

Price Research Integrity Consultant Experts
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EXPERT OPINION FOR DRS. CASSIAN YEE AND JAMIE LIN

January 5, 2023

I was asked on December 12, 2022, by M.D. Anderson Cancer Center (MDACC) Professor Cassian Yee and Assistant Professor Jamie Lin to evaluate apparent allegations of plagiarism related to their recently posted *Journal of Clinical Investigation (JCI) Insight* paper, allegations that were made by MDACC Professor and Associate Vice President, Immunology Padmanee Sharma in her email to *JCI Insight* Editor Kathleen Collins on December 6, 2022.

Specifically, Dr. Sharma claimed therein to the *JCI Insight* Editor [emphasis added]:

Dr. Lin **took all of our work on this project** and, along with her husband, Dr. Yee, accumulated additional nephritis samples that they analyzed for TLS (based on our original work). **They published the work in *JCI Insight* without including us as co-authors. This constitutes an ethical issue...**

In followup, *JCI Insight* Editor Collins notified Dr. Yee of Dr. Sharma's allegation in an email on December 7, 2022, noting [emphasis added]:

If direct communication on your part with Dr. Sharma is not sufficient to resolve this issue, **the matter will need to be referred to the office of research integrity** or other authority at your institution.

Dr. Sharma's December 6, 2022 communication to the *JCI Insight* Editor also cited the contents of an email that Dr. Sharma had sent on November 10, 2021, to *Cancer Immunology Research (CIR)* Senior Associate Editor Karen Honey, on a then-pending *CIR* manuscript with Dr. Lin as first author and Dr. Sharma as last author.

Dr. Sharma stated in this email to *CIR* Senior Associate Editor Honey [emphasis added]:

.... the 3 co-senior authors for this [*CIR*] manuscript (Dr. Adi Diab, Dr. Ala Abudayyeh and myself) **were informed that there will be ongoing reviews internally at MD Anderson related** to the work in this manuscript and the appropriate credit for authors. As such, the 3 of us would like to **request that you pause the review process** at Cancer Immunology Research until we have resolution of the issues being raised. **We will provide additional information after the internal review is complete.**

It is clear that Dr. Sharma's allegations constituted allegations of plagiarism by Drs. Lin and Yee: "Dr. Lin took all our work on this project" and "published the work in *JCI Insight* without including us as co-authors ... an ethical issue". However, MDACC's Research Integrity Officer (RIO) did not treat the allegations as "plagiarism," but instead as an "authorship dispute" that fell outside MDACC's definition of research misconduct.

MDACC RIO referred this dispute on November 29, 2021, MDACC's Chief Scientific Officer: "recommend[ing] handling resolution of the authorship issues presented by Dr. Lin by your office through mediation type of assistance from one or more senior faculty members." Drs. Lin and Yee agreed to such mediation, but MDACC did not then pursue it. On their request, I reviewed the manuscripts files to see whether any subjects/patients records were re-used for both the *CIR* and *JCI* papers.

My expert analysis of Dr. Sharma's apparent allegations of plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined under MDACC Research Misconduct Policy¹ as "appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit." The Federal Office of Research Integrity (ORI), Department of Health and Human Services, created and uses this same definition.² As to my background³ as an expert on investigating plagiarism and other research misconduct allegations, I worked 17 years within the Federal ORI, including serving for many years at Director of the Division of Investigative Oversight and ORI Associate Director for Investigative Oversight. We handled over 3,000 allegations/queries and over 700 formal inquiries/investigations, making over 175 scientific/research misconduct findings (19 involving plagiarism). Additionally I have written 3 papers on analyses of plagiarism.⁴

¹ At <https://ippvip.mdanderson.org/OnBaseWebIPPEExternalPRD/docpop/docpop.aspx>

² At https://ori.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/42_cfr_parts_50_and_93_2005.pdf

³ See my *curriculum vitae* at <http://www.researchmisconductconsultant.com/CV.htm>)

⁴ My publications on plagiarism cases:

Federal Actions Against Plagiarism in Research, *Journal of Information Ethics* 5: 34-51
<https://mcfarlandbooks.com/product/journal-of-information-ethics-vol-5-no-1-spring-1996>

ORI Conference on Plagiarism & Theft of Ideas," <http://ori.dhhs.gov/documents/aaas.pdf>

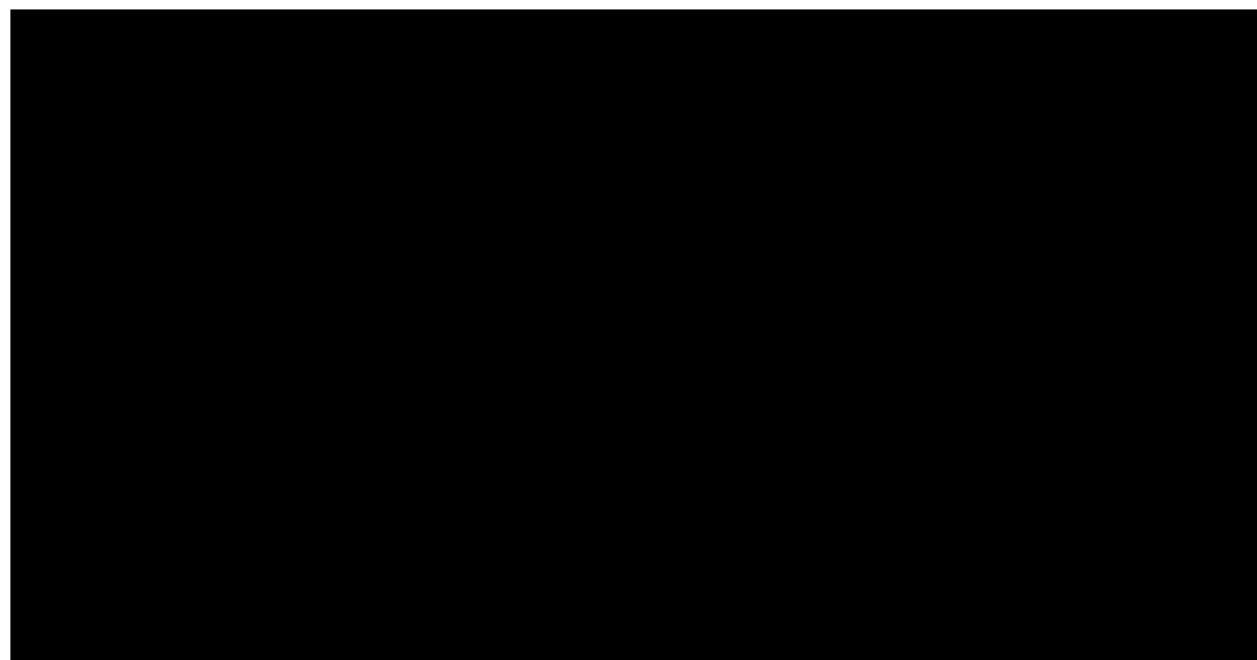
Cases of plagiarism handled by the United States Office of Research Integrity, *Plagiarism* 1:1-11 (2006) http://www.plagiarism.org/cases_of_plagiarism_handled_by_the_ORI.pdf

My analysis for alleged plagiarism in Drs. Yee and Lin’s *JCI Insight* and *CIR* manuscripts

I was provided by Dr. Lin digital files used for the preparation and submission of the *JCI Insight* manuscript and the *CIR* manuscript for my review of their contents, with particular attention to the dates and names, MDA Case Numbers (and/or CYIP numbers) for the patients/human subjects who were listed as the subjects of the research described in these two manuscripts.

I found and summarize here the numbers for patients/human subjects (abbreviated names) that I found in the files used for each manuscript:

2021 CIR manuscript files

<u>Case Number</u>	<u>Patient/Subject Name</u> <u>(abbreviated)</u>	<u>USED</u> <u>in ms</u>
		

I located these patients/human subjects (abbreviated names) with each person’s Case Number in the 2021 *CIR* manuscript directory’s file folders or files. The details I found in the *CIR* manuscript file are shown on Page 4 and in Appendices 1 to 4.

