

MERS papers are duplicates, point to dysfunction is Saudi scientific community

A great story can be told again and again. But scientists working on the deadly Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) virus are puzzled by two papers appearing in separate journals that not only tell the same story, but also are based on data from the very same patient in Saudi Arabia.

The double publication—the first in Emerging Infectious Diseases (EID), the other later in The New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM)—has pitted Saudi Arabia’s former deputy minister of health, Ziad Memish, against infectious diseases specialist Tariq Madani of King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah, who recently became the Saudi government’s chief scientific adviser on MERS. Caught in the uncomfortable middle is German virologist Christian Drosten of the University of Bonn, who helped both and became a co-author on Memish’s paper.

“This is a much bigger issue than just a duplicate publication,” adds Michael Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. “It really is a sign of the overall scientific investigation dysfunction that has occurred to date in Saudi Arabia.”

Read the full, original story: [Research teams clash over too-similar MERS papers](#)