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## *The NIH Undiagnosed Network: hope for more families and links to the International Rare Diseases Community*

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*Cynthia J. Tifft, M.D., Ph.D.  
RareX/ICORD 2016,  
Cape Town, South Africa  
20 October 2016*

Every rare disease was once an  
undiagnosed disease!!

In rare and undiagnosed diseases,  
collaboration is EVERYTHING!!

In the beginning...2007 6% of patients  
contacting the NIH Office of Rare Disorders  
Research did not have a diagnosis



For those who did,  
33% took 1 to 5 years  
15% took > 5 years to obtain it!

# The NIH Undiagnosed Diseases Program 2008-2015

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Launched in May, 2008 as a 5 year pilot project with two main objectives that reflect the mission of the NIH:

- Public Service
  - To provide answers to patients with mysterious conditions that had long eluded diagnosis
- Biomedical Research
  - To advance medical knowledge by providing insight into human physiology and the genetics of rare and common diseases



NATIONAL HUMAN GENOME



# All UDP applicants are desperate--

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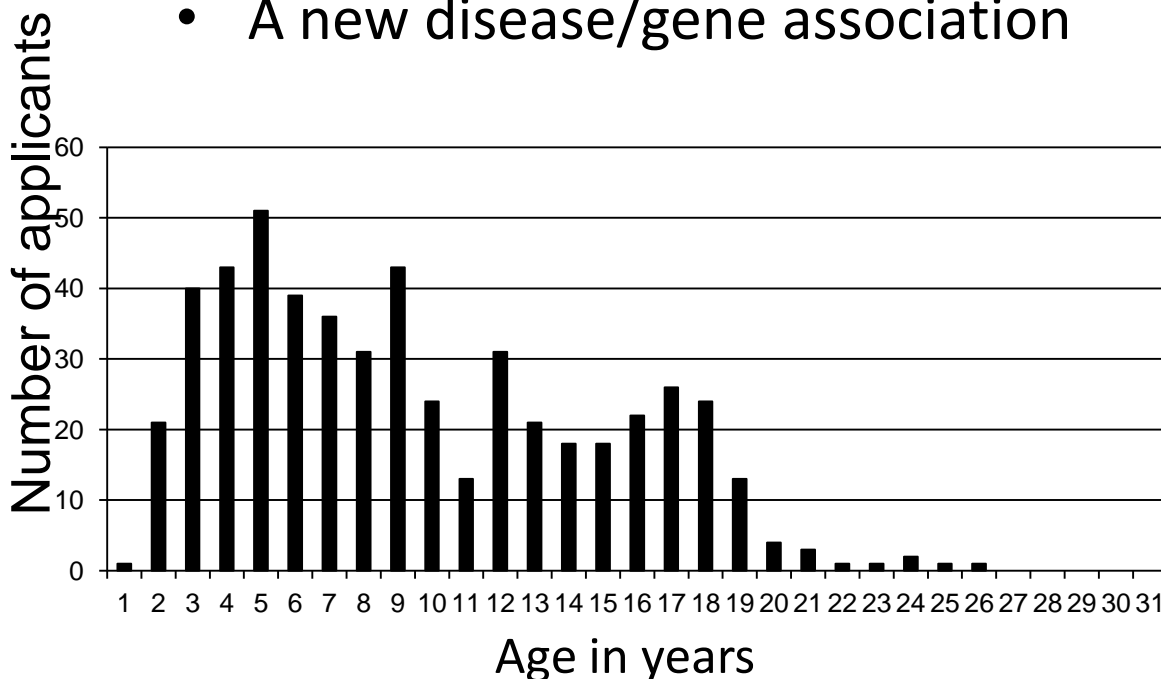
- Everyone gets something from the UDP
  - Complete charts are organized
  - Every chart is read thoroughly by specialists
  - Applicants not accepted (75%) & their physicians receive a personal letter with recommendations for further work up
  - Accepted applicants (25%) receive a one week inpatient evaluation at the NIH Clinical Center in Bethesda, Maryland