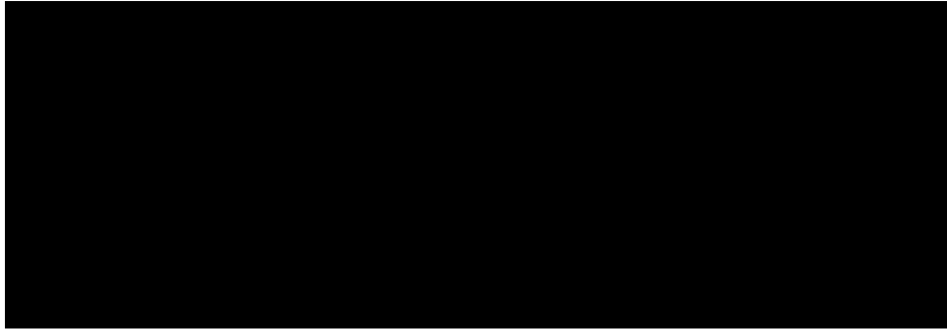
I found the following files in the [2021 CIR manuscript files directory](#) listing the above subjects:

Renal Path Reports 11/19/2021 [Case Number] [see Appendix 1]

CPI nephritis
6/29/2020

Drug-AIN
6/29/2020

Normal
6/29/2020



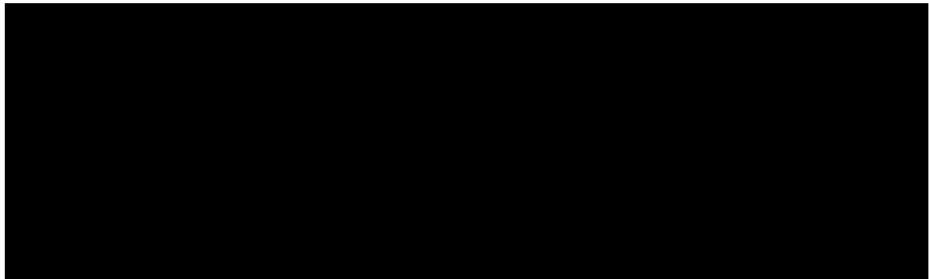
Renal Path Reports

Nanostring 11092020 [Case Number] [see Appendix 2]

CPI/AIN/ATN

drug-AIN

Control



Renal Path Reports

Updated CPI spreadsheet 6/28/2021 [Case Number] [see Appendix 3]

CPI-AIN/ATN

Drug-AIN

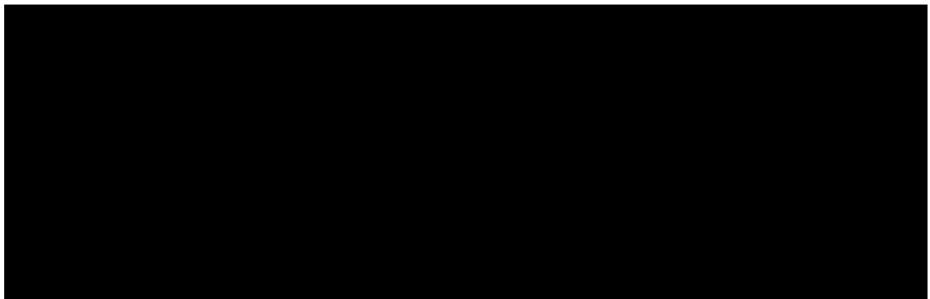
Norm-Control



Resub Data

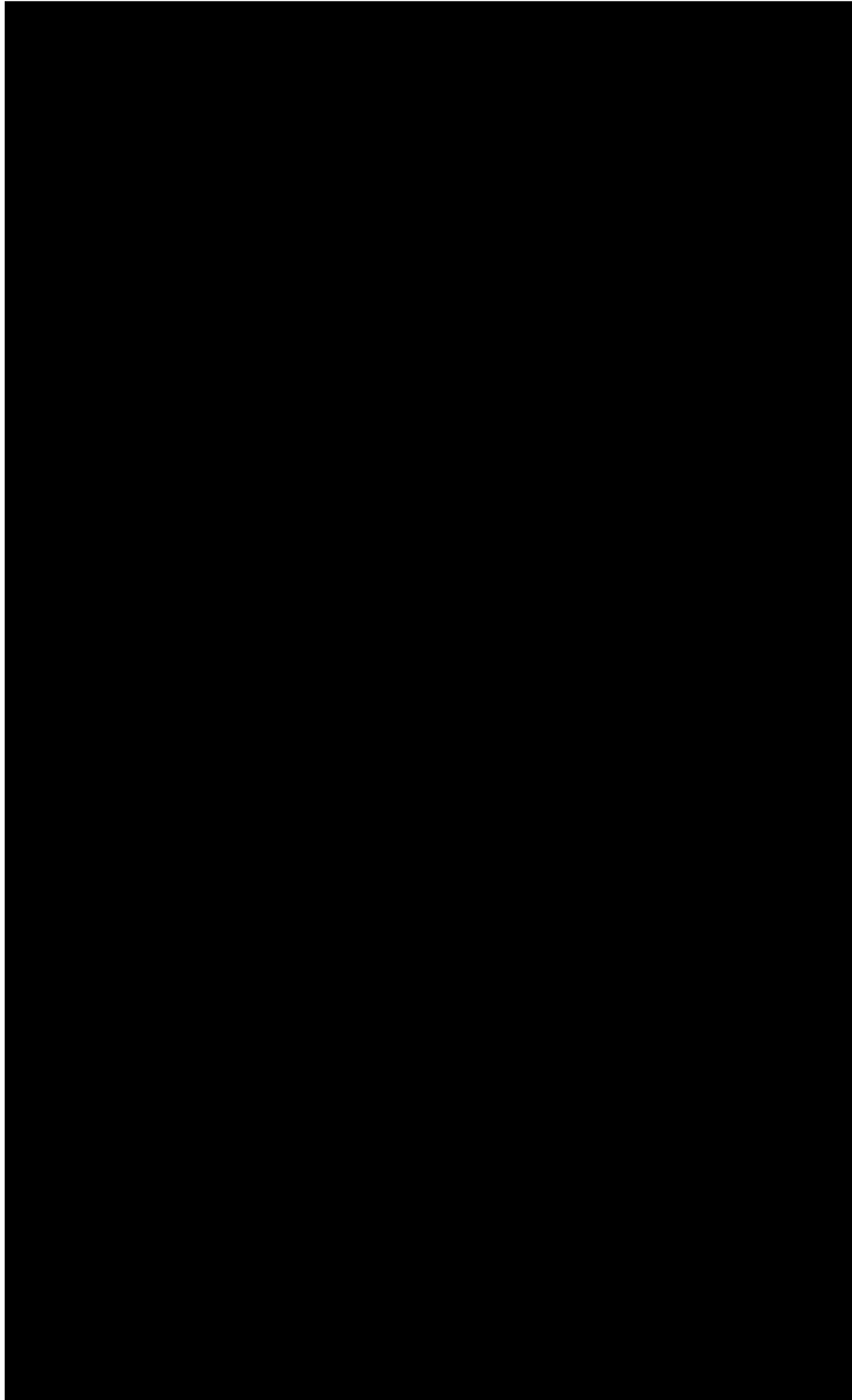
Renal Path Pictures 8/21/2021 [Case Number] [see Appendix 4]

[CPI]



2022 JCII manuscript files

<u>Case Number</u>	<u>CYIP number</u>	<u>Subject Name</u> <u>(abbreviated)</u>	<u>USED</u> <u>in ms</u>
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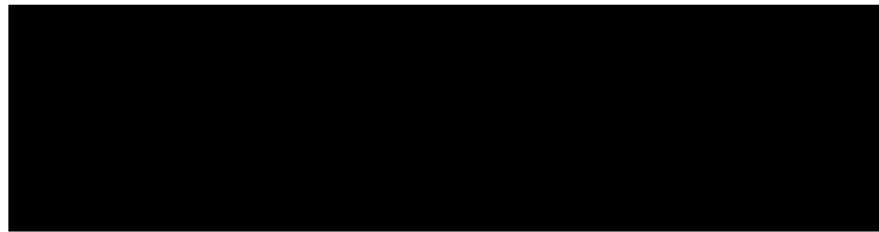


I located these human subjects (abbreviated names) with each person’s Case Number, and/or CYIP number, in the 2022 *JCII* manuscript directory file folders or files. . The details that I found in the *JCII* manuscript file are shown on Pages 6 to 8 and in Appendices 5 to 10.

