Peer Review Report

Douglas Griep and Megan Marsolek were the two reviewers of my project. We had a very helpful group conversation regarding my proposed research project. One point that they brought up regarding the methodology of my project was that the (neighborhood) weights matrix for the counties in the US. They suggested that the definition of the adjacency of the counties should be consistent when I perform local Moran's I and when I use space-time scan statistics. I think this critique is very legit and important. I initially used Queen neighborhood strategy to build a weights' matrix for local Moran's I and then considering this point I changed the strategy to inverse Euclidian distance which is the same as the one that SaTScan software uses.

They also made a few more comments about the time resolution of the analysis. The reviewers suggested a daily resolution of the disease instead of monthly. This suggestion is indeed helpful and interesting, but I might consider it as a future extension of the current project as it will be considered big data and very difficult to deal with. Specifically, the SaTScan analysis requires a big capacity of memory as it runs a 999-iterative Mote Carlo simulation to verify the significance of the results.