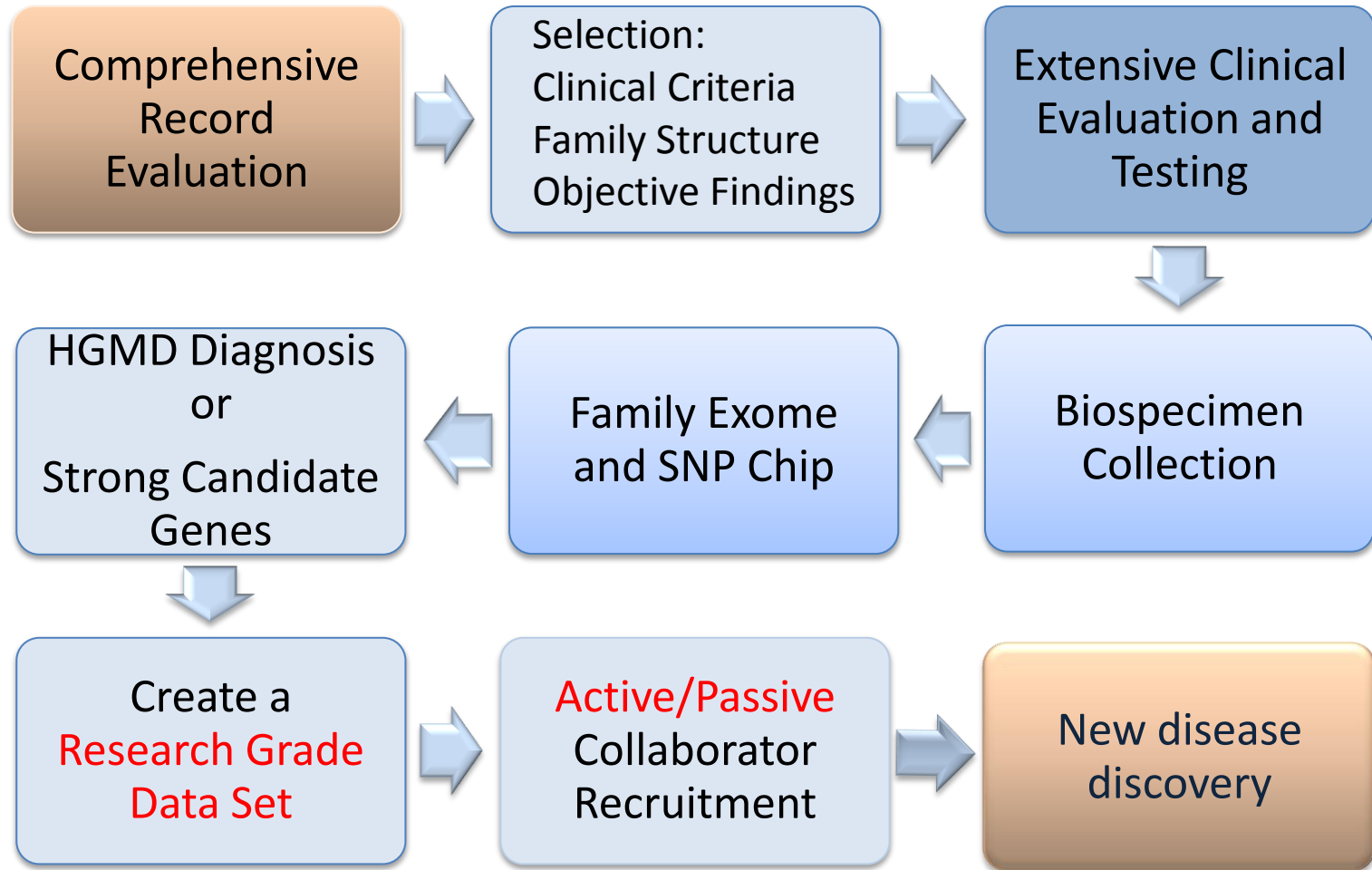


# Working hypotheses...

- An extremely rare disease with expanded phenotype
- An unusual presentation of a more common disease
- More than one disease....
- A new disease/gene association



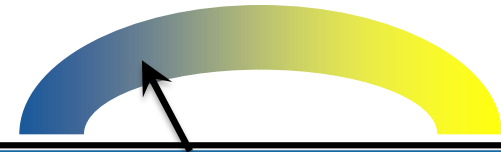
# UDP Model



# Without accurate phenotyping, exome/genome analysis is uninterpretable!

F.P.	DOB	*****	MR #	71-91-81-9	UDP#	7478
Monday 02/10/2014	Tuesday 02/11/2014	Wednesday 02/12/2014	Thursday 02/13/2014	Friday 02/14/2014		
7:00a	7:00a	7:00a	7:00a	7:00a	7:00a	7:00a
7:30a	7:30a	7:30a	7:30a	7:30a	7:30a	7:30a
			Sedate Day			
8:00a	8:00a	8:00a	8:00a	8:00a	8:00a	8:00a
8:30a	8:30a	8:30a	8:30a	8:30a	8:30a	8:30a
9:00a	9:00a	9:00a	9:00a	9:00a	9:00a	9:00a
9:30a	9:30a	9:30a	9:30a	9:30a	9:30a	9:30a
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10:30a	10:30a	10:30a	10:30a	10:30a	10:30a	10:30a
11:00a	11:00a	11:00a	11:00a	11:00a	11:00a	11:00a
11:30a	11:30a	11:30a	11:30a	11:30a	11:30a	11:30a
12:00p	12:00p	12:00p	12:00p	12:00p	12:00p	12:00p
12:30p	12:30p	12:30p	12:30p	12:30p	12:30p	12:30p
1:00p	1:15p	1:00p	1:00p	1:00p	1:15p	1:15p
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6:00p	6:00p	6:00p	6:00p	6:00p	6:00p	6:00p
7:00p	7:00p	7:00p	7:00p	7:00p	7:00p	7:00p
8:00p	8:00p	8:00p	8:00p	8:00p	8:00p	8:00p
9:00p	9:00p	9:00p	9:00p	9:00p	9:00p	9:00p