I found the following files in the [2022 JCII manuscript files directory](#) listing the above subjects:

Photoshop figures/

Photoshop Figure 2 9/2/2022 [[Case Number](#)] [see Appendix 5]



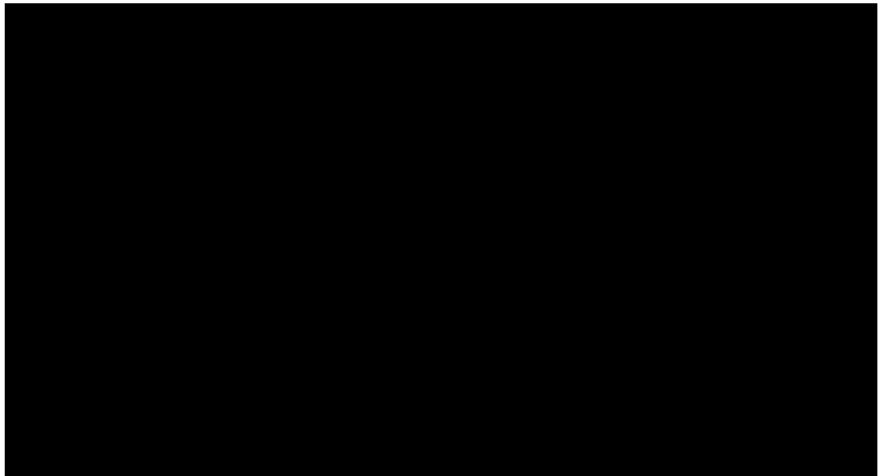
Plasma cytokines

plasma 12 cytokine 8/12/2022 [[Names and CYIP Number](#)] [see Appendix 6]

ATN

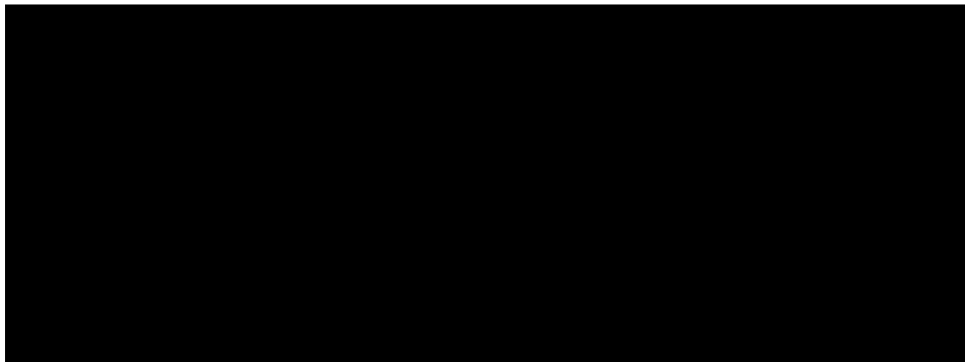
AIN

HTN/CTL



QC Baylor

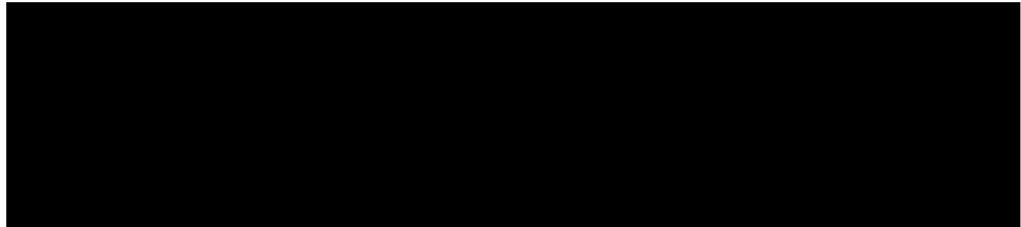
Nanostring samples 03022022 [[Names and CYIP Numbers](#)] [see Appendix 7]



I found the following files in the [2022 JCIH manuscript files directory](#) listing the above subjects:

QC Baylor (continued)

[Nanostring samples](#) 03022022 [[Names and CYIP Numbers](#)] [see Appendix 7]
(continued)

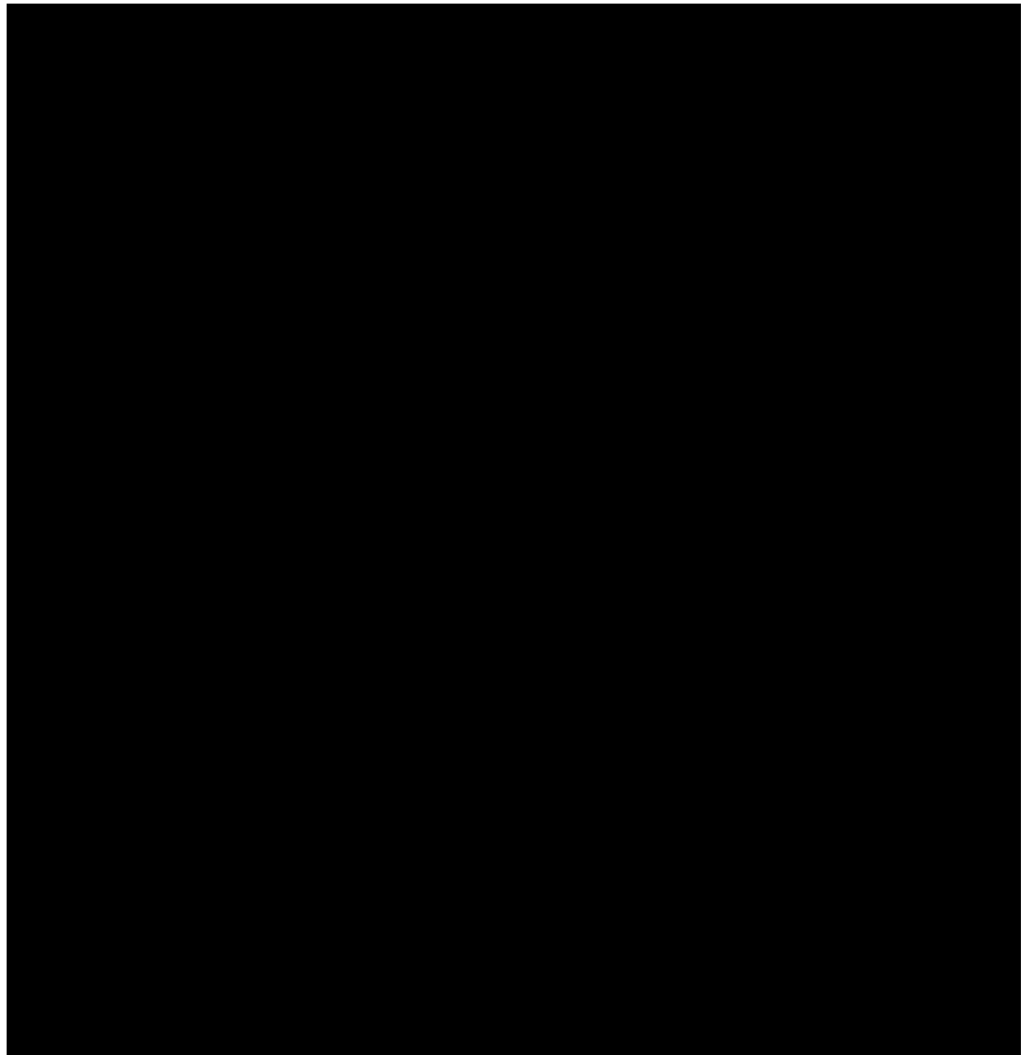


[Renal biopsy reports](#) 9/20/2022 [[Name and Case Number](#)] [see Appendix 8]

ATN

AIN

HTN/CTRL



I found the following files in the [2022 JCII manuscript files directory](#) listing the above subjects:

Renal Pathology Request 2/22/2022

[see Appendix 9]

