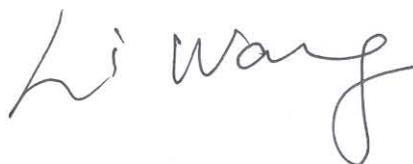


### *Conflict-of-interest statement*

Although partly funding we received was from a commercial source "Bristol-Myers Squibb Company", which is the manufacturer of BARACLUDE (entecavir), one of the antiviral agents studied in our study for research grants, we have not signed an agreement with Bristol-Myers Squibb Company of the research reported in the contribution that prevents us from publishing both positive and negative results or that forbids us from publishing this research without the prior approval of the sponsor.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Li Wang". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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