

INTEGRATING GENOMICS AND PRECISION MEDICINE

Hafiz Ishfaq AHMAD

Hira HAMEED

Mohsin ABBAS

Abdul JABAR

Introduction

Genomics and precision medicine sciences have gained great traction in recent years and are set to transform the healthcare system completely (Fernandes et al., 2017). Understanding the whole genetic makeup of an individual has been made possible through the study of genomics, which has shed light on the hereditary causes of many disorders. Simultaneously, precision medicine emphasizes customizing medical interventions to the distinct features of every individual patient (Fernando Carrasco-Ramiro et al., 2017). There is great potential for enhancing disease prevention, diagnosis, and treatment by integrating genomes and precision medicine, eventually improving patient outcomes (Panahiazar et al., 2014).

Our knowledge of human genetics has been completely changed by genomics, which has illuminated the intricate relationship between genetic variants and disease vulnerability (Goodrich et al., 2017). Researchers have successfully utilized sophisticated sequencing technologies and bioinformatics techniques to decode the genetic code and detect genetic variants, including single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs), copy number variations (CNVs), and structural rearrangements (Nakatohi et al., 2021). These genetic variations can influence an individual's predisposition to diseases, their response to therapies, and their likelihood of experiencing adverse drug reactions (Golomb & Evans, 2008).

On the other hand, precision medicine recognizes that each patient is unique, with distinct genetic profiles, environmental exposures, and lifestyle factors (Schoettler & Strek, 2020). It emphasizes the need to move away from a one-size-fits-all approach to healthcare and instead tailor medical interventions to the specific needs of each individual (Juengst et al., 2020). By considering an individual's genetic information alongside other relevant clinical data, precision medicine aims to optimize treatment decisions, maximize therapeutic efficacy, and minimize adverse effects (Enck et al., 2013).

Integrating genomics and precision medicine represents a paradigm shift in healthcare (Pritchard et al., 2017). By combining the wealth of genetic information provided by genomics with the individualized approach of precision medicine, healthcare providers can make more informed decisions and deliver personalized, targeted treatments (Griffin, 2022). This approach can transform clinical practice, enabling clinicians to identify the most appropriate treatment options based on an individual's genetic profile, predict treatment response, and tailor interventions to maximize efficacy and minimize harm (Pashayan et al., 2020; Scheen, 2016).

Moreover, integrating genomics and precision medicine extends beyond the clinic and has profound implications for research and drug development (Seyhan & Carini, 2019). By studying patients' genomic profiles, researchers can identify biomarkers that can serve as indicators of disease presence, progression, or response to treatment (Crowley et al., 2013). This knowledge enables the development of targeted therapies

and identifying specific patient populations most likely to benefit from these treatments (Y. Wang et al., 2020).

Despite the immense potential, integrating genomics and precision medicine is challenging (Dupont et al., 2021). The interpretation and validation of genomic data, the ethical and legal considerations surrounding genetic information, the privacy and security of patient data, and the need for robust infrastructure and workforce training are all crucial factors that must be addressed for successful implementation (Wright et al., 2013).

1. Genomics: Understanding the Genetic Landscape

Genomics, a field of study within genetics, is focused on understanding the complete set of genetic information encoded within an organism's DNA. It provides a comprehensive view of an individual's genetic landscape, encompassing all the genes, non-coding regions, and variations that make each person unique (Keller, 2011).

The human genome, consisting of approximately 3 billion base pairs, is a blueprint for building and maintaining a living organism (Passarge, 2007). Genomics seeks to unravel the intricacies of this blueprint by employing advanced technologies and analytical tools to sequence and interpret the DNA sequence (Wong et al., 2011).

Sequencing techniques, such as next-generation sequencing (NGS), have revolutionized the field of genomics by enabling the rapid and cost-effective determination of an individual's genetic code. NGS platforms can generate vast amounts of genomic data, revealing the order of nucleotide bases (adenine, thymine, cytosine, and guanine) that make up an individual's DNA (Satam et al., 2023).