**QUICK PHENOTYPE SEARCH:**

Enter keywords and choose among suggested ontology terms

**▼ CRANIOFACIAL**

☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Craniosynostosis  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Cleft upper lip  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Cleft palate  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Abnormal facial shape

Other  
(enter free text and choose among suggested ontology terms)

**▼ EYE DEFECTS**

☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Visual impairment  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Abnormality of the cornea  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Coloboma  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Abnormality of the anterior chamber  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N **Cataract**  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Abnormality of the retina  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Abnormality of the optic nerve  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Microphthalmos  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Nystagmus  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Strabismus

Other  
(enter free text and choose among suggested ontology terms)

**▼ EAR DEFECTS**

Deafness

☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Sensorineural  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Conductive  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Preauricular pit  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Preauricular skin tag  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N **Abnormality of the outer ear**  
☐ NA ☒ Y ☐ N Abnormality of the inner ear

**CURRENT SELECTION**

**GROWTH PARAMETERS**

Decreased body weight [Delete](#) · [Clear details](#)

Neonatal onset  
Slow progression

**CRANIOFACIAL**

Cleft upper lip [Delete](#) · [Clear details](#)

No additional information.

**EYE DEFECTS**

Cataract [Delete](#) · [Add details](#)

**EAR DEFECTS**

Abnormality of the outer ear [Delete](#) · [Add details](#)

**MUSCULOSKELETAL**

Hip osteoarthritis [Delete](#) · [Add details](#)

**BEHAVIOR, COGNITION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Repetitive compulsive behavior [Delete](#) · [Add details](#)

Mutism [Delete](#) · [Add details](#)

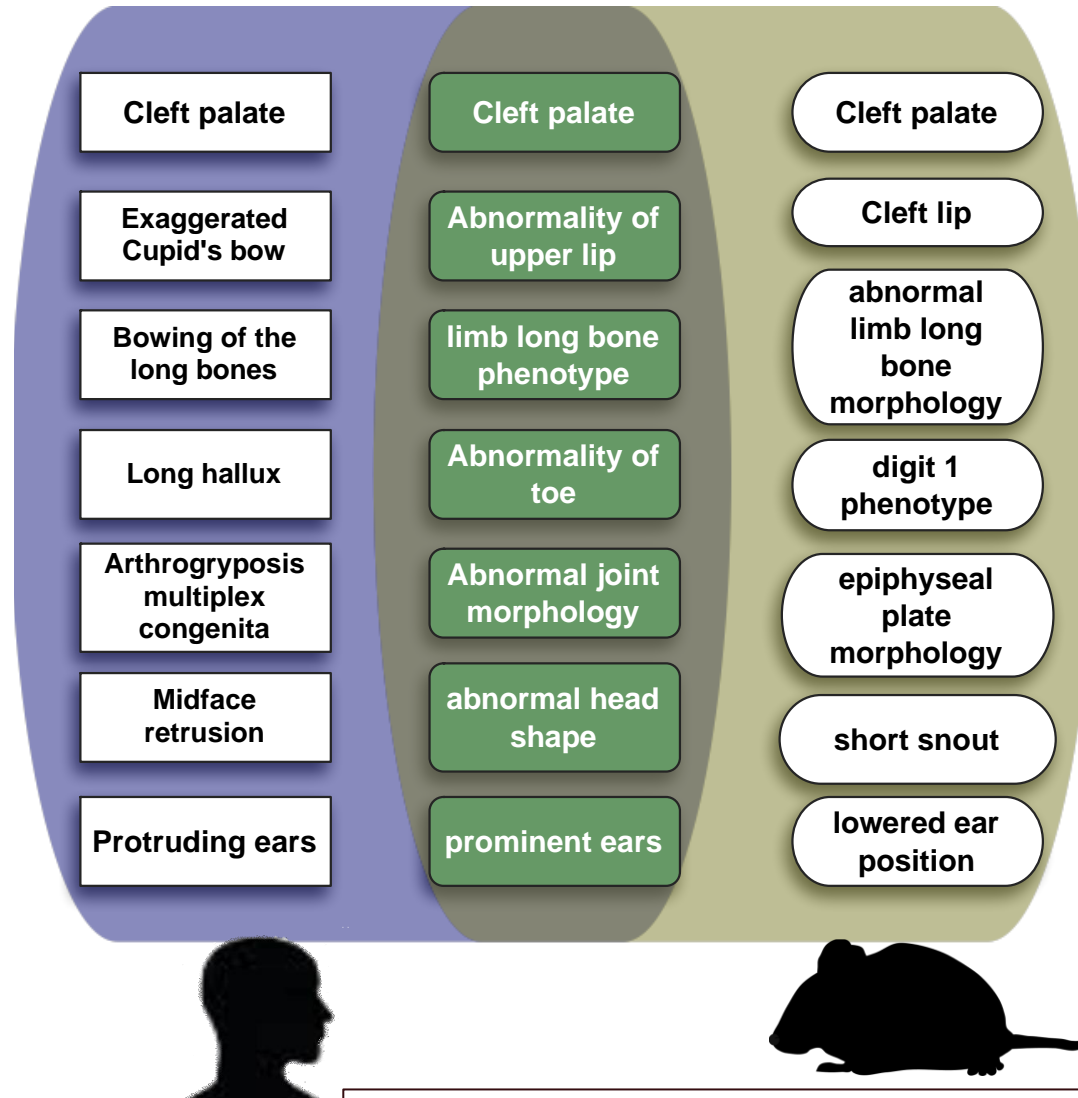
Self-injurious behavior [Delete](#) · [Add details](#)

