

**In response to: Ready or not, *Nature* 452, 666; 2008,
<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v452/n7188/full/452666a.html>**

SIR – Genetic testing is a rapidly expanding marketplace that is attracting the attention of regulators and consumers alike. Part of the solution to ensuring the proper use of genetic tests is to make high quality information available to everyone. *Nature* editors suggested in a recent editorial (*Nature* 452, 666; 2008*) the creation of a publicly accessible registry that contains information about the “basis, validity and limitations” of genetic tests.

We agree that a registry is needed that will give consumers of genetic services a way to decipher genetic findings. This registry would ideally include a rating system that grades the utility of genetic marker information and genetic tests available on the market. It should also be a searchable, current database of actionable information on genes, genetic variants, phenotype associations, and available DNA diagnostics and treatments. Most importantly, such a registry should be a collaborative, industry-wide initiative under expert guidance.

DNA Direct is developing an online forum for professionals that can power such a registry. It is called DNA Perspectives, and the results of the forum will be available to the public for free without a subscription fee. The DNA Perspectives initiative will be based on the principles of the open source movement: transparency, permeable access, and collaboration. In addition, a parallel forum will be available to consumers so that they can exchange comments and personal ratings of genetic tests.

Our goal should be to empower consumers with information. As DNA technology advances, more people—not just those with medical conditions—will have their genomes scanned or sequenced. Given that people prefer to be autonomous, especially when it comes to their health, access to genetic testing should remain available to the general population rather than only to those with access to genetic counselors or medical geneticists.

Currently, the ratio of genetic specialists to patients remains abysmally low, so it’s especially important to provide easily accessible data and information on genetic tests. Only then can genetic tests help people make informed healthcare decisions. As such, we wholeheartedly support transparency in the genetic testing marketplace.

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