Analyzing the genomic data allows scientists to identify genetic variations that contribute to human diversity and influence disease susceptibility and treatment response (Tam et al., 2019). These variations include single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) and single-base differences in the DNA sequence between individuals (Tebbutt et al., 2007). SNPs can impact gene function, protein production, and cellular processes, affecting an individual's predisposition to certain diseases (Chorley et al., 2008).

In addition to SNPs, genomic analysis reveals other genetic variations, such as insertions, deletions, and rearrangements in the DNA sequence (Zhang et al., 2009). Copy number variations (CNVs), for example, involve duplications or deletions of specific segments of DNA, potentially leading to altered gene dosage and functional consequences (Pös et al., 2021). Structural variations, such as translocations or inversions, can disrupt the normal structure of chromosomes and have significant health implications (Spielmann et al., 2018).

Understanding the genetic landscape through genomics is not limited to studying the individual's DNA but also encompasses the interactions between genes and the environment (Fowler et al., 2011). Genomics allows researchers to investigate how genetic variations interact with environmental factors, lifestyle choices, and other variables to influence disease risk, treatment outcomes, and overall health (Suhre & Gieger, 2012).

Moreover, genomics plays a pivotal role in uncovering the genetic basis of rare genetic disorders and complex diseases (Maroilley & Tarailo-Graovac, 2019). By comparing the genomic profiles of affected individuals with healthy controls, scientists can identify disease-causing genetic variants and gain insights into the molecular

mechanisms underlying these conditions (Wei et al., 2021). This knowledge is instrumental in improving diagnostic accuracy, developing targeted therapies, and advancing personalized medicine approaches (Fernando Carrasco-Ramiro et al., 2017).

Genomics continually evolves, driven by technological advancements and data analysis methods (Hudson, 2008). As genomic sequencing becomes more accessible and affordable, its applications in healthcare, research, and personalized medicine continue to expand (Tawfik et al., 2023). Genomics holds the promise of unlocking deeper insights into the genetic basis of diseases, enabling the development of more effective treatments, and ultimately improving the health and well-being of individuals worldwide (Rexroad et al., 2019).

2. Precision Medicine: Tailoring Healthcare to the Individual

Precision medicine refers to the more accurate characterization of diseases through genetic and other approaches, enabling more precise targeting of disease subgroups with innovative medications. Two well-known instances include cancer and cystic fibrosis (Ashley, 2016). Precision medicine is defined formally as a systematic approach to healthcare that involves a set of decision rules specifically designed for each decision point, which establish a connection between the patient's current data and a recommended course of action. A range of treatment or care-related choices, encompassing judgments on pharmaceutical selection, dosage determination, timing of administration, endorsement of specific dietary or exercise regimens, and other potential alternatives, may be considered viable courses of action (Kosorok & Laber, 2019). With the support of both scientific and political viewpoints, the word "precision medicine" has gained tremendous popularity in recent years (Behrens, 2008; Khoury, 2015; Robinson, 2012). The fundamental idea behind precision medicine, which involves individualized treatment based on a person's genes, lifestyle, and environment, is not novel: transfusion patients and donors have been matched for over a century. However, developments in genetics and the expanding accessibility of health data provide a chance to turn precise personalized patient care into a practical reality (R. Hodson, 2016). Precision medicine represents an organic progression that integrates several research disciplines with clinical practice, establishing a comprehensive knowledge base that may effectively inform personalized patient treatment strategies (Bahcall, 2015). Precision medicine offers the potential to improve health outcomes by considering individuals' unique variations in genes, environment, and lifestyle. In the forthcoming decade, precision medicine is poised to significantly transform the healthcare landscape through its advancements in several crucial domains. These include the expansion of extensive cohorts, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI), the routine incorporation of clinical genomes, the incorporation of phenomics and environmental factors, and the delivery of valuable outcomes across diverse populations (Denny & Collins, 2021).