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder [Delete](#) · [Add details](#)

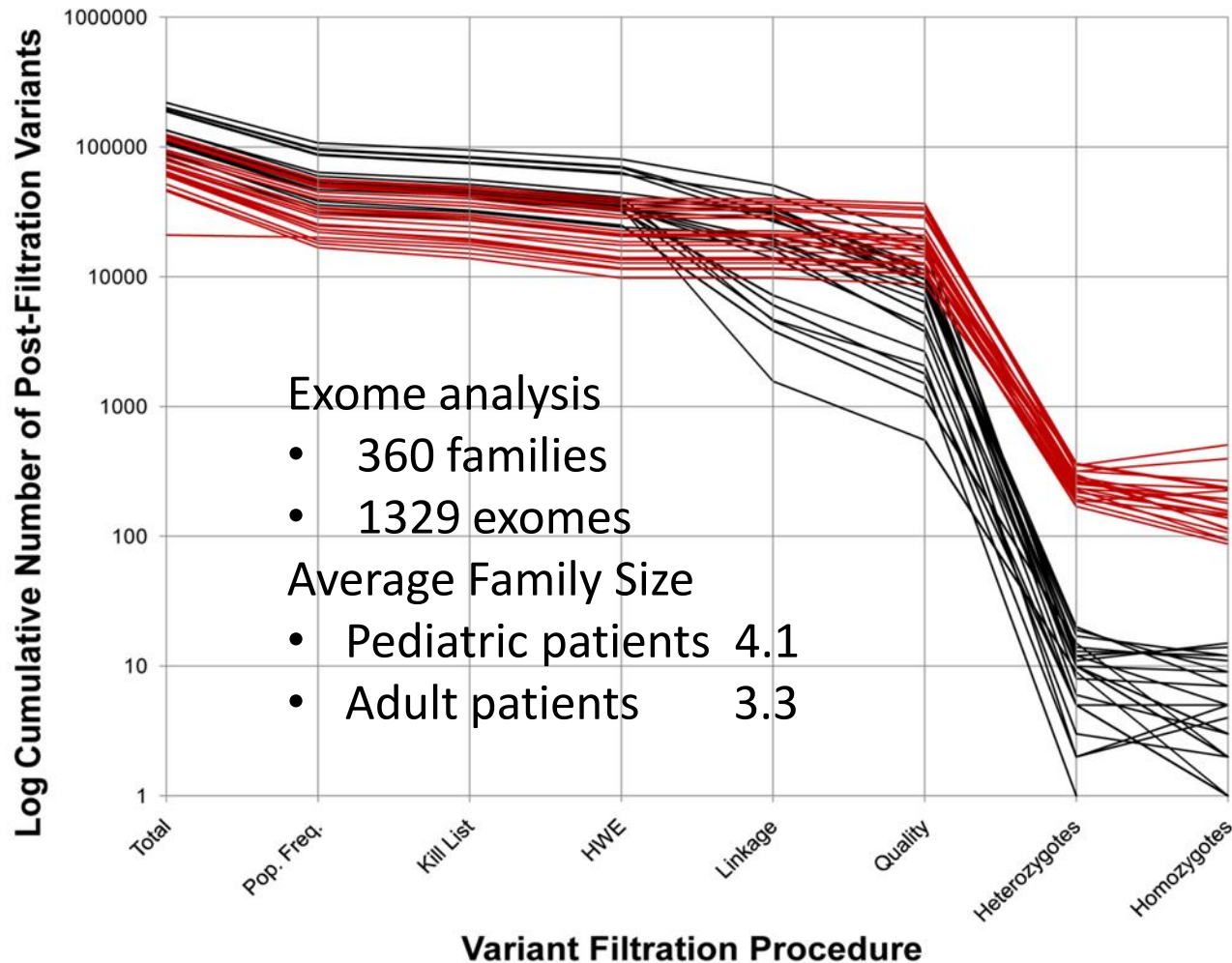
Behavioural/Psychiatric Abnormality [Delete](#) · [Clear details](#)

No additional information.

