

Surgisphere: Governments and WHO Changed COVID-19 Policy Based on Suspect Data From Tiny US Company

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Science and Medicine](#)

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We bring to the attention of our readers selected quotes from a report published by The Guardian.

“The [World Health Organization](#) and a number of national governments have changed their Covid-19 policies and treatments on the basis of flawed data from a little-known US healthcare analytics company, also calling into question the integrity of key studies published in some of the world’s most prestigious medical journals.

A Guardian investigation can reveal the US-based company Surgisphere, whose handful of employees appear to include a science fiction writer and an adult-content model, has provided data for multiple studies on Covid-19 co-authored by its chief executive, but has so far failed to adequately explain its data or methodology.

Data it claims to have legitimately obtained from more than a thousand hospitals worldwide formed the basis of scientific articles that have led to changes in Covid-19 treatment policies in Latin American countries. It was also behind a [decision by the WHO and research institutes around the world to halt trials of the controversial drug hydroxychloroquine](#). On Wednesday, the WHO announced those trials would now resume.

Two of the world’s leading medical journals – the Lancet and the New England Journal of Medicine – published studies based on Surgisphere data. The studies were co-authored by the firm’s chief executive, Sapan Desai.

Late on Tuesday, after being approached by the Guardian, the Lancet released an “expression of concern” about its published study. The New England Journal of Medicine has also issued a similar notice.

An independent audit of the provenance and validity of the data has now been commissioned by the authors not affiliated with Surgisphere because of “concerns that have been raised about the reliability of the database”.

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