3. The Power of Integration: Genomics and Precision Medicine

Precision medicine has the potential to augment the field of medicine significantly. Nevertheless, implementing the required innovations will need significant time, potentially spanning several years. The utilization of genetics in medical decision-making has already been observed and is expected to increase in significance. To expedite these advancements, significant modifications are necessitated inside the framework and methodologies for data collection, storage, and exchange (S. J. Aronson & H. L. Rehm, 2015). The Human Genome Project (HGP), successfully

concluded in 2001, marked a significant milestone in advancing our understanding of medicine. Other programs similar to the Human Genome Project (HGP) are underway, encompassing a range of a few hundred to several million genomes. These programs vary in their specific objectives, ranging from targeted targets to a more comprehensive approach. P4 medicine, encompassing the principles of predictiveness, preventiveness, personalization, and participation, has emerged as a field that presents novel concepts, challenges, and prospects (F. Carrasco-Ramiro et al., 2017). In recent decades, genetic medicine has experienced rapid growth, emerging as a prominent discipline within acute and chronic healthcare. The rapid growth in this field has resulted in a deficiency in genomics knowledge and preparedness among nurses and healthcare professionals. The field of genomic medicine can potentially enhance the precision of evaluating, diagnosing, and treating certain acute care conditions (Kessler, 2018).

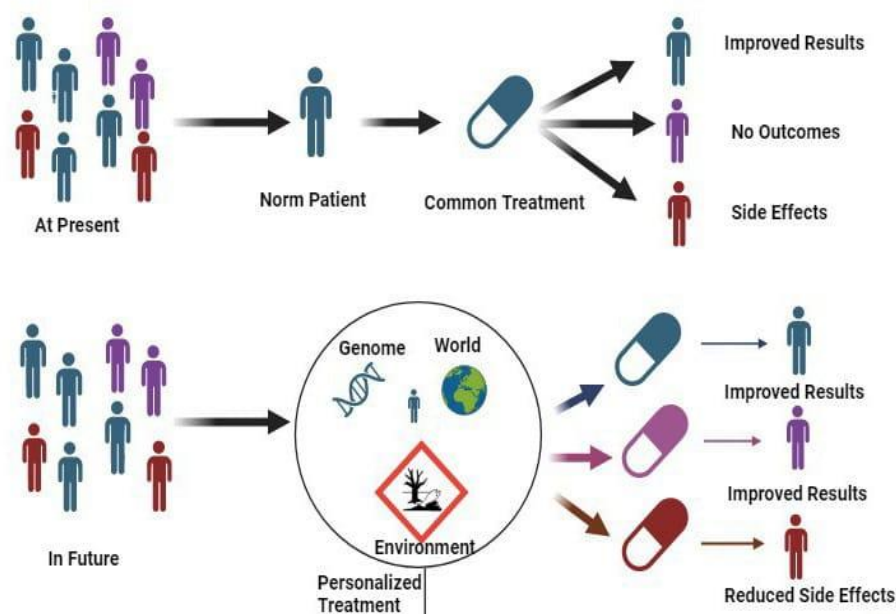


Figure 1. Effect of precision medicine on patients

4. Key Components of Integrating Genomics and Precision Medicine

Integrating genomics and precision medicine is the confluence of genetics, genomes, clinical data, and healthcare to deliver individualized and more effective medical treatment (Gordon, 2007). Comprehensive Genomic Profiling (CGP) is a strong and sophisticated molecular diagnostic method in genomics and precision medicine (Čerina et al., 2022). It includes systematically studying a patient's DNA to discover various genetic abnormalities, including mutations, copy number variations, rearrangements, and other genomic changes (Milbury et al., 2022). CGP attempts to give a thorough knowledge of the genetic composition of a patient's tumor or illness, which may be significant for diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment decision-making in numerous medical settings, notably in cancer care (Mateo et al., 2022). CGP can identify genetic abnormalities, including point mutations, insertions/deletions (indels), gene amplifications, and fusions (Guerrero et al., 2019). CGP may give useful prognostic information, helping doctors forecast the course of the medical condition and patient outcomes (Fumagalli & Barberis, 2021). Precision medicine depends

significantly on computational approaches and bioinformatics tools to process, analyze, and interpret large-scale genetic and clinical data (Gómez-López et al., 2019).