# Phenotype similarity across patients or ....any organism



# Filtered Variants, Family vs No Family



## Analysis of DNA Sequence Variants Detected by High-Throughput Sequencing



David R. Adams,<sup>1,2\*</sup> Murat Sincan,<sup>2</sup> Karin Fuentes Fajardo,<sup>1</sup> James C. Mullikin,<sup>5†</sup> Tyler M. Pierson,<sup>1,4</sup> Camilo Toro,<sup>1</sup> Cornelius F. Boerkoel,<sup>1</sup> Cynthia J. Tift,<sup>1,3</sup> William A. Gahl,<sup>1,2,3</sup> and Tom C. Markello<sup>3</sup>



NATIONAL HUMAN GENOME RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Division of Intramural Research

# UDP Integrated Collaboration System (UDPICS) Facilitates **Active** Collaboration

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## UDP Staff

- Patient identifiers
  - Medical records
  - Photos & videos
  - Consents & Communications
  - Pedigrees
  - Exome/genome
  - HPO phenotyping
  - Candidate genes
  - Biospecimens

Firewall

## Collaborators

- De-identified information
  - Pedigrees
  - HPO clinical phenotype & de-identified medical records
  - List of candidate variants with bioinformatic documentation
  - Available biospecimens

***Each patient's disease is a unique research project!***

# Matchmaker Exchange Facilitates

## Passive Collaboration





# UDP statistics 2008-2015

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- Inquiries 7585
- Medical Records 3124 (41%)
- Acceptances 966 (31%)
  - Pediatric probands 348 (36%)
  - Female 519 (54%)
  - Neurologic phenotype (>50%)
  - International patients
- Diagnoses 176 in 150 (20%)
  - Pediatric diagnoses 93 (33%)





# The Undiagnosed Diseases Network



**National Institutes of Health**  
*Office of Strategic Coordination - The Common Fund*



# UDN Overall Goal

To **extend the success** of the NIH Undiagnosed Diseases Program (UDP) into an Undiagnosed Diseases Network (UDN), composed of UDN Clinical Sites including the UDP, a Coordinating Center, and UDN Core Laboratories, **forming a sustainable national resource** to diagnose both rare and new diseases, **advance laboratory and clinical research**, **enhance global coordination and collaboration** among laboratory and clinical researchers, and **share resulting data and approaches** throughout the scientific and clinical communities.



# NIH > The Undiagnosed Diseases Network

18 Institutions

234 Investigators

- ❖ Network-wide Protocol
- ❖ Central IRB
- ❖ Data Sharing and Use Agreement
- ❖ “Best practices” to share with the clinical and research communities and with patients



Gateway Launched Sept 2015!

<http://undiagnosed.hms.harvard.edu/apply/>



The NIH site will continue to enroll about 150 patients per year, each of the clinical sites will ultimately enroll about 50 patients per year.

**Identified patient information is available to all sites to aid in diagnosis through a common Data Sharing and Use Agreement**





# Help from patient advocates...


The team is composed of dedicated runners from around the world who will not only spend their personal time training for the marathons, but also host numerous events to raise funds and engage people in the cause. (Learn more about the runners at: [www.running4rare.org](http://www.running4rare.org))

The funds raised by the Running for Rare Team will support the NORD/[Undiagnosed Diseases Network \(UDN\)](#) Patient Assistance Program. This program provides financial assistance to families who have exhausted all other alternatives for seeking a diagnosis. NORD will help cover the basic diagnostic testing needed for patients and families to apply into the Undiagnosed Diseases Network.




# Patient Online Application


The Undiagnosed Diseases Network




Login with a social network


LOG IN CREATE NEW USER


 LOGIN WITH FACEBOOK

 LOGIN WITH GOOGLE


 LOGIN WITH YAHOO!

Or If You've Already Signed-Up

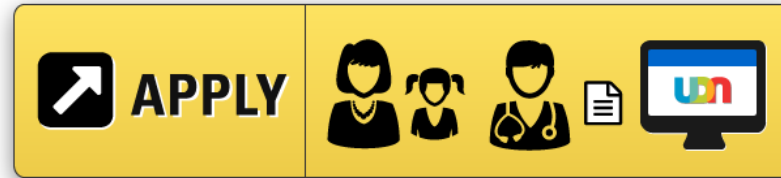
 Email

 Password

Don't remember your password?



Login Instructions



UDN Undiagnosed GATEWAY Diseases Network [About the UDN](#) [Log Out](#)

Are you an applicant, parent or guardian of the applicant, or a licensed healthcare provider?

--Select--

Email  
genzrus@gmail.com

First name  
First name

Last name  
Last name

Address  
This will autocomplete as you type.  
This will autocomplete as you type. Please use a real street address (ie not a PO Box or building name). The City, State and Zip will automatically fill in when you pick an address.

Apt/Suite/Floor/etc  
Apt/Suite/Floor/etc

☒ Uncheck to turn-off address autocomplete.  
If you are outside of the US, please uncheck this box.

