PUBLIC PERSPECTIVES AND POLICY OPTIONS FOR IGG: Results of Empirical Studies

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Key Takeaways

1. There is strong public support for FIGG, and this has not changed over time.

2. The public and many experts prefer that FIGG is subject to some form of regulation.

3. FIGG policies can and should be informed by diverse experts.
Our Project

**Funder:** National Human Genome Research Institute R01 HG011268

**Objective:** To collect data informative of policies for IGG

**Design:** 4-year research project involving 4 main activities, plus a supplement
FIGG relies on public support for its very existence.

Now ~48M total

~3M
U.S. general population survey: 2018

N=1587

- 52% female
- 71% non-Hispanic White

91% support use to ID violent perpetrators
46% support to ID non-violent perpetrators
U.S. general population survey: 2023

N=1394

- 50% female
- 74% non-Hispanic White

91% support use to ID violent perpetrators
46% support to ID non-violent perpetrators
Support for FIGG to identify violent criminals and UHRs

Yet some mistrust of the police

Consensus on need for regulation oversight

Focus groups with U.S. general population: 2022

N=72 from 4 cities
- 51% female
- 43% White

“[B]odily harm or murder or rape, I would say definitely, immediately go to the database.” (MO-B, 22)

“[S]afeguards should definitely be put in place, so that information will not be abused.” (CA-A, 15)

Dahlquist et al., 2024 (in press)
Policy Delphi with experts: ongoing

N=34 expert participants

Round 1: Generated 33 issues

Round 2: Prioritized 9 issues for policy attention
9 Top Priority Issues

**Applications**
- Potential FIGG in medical databases
- Underuse by defense
- Participation against ToS

**Data**
- Data management practices
- Potential SNP reuse by commercial labs

**Final Identification**
- FIGG without STR confirmation

**Regulation**
- Patchwork governance
- Commercial lab under-regulation
- Potential unregulated SNP databases
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Round 2: Prioritized 9 issues for policy attention

Round 3: Generated 49 policy options for prioritized issues (3-9 per issue)

Round 4: Evaluating each policy solution for effectiveness/feasibility
Focus Groups: Participation against ToS

• Various bans (*federal**, state, DOJ, individual agencies, GG licensing body)

• Standard data base consent approach: all opt in or out

• Databases upload LE profiles

• Public, LE-use only database**

Patchwork Governance

• Federal FIGG law**

• State model law

• Finalized DOJ policy

• Condition grants on best practice compliance
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The Team

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Ram N. Incidental informants: police can use genealogy databases to help identify criminal relatives—but should they? Maryland Bar J. 2018; 51(3): 8-12.


THANK YOU!

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