Table 1. Bioinformatics tools and their applications in precision medicine (Gómez-López et al., 2019)

Sr	Tools	Applications
1	Genomic Sequencing Next-Generation Sequencing (NGS)	This high-throughput technology is used for whole genome sequencing (WGS), whole exome sequencing (WES), RNA sequencing (RNA-seq), and other applications to generate genomic data.
2	Variant Callers Tools like GATK, Samtools, and FreeBayes Variant Annotation Tools like ANNOVAR and Variant Effect Predictor (VEP)	Provide information about the functional impact of genetic variants.
3	Pharmacogenomics PharmGKB	A database that collects information on drug-gene interactions, helping to predict how an individual may respond to a specific medication based on their genetic profile.
4	SV callers Tools like DELLY and Manta detect structural variations	Detect structural variations, such as translocations, inversions, and copy number variations (CNVs).
5	Pathway Analysis Ingenuity Pathway Analysis (IPA)	Helps identify biological pathways and networks affected by genomic variations, aiding in the understanding of disease mechanisms.
6	Variant Interpretation ClinVar	A public database that aggregates clinical interpretations of genetic variants, providing information on their significance in disease
7	Clinical Decision Support Systems IBM Watson for Genomics	Uses AI and machine learning to analyze genomic and clinical data to support healthcare professionals in making treatment decisions.
8	Drug Target Prediction DGIdb	A database that provides information on potential drug targets and their interactions with genomic alterations.
9	Tumor Mutational Burden (TMB) Analysis MSI Sensor and other TMB calculators	Calculate the TMB score, which can help determine eligibility for immunotherapy.

10	Immune Profiling CIBERSORT	Estimates the composition of immune cell populations in tumor samples based on gene expression data.
11	Survival Analysis Kaplan-Meier Plotter	Analyzes gene expression data to assess the impact of specific genes on patient survival.
12	Data Integration cBioPortal	Integrates genomic and clinical data to visualize genetic alterations in the context of pathways and patient outcomes.
13	Data Privacy and Security Secure Data Repositories	Systems like Genomic Data Commons (GDC) and the European Genome-phenome Archive (EGA) ensure the secure storage and sharing of genomic data while protecting patient privacy.
14	Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Deep Learning Models Random Forest, Support Vector Machines	Utilized for image analysis, clinical data prediction, and patient stratification. Used for various classification and prediction tasks.
15	Cloud Computing Platforms	Provide scalable resources for processing and analyzing large genomic datasets.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is experiencing significant growth as it focuses on developing computer systems that can perform tasks often associated with human intelligence. The rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI) software and technology, particularly neural network algorithms and graphics processing units (GPUs) utilized for training, has sparked a burgeoning interest in the field of medical AI applications (Dias & Torkamani, 2019). Since the beginning of scientific exploration, investigating the etiology of chronic, acute, infectious, and rare diseases has been a central area of inquiry within human health research. The increasing recognition of the intricate nature of these disorders has prompted us to acknowledge the necessity of accurately diagnosing and effectively treating individuals affected by them (Ahmed, 2022; Ahmed et al., 2023). Numerous methodologies have been employed in artificial intelligence (AI) research over several decades. One way involves simulating the human brain by representing it as a network of artificial neurons. These neurons receive input signals, analyze them, and transmit new signals to subsequent neurons (Chang et al., 2019). Physicians have always relied on their professional knowledge, judgment, and analytical skills in conjunction with rudimentary tools and constrained resources. The advent of digital health has brought about a societal shift wherein technical advancements have made enhanced medical processes accessible not just to healthcare professionals and their patients. Technologies such as genetics, biotechnology, wearable sensors, and artificial intelligence (AI) are increasingly being directed toward three main trajectories. Three key developments have emerged in the healthcare field. Firstly, there has been a shift towards prioritizing people as the central focus of care. Secondly, a substantial volume of data has been generated, necessitating the utilization of advanced analytics. Lastly, the foundation of precision medicine has been established (Mesko, 2017). The

temporal aspects of cancer detection, accurate cancer diagnosis, and determination of tumor stage are crucial factors that indicate tumor aggressiveness. These factors substantially influence clinical decision-making and ultimately affect patient outcomes. Throughout a limited timeframe, artificial intelligence (AI) has achieved significant advancements in the crucial domain of cancer. These advancements frequently exhibit comparable performance to human specialists while offering the supplementary advantages of scalability and automation (Bhinder et al., 2021).