City  
City

State  
State

Zip Code  
Zip Code

Phone number  
Phone number

Save Cancel [Shipping Tool](#)

# Sharing of “Best Practices”


**For Researchers**

[Home](#) > [Resources](#) > **For Researchers**

## UDN Manual of Operations

The UDN Manual of Operations is a handbook that details the network’s research conduct and protocols in order to facilitate consistent adherence across all institutions participating in the study. This is a dynamic document that will be updated throughout the duration of the study to reflect amendments and refinements. Each update that is approved by the UDN Steering Committee will be posted on this page.

### Current

[UDN Manual of Operations – July 2016](#) 

183 Pages, 2.7 MB

### Archive


Previous versions of the manual

[Advocacy Organizations](#)  
[Find Matching Patients](#)  
[Genetics Info](#)  
**For Researchers**

# Empowering Patients

## Find Matching Patients

[Home](#) > [Resources](#) > **Find Matching Patients**

[Discovering new diseases with the internet: How to find a matching patient](#) 

In this blog post, Matt Might describes ways you can use the internet to find more patients with the same rare genetic disorder, including

- Setting up your own patient-finding web site
- Creating content for the web site
- Editing Wikipedia
- Setting Google alerts
- Buying Google AdWords
- Using gene names for domain names
- Minor search engine optimization
- Using Google analytics and webmaster tools to find “cloaked” patients
- Standard registries

Advocacy Organizations

**Find Matching Patients**

Genetics Info

For Researchers



# Gateway Launched Sept 2015!

<http://undiagnosed.hms.harvard.edu/apply/>

- UDN has received 994 applications
  - Accepted 380 participants
  - Completed 137 evaluations
- UDN has made diagnoses\*
  - 24 confirmed
  - 10 clinical
  - 11 strong candidates

\*numbers as of 10/12/2016







Undiagnosed  
Diseases Network  
INTERNATIONAL

Home Network Participants Platform resources Dissemination



## GENERAL AIMS

**Improve the level of diagnosis and care for patients with undiagnosed diseases**

through the development of *common protocols* designed by a large community of investigators.

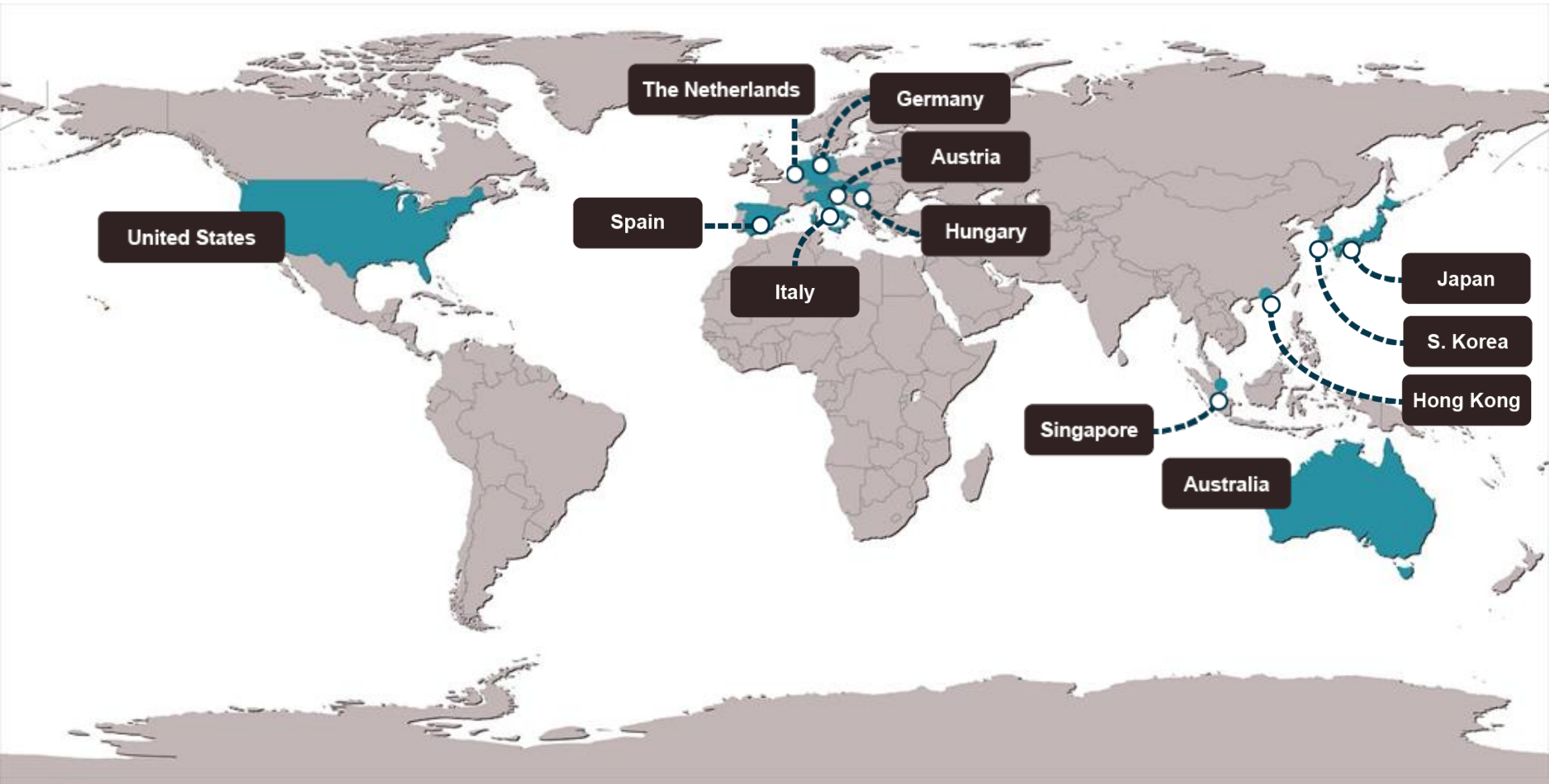
**Facilitate research into the etiology of undiagnosed diseases,**

