Opportunities for Hospital Librarians in the Era of Genomic Medicine
Helping Clinicians Implement New Approaches to Patient Care
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Introduction
Genomic medicine is a rapidly growing new field. It is a comprehensive approach to using individuals’ genetic information to guide healthcare and drug therapy strategies. Translation of research into clinical practice faces many challenges, including development and dissemination of evidence-based guidelines and policies [1]. Physician attitudes, time constraints, and lack of genomic literacy create barriers to incorporating new genomic medicine approaches to patient care [2]. The result is an information gap that is likely to grow dramatically as genomic applications transform medical practice. This study examines ways in which hospital librarians are addressing current and anticipated genomic medicine information needs.

Methods
• **Survey design:** 2 closed- and 3 open-ended questions ([http://tinyurl.com/genomicsurvey](http://tinyurl.com/genomicsurvey)) on GoogleDocs ([http://docs.google.com](http://docs.google.com))
• **Survey invitation:** directed to hospital librarians, posted on 3 electronic discussion groups (MEDLIB-L, MLA Hospital Libraries Section, MLA Public Services Section)
• **Responses:** 39
• **Timeframe:** November 2-7, 2011

Results (1)
Have you received requests from clinicians for genomic medicine information?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Information Requested</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosis/treatment of disorders related to an individual’s genome</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drug sensitivity markers (pharmaco-genomics)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information on genetics of specific diseases: cancer, cystic fibrosis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information for patients and families: genetic conditions, support groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literature searches for genetic counselors</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>General questions on trend toward genomic medicine</td>
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Discussion
Interactions between hospital librarians and clinicians in the new field of genomic medicine appear to be at an early stage. However, some clinicians are requesting support, and librarians are using a variety of tools and resources to respond. Opportunities exist for proactive librarians to help clinicians learn about and implement cutting-edge, evidence-based practices in genomic medicine.

References

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