using the same techniques as WPI and its collaborators. The fact that XMRV was detected in 67 percent of the CFS samples in the U.S. study determined a significant association between XMRV and CFS, demanding a much more serious inquiry by responsible health agencies around the world as to the cause of this debilitating disease.

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Whittemore Peterson Institute

The Whittemore Peterson Institute for Neuro-Immune Disease exists to bring discovery, knowledge, and effective treatments to patients with illnesses that are caused by acquired dysregulation of the immune system and the nervous system, often results in lifelong disease and disability. The WPI is the first institute in the world dedicated to X associated neuro-immune disease (XAND), and other X associated diseases, integrating patient treatment, basic and clinical research and medical education.

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