*by collecting and sharing standardized, high-quality clinical and laboratory data* (including genotyping, phenotyping, and documentation of environmental exposures).

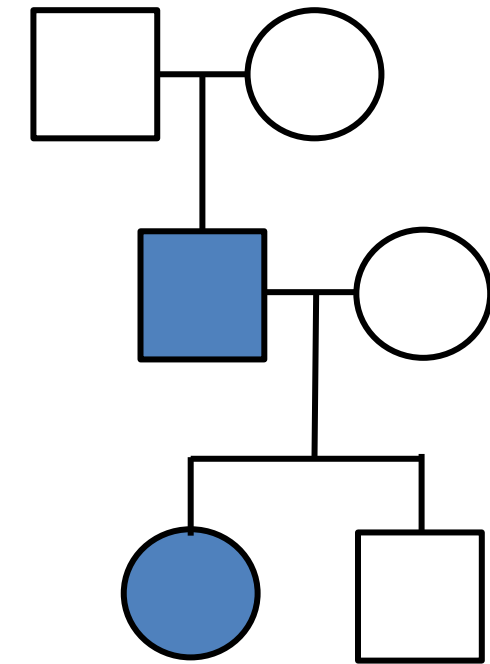
**Create an integrated and collaborative community**

across *multiple Countries* and *among laboratory and clinical investigators* prepared to investigate the pathophysiology of these newly recognized and rare diseases.

[www.udninternational.org](http://www.udninternational.org)  
[udni@iss.it](mailto:udni@iss.it)



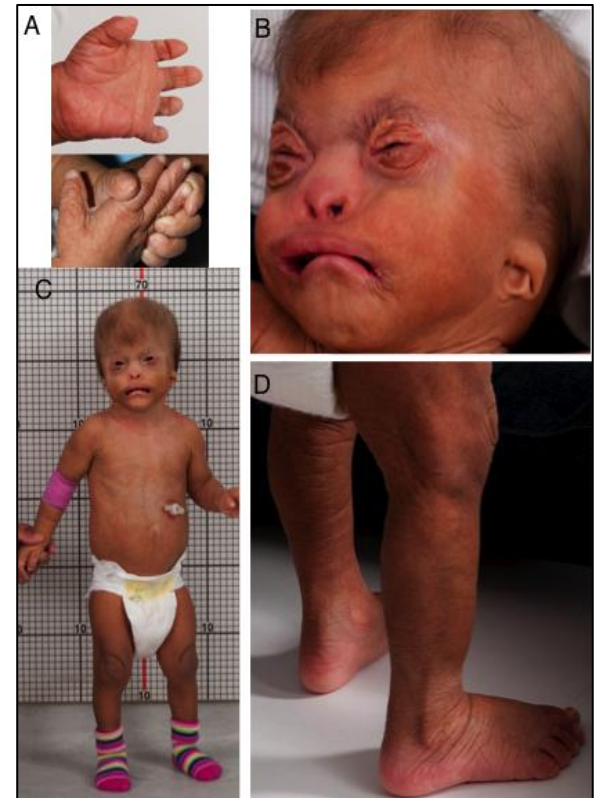
# Teamwork and the global community...



