

November 6, 2014

Ms. Mary Ballantyne  
Executive Director of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies  
75 Front Street East, Suite 308  
Toronto, Ontario  
Canada M5E 1V9

Dear Ms. Ballantyne,

You may be aware of a recent series of articles in the Toronto media. We realize the articles may have raised concerns for some of you. Thus, we felt it prudent to reassure the agencies we serve of a few essential facts:

- The Motherisk Drug Testing Laboratory has a robust quality assurance program in place and applies the most advanced testing methodology and standards available for the analysis of cocaine and its metabolites. It is a recognized leading authority on toxicology and hair testing, particularly in the context of child welfare related work.
- Motherisk laboratory staff have training in pharmacology, toxicology, addictions, and child health and development. Motherisk is committed to facilitating objective understanding of drug test results to enable a rational assessment of risk to children and families.
- The Motherisk Drug Testing Laboratory is accredited as a clinical laboratory under the Ontario Medical Association's Quality Management Program for Laboratory Services by the province of Ontario's Laboratory Accreditation program, ensuring the highest available standards of medical laboratory service and accountability. Since 2001, Motherisk has participated annually in international proficiency testing to ensure that hair drug testing results are comparable to results generated in other laboratories around the world, including forensic laboratories.
- It is not uncommon for scientific experts to disagree on methodology and the interpretation of results. This recently happened when an expert opinion, which SickKids was asked to provide in a 2009 court case (arising from a 2005 incident), was questioned by a defense expert in 2013. It is important to note that the appeal in this case was granted on the basis that the trial court was unaware of the competing expert opinion evidence regarding 2005 testing methods used to determine chronic cocaine ingestion. The Court of Appeal's decision did not make any finding about the Motherisk Program or its evidence.
- Recent media attention focuses on the opinion of one expert who is critical of Motherisk's approach and findings. An additional expert retained by the Crown provided an opinion that Motherisk's conclusions were valid and reliable.

SickKids takes any such evidence-based challenges very seriously. As leaders in the clinical and scientific community, we are committed to the ongoing assessment of all the work we do. Consistent with our usual practices, we will work with the appropriate bodies to address any concerns that may emerge.

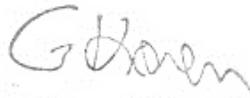
We are confident that our testing methodologies are consistent with the highest international standards in the field of analytical toxicology.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call Joey Gareri at 416-813-5780.

Sincerely,



Joey Gareri  
Laboratory Manager  
Motherisk Program



Dr. Gideon Koren  
Senior Scientist, Director  
Motherisk Program



Patricia Macgregor  
Executive Director  
Clinical Programs