5. Clinical Applications of Genomics and Precision Medicine

Genomics and precision medicine are revolutionizing healthcare by customizing medical care to individual genetic profiles, enabling better diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of diseases (Juengst et al., 2016; Strianese et al., 2020). This includes cancer genomic profiling, identifying hereditary disorders, tracking disease outbreaks, identifying medication resistance, and developing more potent treatments (Ahmed et al., 2020; McCarthy et al., 2013). Metagenomics analyzes the microbiome's genetic composition, and clinical trials use genomic data for patient selection and drug efficacy assessment (Zhao et al., 2021). Personalized treatment selection is a healthcare approach that tailors medical treatment to each patient's unique features, considering genetics, molecular profiles, lifestyle, and environmental factors (Pruis et al., 2022). This method aids in treatment decisions, targeting medications, monitoring and modifying therapy, and offering recommendations for illness prevention and health promotion (Kaplan & Stone, 2013). Examples include cancer tumour genetic profiling, cardiovascular disorders, psychiatric drugs, and rare genetic illnesses (Ginsburg & McCarthy, 2001). Risk assessment and predictive medicine are two key concepts in personalized medicine (Ainiwan et al., 2022). Predictive medicine uses genetic, molecular, clinical, and lifestyle data to predict a person's likelihood of developing a specific illness (Biesecker, 2013). Risk assessment systematically evaluates an individual's risk factors, such as genetics, environmental factors, and lifestyle choices (Reuben et al., 2017). This helps healthcare professionals suggest personalized preventative measures and informs shared decision-making between patients and healthcare professionals (Ozanne et al., 2014). Both approaches are essential for early interventions and personalized healthcare strategies (Simmons et al., 2012). Proactive disease prevention and early treatments can reduce illness incidence, severity, and healthcare expenditures (Sánchez-Hernández et al., 2020). Healthcare professionals evaluate risk factors, modify lifestyles, and promote vaccinations (Edelman & Kudzma, 2021). Regular health examinations aid in the early detection and monitoring of chronic illnesses (Health et al., 2006; Nami et al., 2022). Health promotion and education promote healthy habits (Yajima et al., 2001). Early treatment and medication are recommended for high-risk patients (Bhatt et al., 2004). Precision medicine and genetics can determine genetic vulnerability, enabling tailored preventative actions (Strianese et al., 2020). Community health programs provide access to healthcare and education. These initiatives not only improve individual health but also help healthcare systems remain sustainable (Brooks et al., 2017).

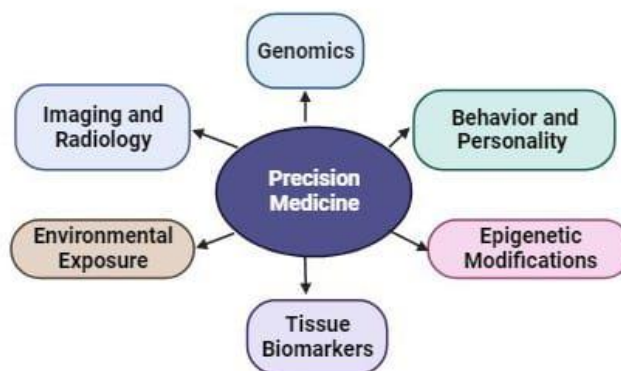


Figure 2. Clinical Applications of Precision Medicines in Healthcare

7. Genomics and Precision Medicine in Research and Drug Development

Drug development remains to be expensive and sluggish (Denny et al., 2018). Precision medicine highlights a unique interaction between genomes and drug development, one that gives both insights into the processes and possible treatment choices of a specific patient's ailment. The application of genomics to guide drug research and development processes has prompted both enthusiasm and skepticism (Dugger et al., 2018). microRNA expression will not only help our knowledge of the illness but will also lead to the development of novel molecular biomarkers and therapeutic targets (Reid, 2015).

