

Peer Review

# Review of: "Expanding Contracting Authorities Across the Department of Health and Human Services Family of Agencies to Address Critical Public Health Needs"

Paulo Ferrinho<sup>1</sup>

1. Instituto de Higiene e Medicina Tropical, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal

## REVIEW TEXT:

This paper addresses an important policy issue: how limited HHS contracting authorities hindered COVID-19 testing through the ICATT program. However, it lacks essential scholarly elements and requires major revision.

## Critical Issues:

1. No stated objectives or article type - The paper never defines what it is (commentary, opinion, perspective ...) or aims to accomplish. Add an Introduction with explicit objectives.
2. Missing methodology - There is no explanation of the analytical approach or case selection. Include a "Methods/Approach" section.
3. Zero academic literature - Cites only statutes, government reports, and websites - no peer-reviewed scholarship on OTAs, emergency contracting, or pandemic response. Conduct a literature review and engage with scholarly debates.
4. Poor organization - The text jumps to technical details without context; presents the case before definitions; Section 3 repeats the abstract; lacks transitions between sections. Reorganize: Introduction → Background → Case → Analysis → Recommendations.
5. Missing analysis - CDC's 2022 OTA mentioned without explaining implications. No engagement with counter-arguments on accountability/oversight trade-offs.

Strengths - Important topic, concrete evidence, actionable recommendations, timely.

Recommendation - Major revision recommended. With substantial changes, particularly literature engagement, methodological transparency, and better organization, this could become a valuable contribution.

## **Declarations**

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.