Cross-cohort collaboration: meeting introduction

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- Limited support provided by the University of Washington and, with approval of the contracts office, by the MESA contract, which explicitly encourages cross-cohort collaboration
Origins

• CHS Steering Committee, May 2014

• NHLBI Working Group Report
  – Recommendation to identify key public health questions and data fit for purpose
  – Recommendation for a cohort consortium
    • A functioning group of investigators can provide bottom-up direction to NHLBI

• New program in precision medicine

Roger V. Am J Epidemiol 2015; in press.
Trend toward data sharing

• Make publicly funded data publicly available
  – Success of the Human Genome project

• NIH-funded cohorts required to provide datasets to BioLINC and dbGaP

• A range of NIH- and investigator-initiated consortia have emerged
CHARGE as one example

- Side effect of GWAS technology
  - The search for improved power or replication
  - Cohort design as the organizing principle

- Voluntary federation of studies
  - Prospective meta-analyses across multiple common phenotypes

CHARGE organization

- Steering committee, analysis committee, genotyping committee, and about 40 phenotype-specific working groups (WG)
- CHARGE as matrix of cohorts and WGs
  - WGs include cross-cohort teams
  - SC includes representatives from cohorts
    - Communications and coordination
    - Setting up consortium-wide meetings
CHARGE working groups

• About 40 phenotype-specific WGs
  – Source of scientific leadership
  – Importance of a “champion”
  – Role for young investigators

• One side effect of the genetic WGs has been some non-genetic collaborations

• Many cohorts already use WG structure
Times have changed

- Generous funding from the NIH enabled collaborations among GWAS studies
- NHLBI interest in “data commons”
- Fiscal constraints and shift from contract- to R01-funding for cohorts seem like existential threats
  - Different context, but cross-cohort collaborations may still be useful response
Agenda and outcomes

• Each cohort invited to present
  – A cross-cohort project
  – Future directions for CV epidemiology
  – Design and scope of on-going collaboration

• Desirable outcomes of this meeting
  – A grant application or two
  – Some published commentaries
  – A start on plans for future organization
How CHARGE started

• Nominate two from each cohort and start with two conference calls a month
  – Develop agreements and procedures
  – Rely on WG experience to expand efforts
  – Seek funding and opportunities for meetings and, due to multi-site structure, a coordinating center as well

• Will require effort and leadership
Non-disclosure

• An informal agreement to keep new unpublished science confidential

• Plan a website to post
  – Slides from each presentation (edited)
  – List of attendees
  – Agenda for the meeting
  – URLs for participating cohorts