A complete mapping of the treatment-linked biomarkers will enable the identification of targets and histologies that may react to a certain medicine to plan better clinical trials (Movva et al., 2015). The core purpose of precision medicine is to identify biomarkers and therapeutic targets. N-glycoproteins represent a captivating group of proteins that hold promise as potential cancer biomarkers and therapeutic targets for small molecules, antibodies, and cellular interventions (Rolland et al., 2017). The dysregulation of many metabolites, including amino acids, lipids, nucleotides, and glycoses, is closely associated with chronic kidney disease (CKD). These metabolites hold promise as possible biomarkers for further investigation (Y.-N. Wang et al., 2019). The capacity to control NK cells for therapeutic reasons could rely on a fuller understanding of the biology of these cells and their relationship with autoimmune (Gianhecchi et al., 2021). Identifying the drug target is crucial to the success of mechanism-based drug development (Santos et al., 2017). Three primary strategies are commonly employed to maximize drugs' therapeutic efficacy while mitigating their adverse side effects. Three primary strategies can be employed to enhance drug delivery efficacy. Firstly, developing efficient drug delivery systems (DDSs) enables the targeted delivery of drug molecules to specific regions of interest. Secondly, the addition of permissible salts can facilitate the electrostatic propulsion of ionic drugs towards less polar target regions, thereby enhancing their solubility. Lastly, the elimination of surplus drug molecules that have been adsorbed onto cell membranes can be achieved through the utilization of biocompatible methods (Kundu et al., 2019).

8. Challenges in Integrating Genomics and Precision Medicine

Precision medicine is currently not effective. The inherent heterogeneity of individual tumours, especially between primary and metastatic tumours, and the heterogeneous character of cancer are recognised as major challenges in cancer therapies (Seoane &

De Mattos-Arruda, 2014). Data portals, such as the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) Cancer Browser (now retired), cBioPortal, the International Cancer Genomics Consortium (ICGC) Data Portal, and the GDC Data Portal, possess a specialized backend infrastructure and serve as a proficient means to access and explore resource datasets that are centrally hosted. Currently, novel methodologies, including whole-genome sequencing¹¹, DNA methylation whole-genome bisulfite sequencing¹², and ATAC-seq (Assay for Transposase-Accessible Chromatin using sequencing¹³), are being employed to generate datasets for cancer genomics (Goldman et al., 2020). Structural variants (SVs) substantially impact inherited retinal diseases (IRD). Despite significant advancements in SV detection with the advent of genome sequencing, it is widely considered that the contribution of SVs to inherited retinal diseases (IRDs) is more than initially anticipated. To enhance the identification of gene-disruptive structural variations (SVs), a comprehensive analysis was conducted on short-read genome sequencing data (de Bruijn et al., 2023). NHS genetics facilities examined Scotland's Genomics England 100,000 Genomes Project diagnostic efficacy to assess genome sequencing for uncommon, hereditary diseases. With negative past genetic testing, four regional programmes recruited 999 people from 394 families in 200 unusual phenotypic categories (Hocking et al., 2023). Neurotherapies for diagnosis and treatment are consistently being made accessible to the general people beyond the confines of conventional healthcare environments. Illustrative instances encompass electroencephalography (EEG) neurofeedback, single-photon emission computerised tomography (SPECT) imaging employed for neuropsychiatric assessment, and the utilization of brain stimulation for off-label or experimental purposes [93]. The complexity of effectively engaging with genetic data is compounded by the discrepancy between our current capacity to generate such data and our limited understanding of its implications (Horton & Lucassen, 2023).