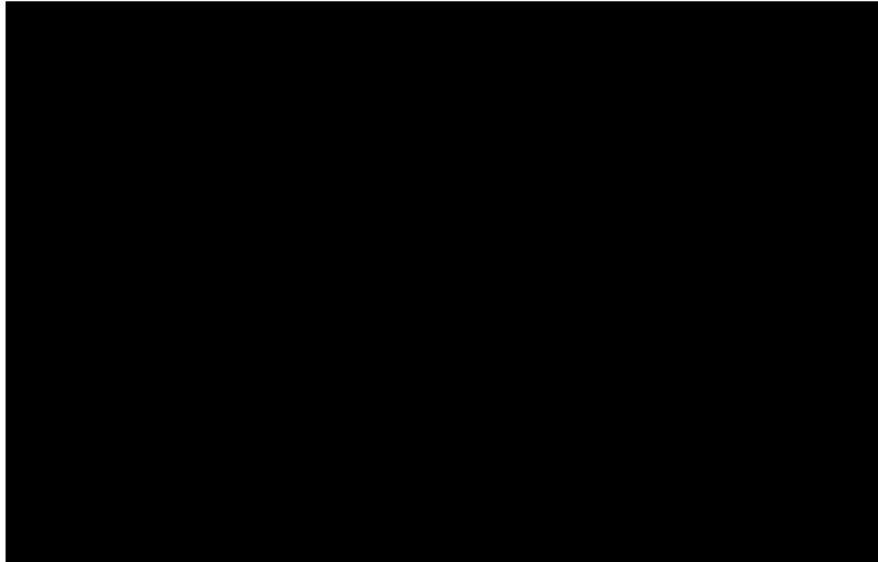
For these 17 cases

[Names and Case numbers]

ATN

AIN-g

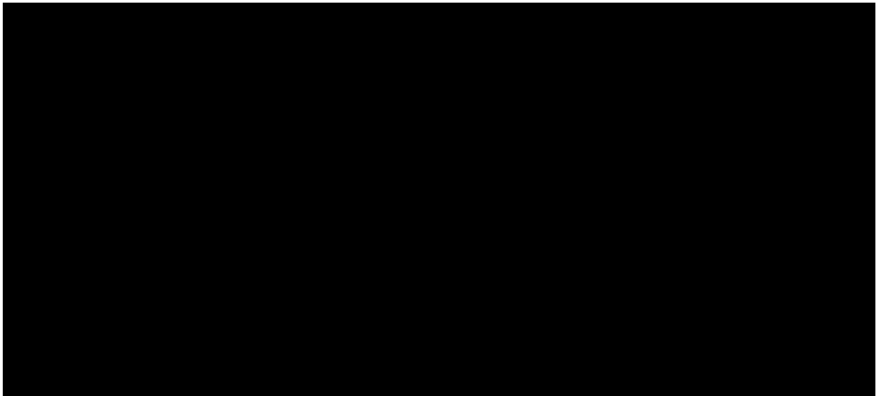
HTN/CTL



For these 7 cases

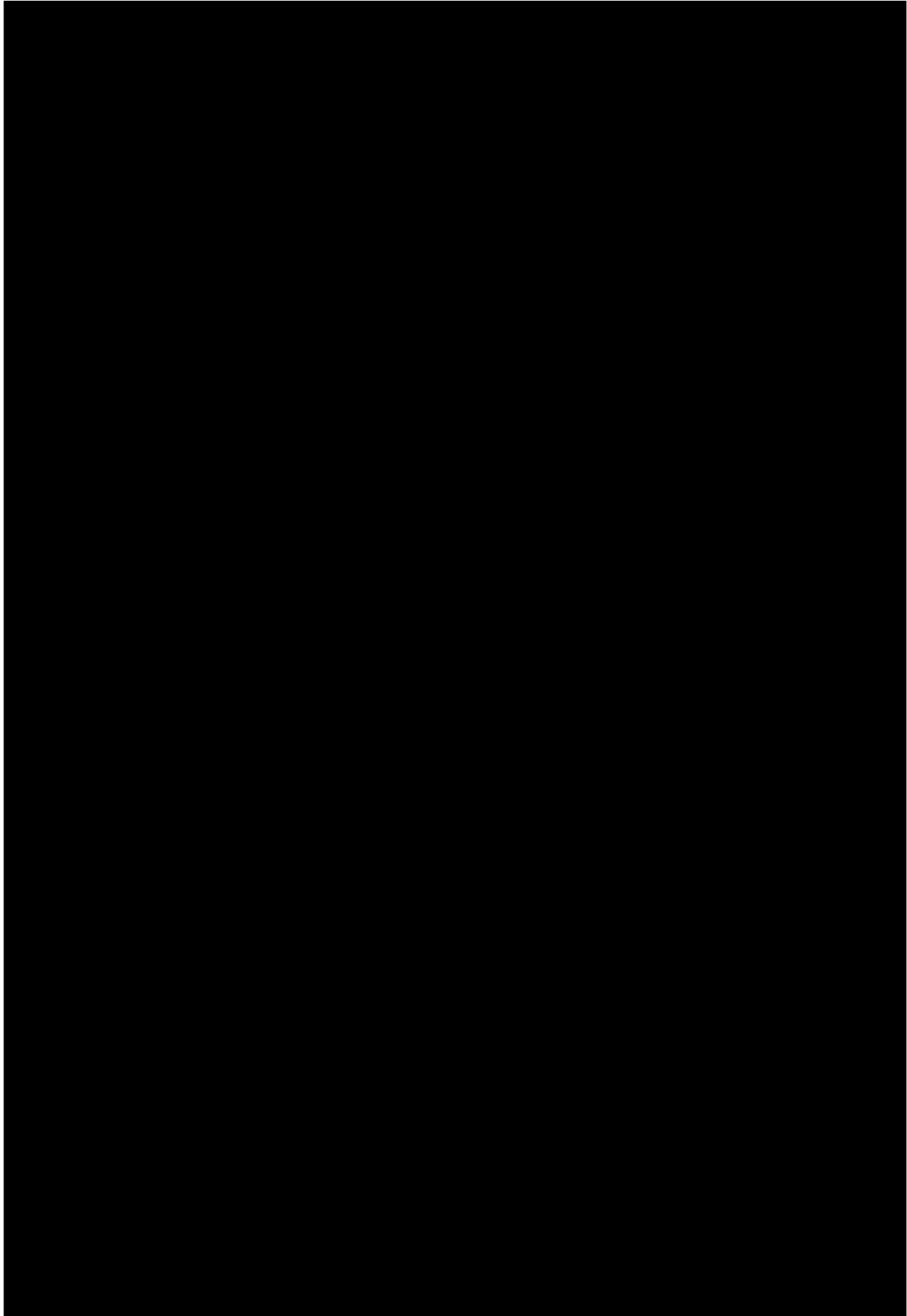
[Names, Case number and CYIP number]

AIN



I found following files in the [2022 JCIH manuscript files directory](#) listing above subjects (cont.):

Urine cytokines and creatinine 8/6/2022 [[Names and CYIP number](#)] [see Appendix 10]



My Conclusion from review of Drs. Yee and Lin's *CIR* and *JCI Insight* manuscripts files

I found no overlap in the numerous detailed records in the *CIR* and *JCI* manuscripts files for the patients/human subjects listed, with their names and Case Numbers [all were R17- to R19- for *CIR*, versus all being R20- to R22- for *JCI*]. All of the patients/human subjects are different in the extensively documented two file directories for the *CIR* and *JCI* manuscripts.

Therefore, I conclude there is no basis for apparent allegations of plagiarism of the data in the *JCI* manuscript from the *CIR* manuscript, both of which were written by Dr. Lin.⁵



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⁵ I noted the submission to the Society of Immunotherapy for Cancer Committee of an abstract, with Corresponding Author Dr. Adi Diab (another Corresponding Author was Dr. Ala Abudayyeh), for which Dr. Diab wrote a letter on July 27, 2021, supporting Dr. Lin's submission of the abstract on the earlier research on this topic (it was posted online on November 10, 2021): Jamie S. Lin *et al.*, , "Tertiary Lymphoid Gene Structure Signature Detected in Immune Checkpoint Inhibitor-Induced Immune Related Adverse Event" https://jitc.bmj.com/content/jitc/9/Suppl_2/A845.full.pdf *J. for Immunotherapy of Cancer*, Volume 9, Issue Suppl 2, Young Investigator Award <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/jitc-2021-SITC2021.808>

Corresponding Author Diab stated in her letter, fully supporting this SITC abstract and Dr. Lin:

... it is Dr. Lin who has led the execution from start to finish including data collection and assembly, data analysis and interpretation, and abstract writing. We merely provided her with the raw data.... She reviewed all the cases, designed the comparisons, and ensured the samples met quality control metrics before analyzing any data... Dr. Lin astutely noted that there was an abundance of T and B cell associated genes in ICI-AIN... these observations might be associated with tertiary lymphoid structures (TLS) and confirmed the presence of TLS signatures in the ICI-AIN group... I hope this letter indicates my sincere enthusiasm for Dr. Jamie S. Lin's Young Investigator Award SITC abstract application.