**Ablepharon macrostomia syndrome**



Mosaicism in 1<sup>st</sup> generation (fertile)



# Recurrent Mutations in the Basic Domain of *TWIST2* Cause Ablepharon Macrostomia and Barber-Say Syndromes

**47 authors from  
11 countries**

Shannon Marchegiani,<sup>1,2,31</sup> Taylor Davis,<sup>1,31</sup> Federico Tessadori,<sup>3,31</sup> Gijs van Haaften,<sup>4</sup> Francesco Brancati,<sup>5</sup> Alexander Hoischen,<sup>6</sup> Haigen Huang,<sup>7</sup> Elise Valkanas,<sup>1</sup> Barbara Pusey,<sup>1</sup> Denny Schanze,<sup>8</sup> Hanka Venselaar,<sup>6</sup> Anneke T. Vulto-van Silfhout,<sup>6</sup> Lynne A. Wolfe,<sup>1,9</sup> Cynthia J. Tifft,<sup>1,9</sup> Patricia M. Zerfas,<sup>10</sup> Giovanna Zambruno,<sup>11</sup> Ariana Kariminejad,<sup>12</sup> Farahnaz Sabbagh-Kermani,<sup>13</sup> Janice Lee,<sup>14</sup> Maria G. Tsokos,<sup>15</sup> Chyi-Chia R. Lee,<sup>15</sup> Victor Ferraz,<sup>16</sup> Eduarda Morgana da Silva,<sup>16</sup> Cathy A. Stevens,<sup>17</sup> Nathalie Roche,<sup>18</sup> Oliver Bartsch,<sup>19</sup> Peter Farndon,<sup>20</sup> Eva Bermejo-Sanchez,<sup>21</sup> Brian P. Brooks,<sup>22</sup> Valerie Maduro,<sup>1</sup> Bruno Dallapiccola,<sup>23</sup> Feliciano J. Ramos,<sup>24</sup> Hon-Yin Brian Chung,<sup>25</sup> Cédric Le Caignec,<sup>26</sup> Fabiana Martins,<sup>27</sup> Witold K. Jacyk,<sup>28</sup> Laura Mazzanti,<sup>29</sup> Han G. Brunner,<sup>6,30</sup> Jeroen Bakkers,<sup>3</sup> Shuo Lin,<sup>7</sup> May Christine V. Malicdan,<sup>1,9,\*</sup> Cornelius F. Boerkoel,<sup>1</sup> William A. Gahl,<sup>1,9,\*</sup> Bert B.A. de Vries,<sup>6</sup> Mieke M. van Haelst,<sup>4</sup> Martin Zenker,<sup>8,32</sup> and Thomas C. Markello<sup>1,32</sup>

## **TWIST2:c.223G>A(p.E75K)**

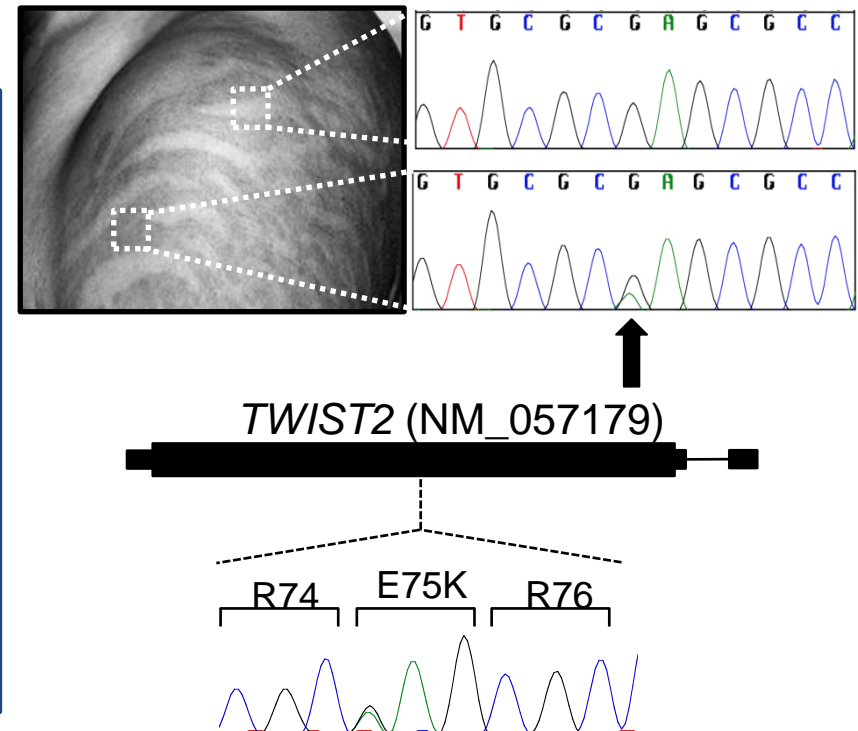
Transcription factor

Group A helix-loop-helix transcription factor (E box)

Mesenchyme and craniofacial and dermis in embryogenesis plus cell maintenance

Autosomal dominant

**7 families with ablepharon macrostomia**  
**10 families with Barber-Say syndrome**





“A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

*-Margaret Mead*





# Acknowledgements

## **UDP**

William Gahl  
Stephen Groft  
David Adams  
May Malicdan  
Camilo Toro

cast of > 100 others



## **UDN**

William Gahl  
Anastasia Wise  
234 Investigators  
many, many others



## **UDNI**

Domenica Taruscio  
William Gahl  
Helene & Mikk Cederroth  
Investigators from 13 countries

