THE HUMAN VARIOME PROJECT

sharing data · reducing disease

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MINUTES

Gene/Disease Specific Database Advisory Council
Tuesday 17 March, 2015
1200-1300hrs UTC/GMT

MEMBERS

Present
Peter E M Taschner (Chair)
Arleen Auerbach
Raymond Dalgleish
Rosemary Ekong
Daniel Hampshire
Sarah E A Leigh
Yves Sabbagh
Mauno Vihinen

ICO Staff
Timothy D. Smith

Apologies
Olubunmi K D Abel
Ammar Al-Chalabi
Stefan Aretz
Timothy Barret
David Baux
Jean-Pierre Bayley
Daniel Bichet
Nenad Blau
Nancy Braverman
Paola Carrera
Johan T den Dunnen
Pascal Escher
Marc Ferre
Mary Fujiwara
Bruce Gottlieb
Tamas Hegedus
Raoul Hennekam
Alex Hewitt
Ammar Husami
Derek Lim
Finlay Macrae
Eamonn Maher
Etienne Mornet
Magali Olivier
Sue M Povey
Judith Anne Savige
Sarah Sim
Carli Tops
Ronald Trent
Richard van Wijk
Katarzyna Wertheim-Tysarowska
Tom Winder
Bing Yu
Martina Witsch-Baumgartner
Johannes Zschocke

1. **Welcome**

2. **Apologies**

   Apologies were noted as above.

3. **Welcome new members**

   No new members were admitted since the last meeting.

4. **Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting**

   Minutes were approved unanimously

5. **Matters arising from the previous meeting**

   a. ***Policy recommendations on variant terminology and exon numbering – Raymond Dalgleish***

   Raymond Dalgleish informed the Council that he had been unable to progress this item due to ill health. Raymond further reported to the Council that the recently published *Standards and guidelines for the interpretation of sequence variants* from the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics and the Association for Molecular Pathology contains definitions for a number of terms, including clearly specifying that the term 'variant' should be used in favour of the terms 'mutation' and 'polymorphism,' and as such, any move by the Project to adopt a similar

policy will most likely not be seen as controversial. Raymond Dalgleish flagged that a policy on exon numbering may be more contentious and advised the Council that it may need to consider multiple versions of any such policy. Raymond undertook to produce a draft for the next meeting.

ACTION:	Raymond Dalgleish to continue to draft policy recommendations.

Arleen Auerbach queried whether terminology for the classification of variants fell within the scope of the policy recommendations being drafted as this was included in the recently published ACMG guidelines. Peter Taschner counselled that this issue should be dealt with separately to avoid confusing matters. Raymond Dalgleish advised the Council that LOVD contains hard-coded terminology for pathogenicity that does not comply with the ACMG guidelines and as such, compliance would require changes to the LOVD codebase. Peter Taschner advised that this is possible if a request is made.

6. Report from Chair

Peter Taschner reported on progress made in working with journal editors to update author guidelines to require the use of HGVS nomenclature and submission of variants to databases. Raymond Dalgleish reported on a recent experience of his with a paper in PLoS One: variants were reported in the paper but there was no indication of the reference sequence that was used. Sequence data was provided in the online supplementary material in MS Word format and without any numbering or annotation. Raymond Dagleish suggested that PLoS One be added to the list of journals that are contacted about reporting standards.

Peter Taschner noted that it is important for the journals to not only state that they require the use of HGVS nomenclature but to ensure that authors comply with this requirement. Ideally this would be the job of the reviewers, but this is not always done. There may be a role for the Human Variome Project to randomly assess compliance; however this would be difficult to do systematically. He suggested that the Council consider how a process for this could be developed. In the meantime, he asked for Council members to send examples of non-compliance, such as that mentioned by Raymond Dalgleish, to Timothy Smith at the Human Variome Project ICO.

ACTION:	Council members to send examples of papers not using HGVS nomenclature correctly to Timothy Smith

Areleen Auerbach noted that the recently published ACMG guidelines already discussed by the Council clearly specify that HGVS nomenclature must be used when reporting variants.

7. Working Group Reports

a. WG06: Disease & Phenotype Descriptions in Gene/Disease Specific Databases – Peter Robinson

No report was received.

b. WG08: Ethics Checklist for Gene/Disease Specific Database Curators and Submitters – Rosemary Ekong

Rosemary Ekong reported that the Working Group was in the process of analysing the responses to the survey of Gene/Disease Specific Database curators that they fielded. They are also examining other guidelines and will begin work on a first draft soon. She requested assistance from Council members and asked that they send her descriptions of scenarios involving ethical issues that they have encountered in the course of curating their databases.

ACTION:	Council members to send ethical issue scenarios to Rosemary Ekong

8. Gene/Disease Specific Database Activities

Johan den Dunnen reported that Quest Diagnostics has begun to share their data with LOVD. So far they have submitted data on polymorphisms in BRCA 1 and 2, but once some further technical issues are sorted out, they will begin to submit all of their data. Arleen Auerbach asked about the relationship between LOVD data collection activities and activities by the Global Alliance. Johan den Dunnen clarified that Quest Diagnostics is sharing their data with LOVD irrespective of anything related to the Global Alliance. GA4GH is working on the BRCA Challenge, an aspect of which will be centralising as much BRCA data as possible; this is still in the planning stages. He further noted that LOVD and ClinVar will be exchanging data soon. Johan den Dunnen also reported that the Dutch and Belgian national BRCA collections have also been uploaded to LOVD.

9. Recommendations to the Scientific Advisory Committee

No recommendations were made.

10. Other matters

11. Next Meetings

- Tuesday 12 May 2015 1200hrs GMT/UTC
- Tuesday 7 July 2015 1200hrs GMT/UTC
- Tuesday 8 September 2015 1200hrs GMT/UTC
- Tuesday 10 November 2015 1200hrs GMT/UTC