Renal Path Reports – folder, pdf files – 11/19/2021

SOURCE

Paper1 CIR manuscript

Renal Path Reports

11/19/2021

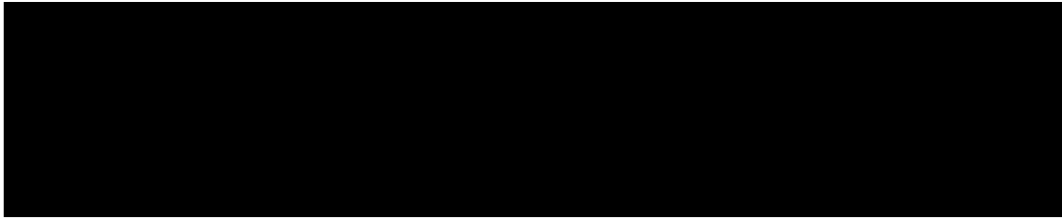
CPI nephritis

[Patient Name (abbreviated)]

Case Number

(6/29/2020)

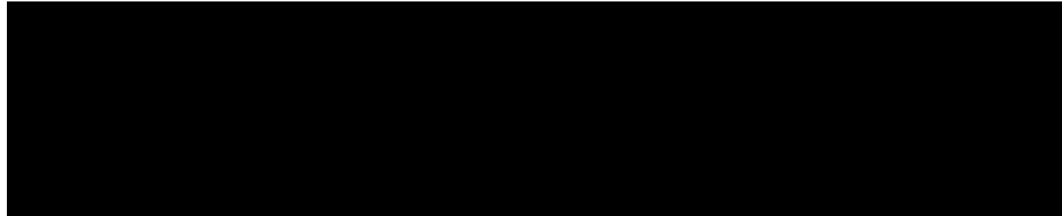
1



Drug-AIN



Normal



Appendix 2 Expert Opinion of Dr. Alan Price, Research Integrity Consultant Experts

Nanostring 11092020

xlsx 6/03/2021

SOURCE

Paper1 CIR manuscript

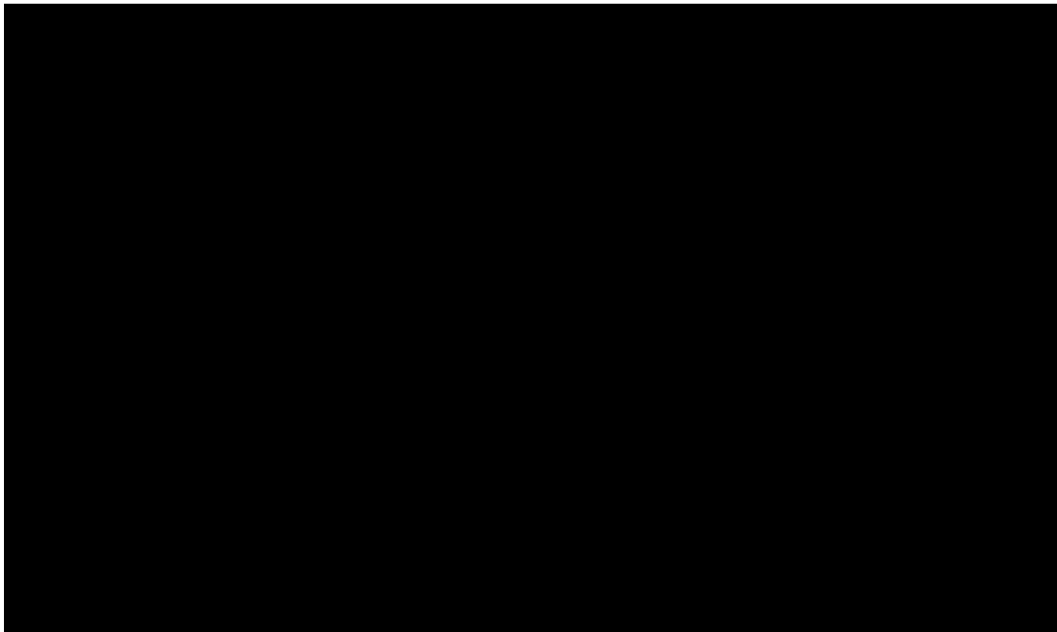
Renal Path Reports

Nanostring 11092020 (JLin8@mdanderson.org)

xlsx

06/03/2021

[Case Number]