9. Future of Precision Medicine

Precision medicine is a method of healthcare that considers a patient's unique genetic, environmental, and lifestyle characteristics (Franssen et al., 2019; Williams et al., 2019). Advances in genomic medicine allow for better diagnosis and treatment choices (Juengst et al., 2020; Savoia et al., 2017). Pharmacogenomics and machine learning help identify trends and predict illness risks (Ho et al., 2019). Precision medicine includes preventive care and targeted therapies for rare diseases (Dzau et al., 2015). The integration of precision medicine into healthcare promises to generate more accurate diagnoses, anticipate disease susceptibility before symptoms manifest, and devise personalized treatment strategies that optimize both safety and efficacy (Johnson, Wei, Weeraratne, Frisse, Misulis, Rhee, Zhao, & Snowdon, 2021).

Summary

The integration of genomics and precision medicine has the potential to revolutionize healthcare by improving disease prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. Genomics has provided valuable insights into the genetic basis of diseases, allowing researchers to identify genetic variations that influence disease susceptibility and treatment response. Precision medicine recognizes that each patient is unique and aims to tailor medical interventions to the specific needs of each individual. By combining the wealth of genetic information provided by genomics with the individualized approach of precision medicine, healthcare providers can make more informed decisions and deliver personalized, targeted treatments. This approach can transform clinical practice, enabling clinicians to identify the most appropriate treatment options based on an individual's genetic profile, predict treatment response, and maximize efficacy

while minimizing harm. Furthermore, integrating genomics and precision medicine has profound research and drug development implications. By studying patients' genomic profiles, researchers can identify biomarkers that can serve as indicators of disease presence, progression, or response to treatment, leading to the development of targeted therapies and the identification of specific patient populations who are most likely to benefit from these treatments. However, some challenges need to be addressed for successful implementation, such as the interpretation and validation of genomic data, ethical and legal considerations surrounding genetic information, privacy and security of patient data, and the need for robust infrastructure and workforce training. Overall, the integration of genomics and precision medicine represents a paradigm shift in healthcare that has the potential to improve patient outcomes greatly.

Scientific Ethics Declaration

The authors say that they are responsible for the scientific, moral, and legal aspects of this chapter, which is published in Current Studies in Health and Life Sciences 2023.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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About The Authors

Dr. Hafiz Ishfaq Ahmad is working as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Animal Breeding and Genetics, Faculty of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, and holds D.V.M. (UVAS), MPhil (UVAS), Ph.D. (China) & Post. Doc. (GIABR, China). Dr. Ahmad is a researcher in a multidisciplinary field, has engaged in several research domains in a range of organisms, but the primary focus on different aspects of genetic diversity and evolution. The current research activities include molecular evolution, sequencing analyses, the genetic and molecular basis of emerging antimicrobial resistance and metagenomic populations, genome annotation, and diversity analysis; the role of the gene conversion in the evolution of organisms; applications of polymorphisms; patterns of diversity and linkage disequilibrium in autosomal genes. His published work includes 2 books and 10 book chapters, 75 published research articles with a total of 300 IF, 15 oral presentations at International/National professional conferences and 20 published abstracts. He is working as an academic editor in 5 international journals, He is also reviewer for 15 scientific journals.

E-mail: ishfaq.ahmad@iub.edu.pk , ORCID: 0000-0002-7512-3254

Ms. Hira Hameed received her bachelor in 2022 at the Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur. Her research interests include cancer genetics, molecular virology, molecular genetics, microbiology, genetic mutations, etc.

E-mail: hirahameed560@gmail.com , ORCID: 0009-0009-5117-0353

Mr. Mohsin Abbas received his bachelor in 2022 at the Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur. His research interests include cancer genetics, molecular virology, molecular genetics, microbiology, genetic mutations, etc.

E-mail: mohsingabol3@gmail.com , ORCID: 0009-0001-6299-3496

Mr. Abdul Jabbar received his master in 2021 at the Department of Clinical Medicine, Faculty of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Lahore. His research interests include cancer genetics, molecular virology, molecular genetics, microbiology, genetic mutations, etc.

E-mail: vet.drabduljabbar@gmail.com , **ORCID:** 0000-0003-4528-8389

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