Appendix 3

Expert Opinion of Dr. Alan Price, Research Integrity Consultant Experts

updated CPI spreadsheet

xlsx file

6/28/2021

SOURCE

Paper1_CIR manuscript

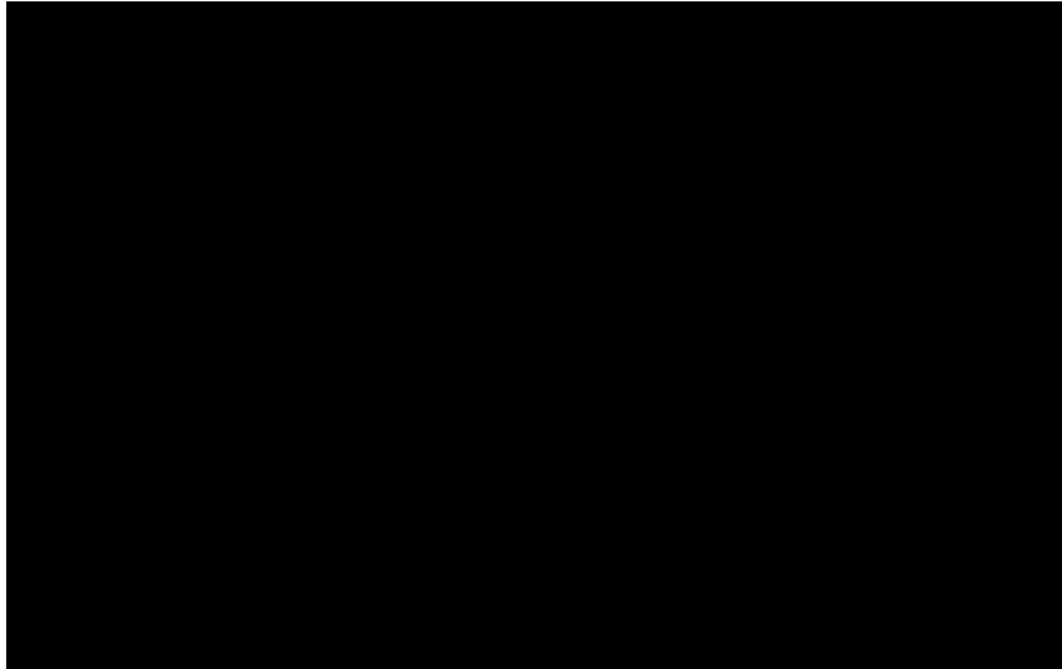
Renal Path Reports

Updated CPI spreadsheet

Case Number

biopsy date

6/28/2021



Renal Pathology Figures

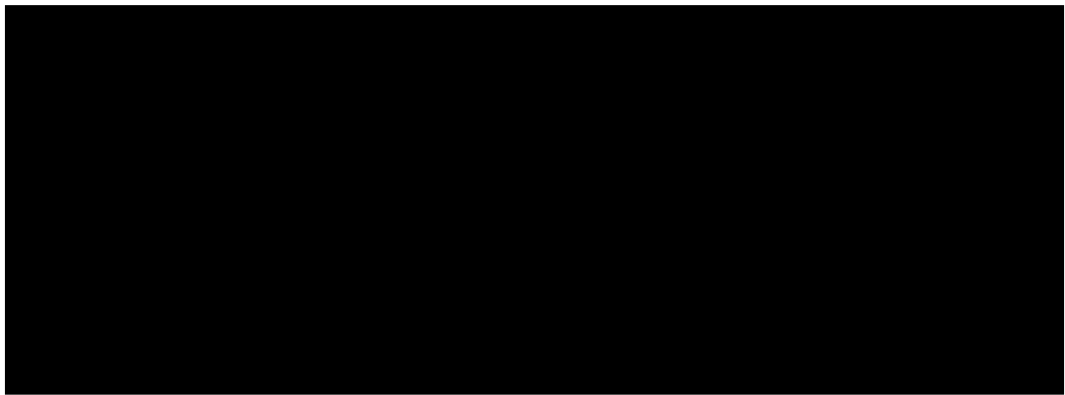
SOURCE

Paper1 CIR manuscript

Resub Data

Renal Path Pictures

Case Numbers



Photoshop figures

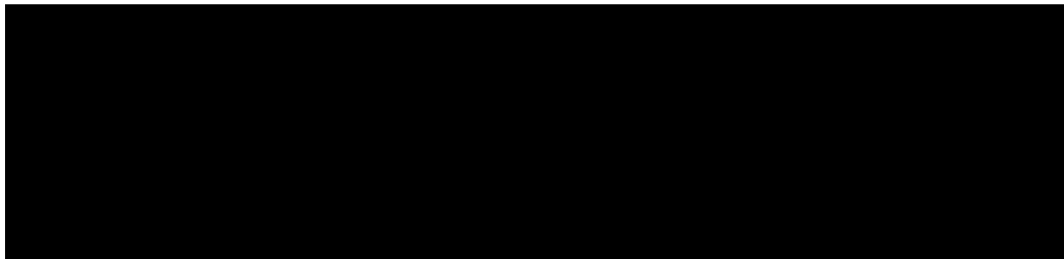
SOURCE

Paper2_JCII manuscript

Photoshop

Figure 2

[Case Number]



Plasma cytokines

SOURCE

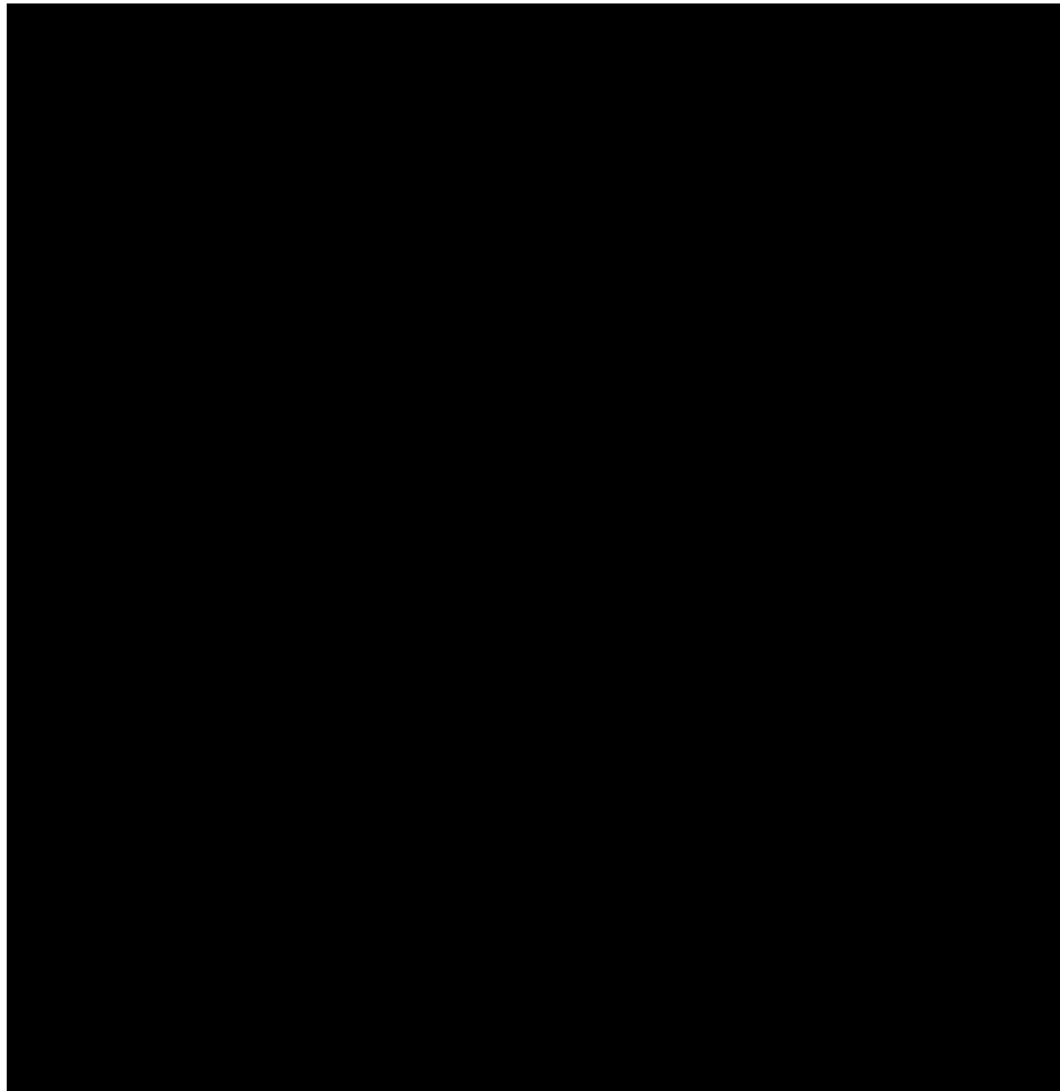
Paper2 JCII manuscript

Plasma cytokines 8/16/2022

plasma 12 cytokine 08122022 xlsx 8/12/2022

[Patient name (abbreviated)]

CYIP number



Plasma cytokines (continued)

SOURCE

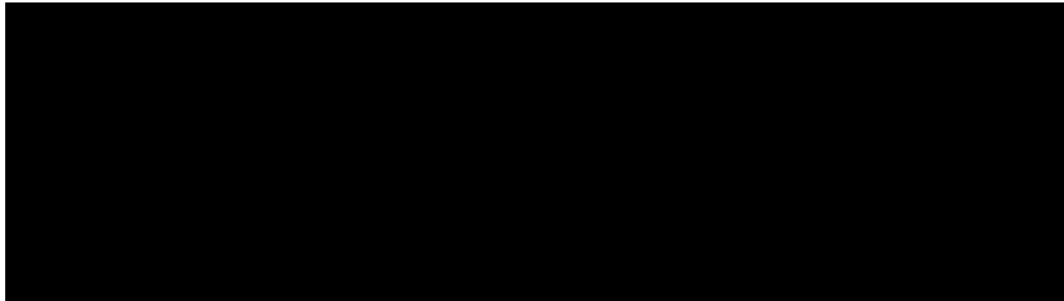
Paper2 JCII manuscript

Plasma cytokines 8/16/2022

plasma 12 cytokine 08122022 xlsx 8/12/2022

[Patient name, abbreviated]

CYIP number



Nanostring samples

SOURCE

Paper2_JCII manuscript

QC Baylor

Nanostring samples 03022022

xlsx 6/8/2022

[Patient name CYIP number]

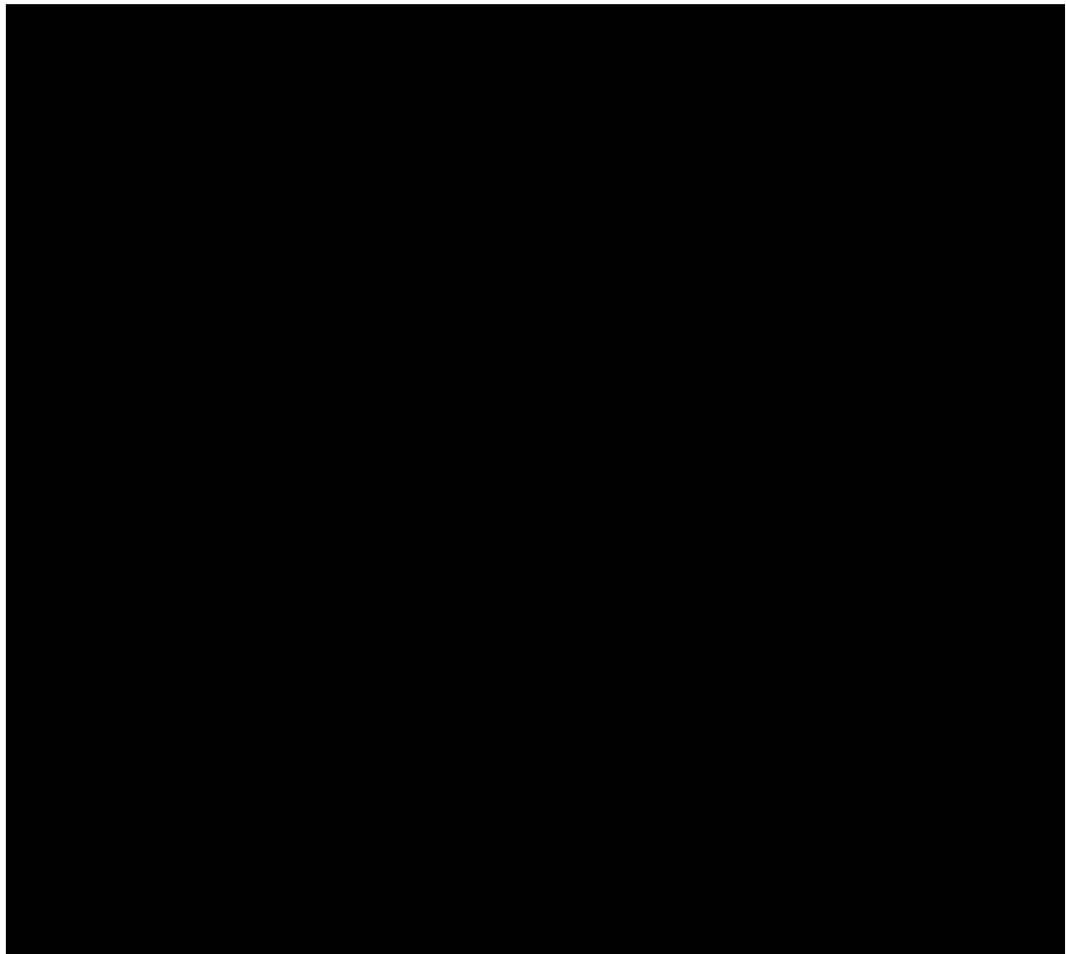
(abbreviated)]

[Column] F

[Patient name CYIP number]

(abbreviated)

[Column] H



Renal biopsy reports

SOURCE

Paper2 JCII manuscript

Renal biopsy reports

9/20/2022

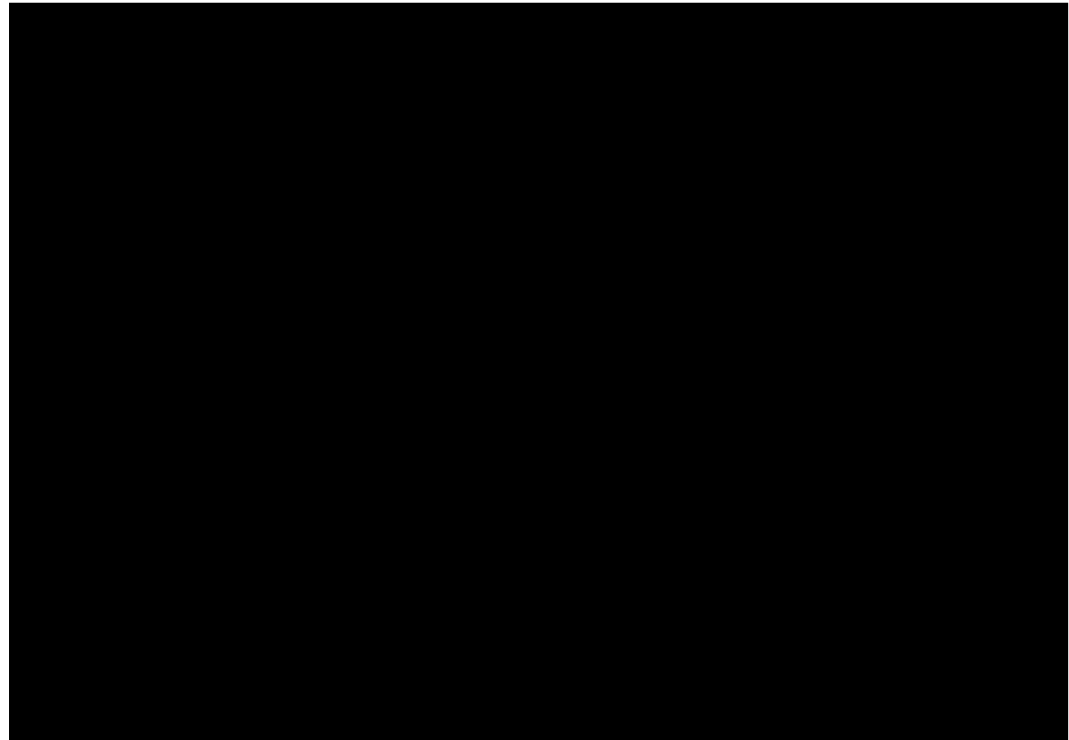
[Patient name]
(abbreviated)

Case number

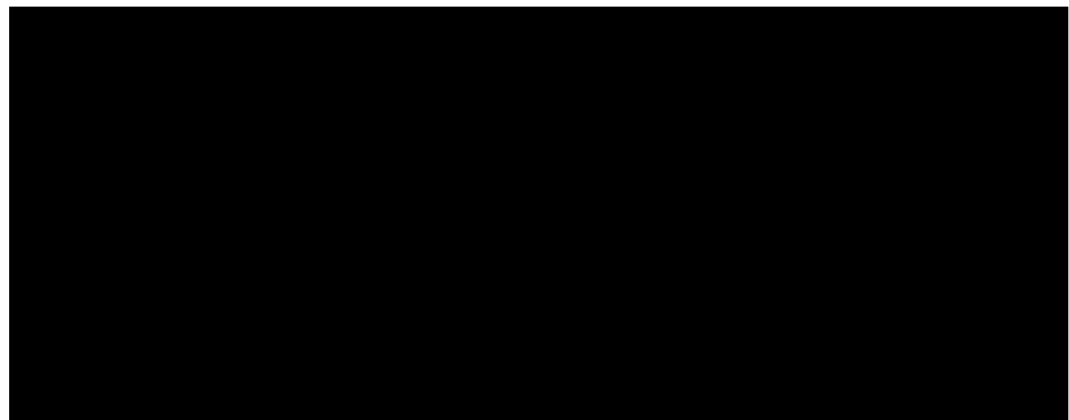
pdf

filedate

AIN



ATN



Renal biopsy reports [continued]

SOURCE

Paper2 JCII manuscript

Renal biopsy reports

9/20/2022

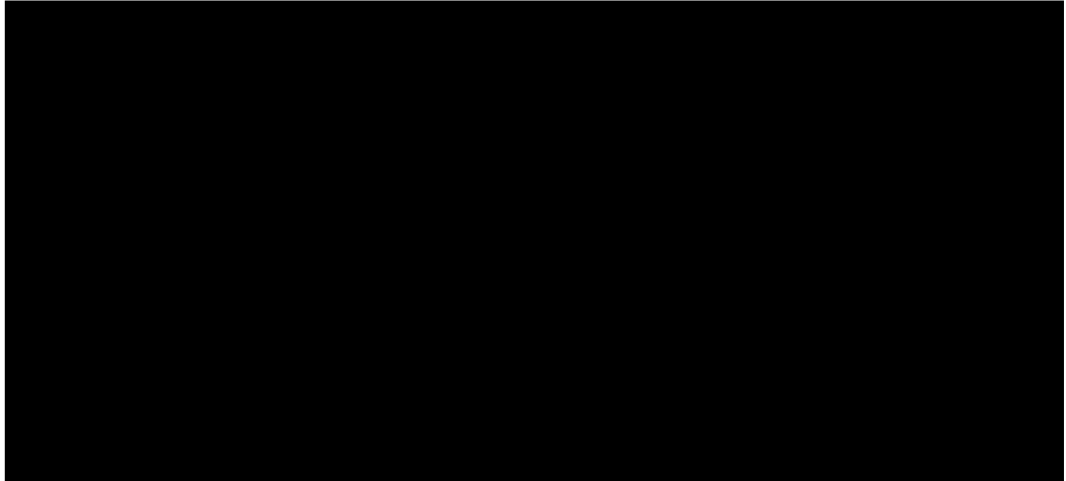
[Patient name]
(abbreviated)

Case number

pdf

filedate

HTN Ctl



Renal Pathology Request

SOURCE

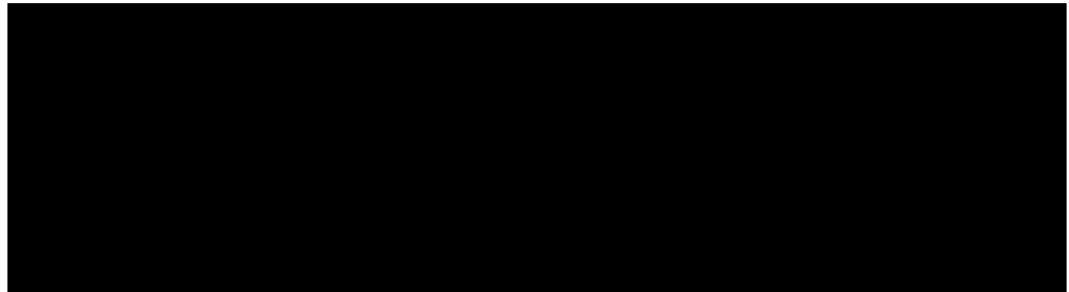
Paper2 JCII manuscript

Renal Pathology Request 01262022 decoded

2/22/2022

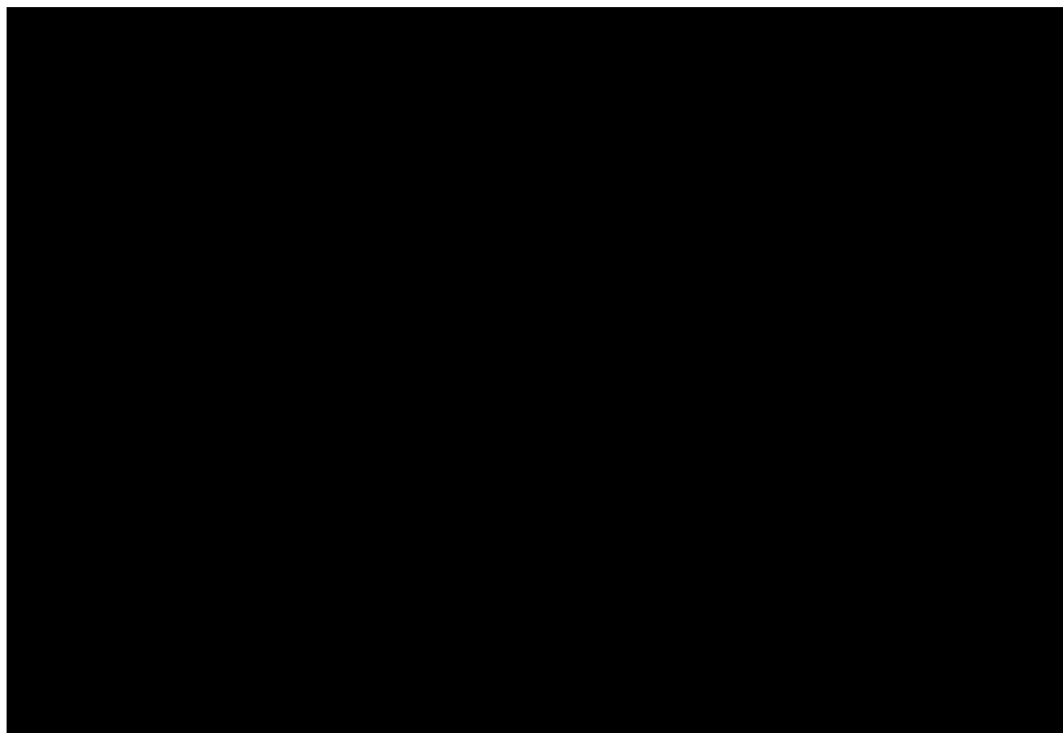
For these 7 cases

<u>Patient name</u> (abbreviated)	<u>CYIP number</u>	<u>Case number</u>
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For these 17 cases

<u>Patient name</u> (abbreviated)	<u>Case number</u>
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Appendix 10

Expert Opinion of Dr. Alan Price, Research Integrity Consultant Experts

Urine cytokines

SOURCE

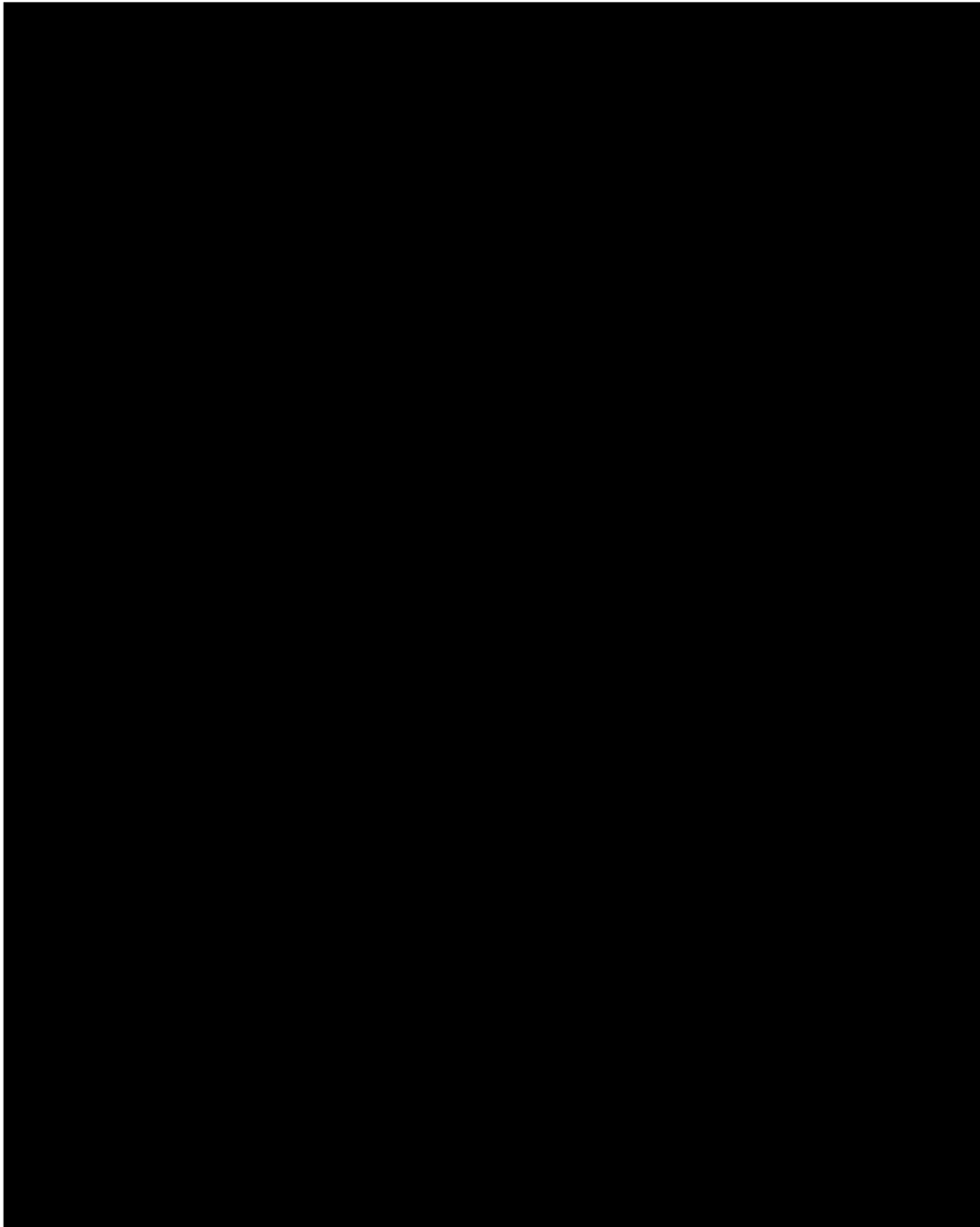
Paper2 JCIH manuscript

Urine cytokines and creatinine

06042022

xlsx

8/6/2022



Urine cytokines (continued)

SOURCE

Paper2 JCIH manuscript

Urine cytokines and creatinine

06042022

xlsx

8/6/2022

Patient name
(abbreviated)

CYIP number

