



Message from the Project Directors Kathryn Hassell, MD & Janet Thomas, MD

Join Our List.

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

January/February 2018

Dear friends and colleagues,

Happy New Years, Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day and President's Day from all of us at MSRGN!

State Teams In-Person Meeting



We were off to a quick start with MSRGN activities on January 9-10 as we gathered a small meeting of our state teams and steering committee in Austin, TX. The first day was an overview of the new Genetics Network grant cycle, and the second day was focused on state team breakout sessions and

presentations, as well as the steering committee meeting. The agenda and Powerpoint presentations can be found [here](#) on the MSRGN website.

Photos from the event can be found [here](#) at this Facebook link.

These past 2 weeks in February, we have been convening conference calls with all the state teams to discuss their projects going forward.

It is not too late to JOIN a state team! If you are passionate about reaching underserved populations with genetic services in YOUR state, let us know. Send us a message [here](#) to contact us and let us know you would like to be involved. We can schedule a time to reach out to you to discuss possible roles.

Follow-up state team calls are now scheduled for March. On those calls, state teams will finalize their priority areas and approaches to increasing access to genetic services for underserved populations in their state.

Our BIG News!
MSRGN has a NEW Project Manager:
Annette Lara



Here is a little bit about Annette and her photo, too!

Annette Lara is the MSRGN Project Manager at the Texas Health Institute. Annette's past experiences include Project Coordinator for the Division of Regional and Local Health Services at the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Acting Program Administrator for Community Health Worker Program, Continuing Education Administrator for the Office of Academic Affairs at DSHS, Program Coordinator for the Preventive Medicine Residency Program for the Office of

Academic Affairs at DSHS, Manager for Vital Statistics at DSHS, and Auditor for the Texas Department of Public Safety. Annette holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration from West Texas A&M University.

Please reach out to her here:
(alara@mountainstatesgenetics.org)
to welcome her to our team, and please contact her if you have any questions, concerns or requests for MSRGN.

Genetic Dossiers Project

We are sharing a request that came to us through our National Coordinating Center *Healthcare Access and Financing Workgroup* calls. If you would like to be part of this project, and have genetic testing expertise (might be perfect for a resident or medical student interested in genetics to also work on), please reach out to MSRGN here and note that you are interested in learning more about the Genetic Dossiers Project. See below for a few more details.

Genetic Dossiers Project

(A Joint Effort of the ACMG Economics Committee and the NCC Healthcare Access and Financing Workgroup)

PROJECT: Developing an archive of "dossiers" for molecular genetic tests. Coordinated by NCC and ACMG

PURPOSE: The "dossiers" will compile evidence to support the clinical usefulness and utility of specific genetic tests.

- Used to support advocacy for CMS/Medicare and other payer's coverage policy
 - Including cost-benefit analysis, when applicable
- Used by clinical genetic service providers in writing letters of medical necessity

"Dossiers" will follow this template:

Gene:

- What disorder is caused by changes in the gene.
- What the effects of the disorder are.
- Why a Medicare recipient might need to have the test done (indications).
- Why genetic test is necessary - either it's the only way to make the diagnosis from among multiple disorders which present similar signs and symptoms, or there are different forms of a disorder and they have different genetic causes.
- How will finding a change in the gene will directly impact management of the patient.

UPP Project update

Our Underserved Population Project (UPP) is moving forward with implementation at our 4 initial sites. The MSRGN website has been updated with the work of our 2017 summer intern, Grace Miller, who completed a literature project/review for this project. You can read that review [here](#).

We hope you all are staying warm and aren't too upset by the groundhog's prediction of 6 more weeks of winter!

Warm regards,



Kathryn Hassell, M.D.
Project Director



Janet Thomas, M.D.
Project Director

MSGRC staff contact information:

Kathryn Hassell, Project Director

Kathryn.Hassell@ucdenver.edu

Janet Thomas, Associate Project Director

Janet.Thomas@ucdenver.edu

Annette Lara, Project Manager

alara@mountainstatesgenetics.org

Joyce Hooker, Director of Social Outreach

jhooker@mountainstatesgenetics.org

Kristi Wees, Social Media Coordinator

kwees@mountainstatesgenetics.org

Liza Creel, Evaluator

Liza.Creel@louisville.edu

Celia Kaye, MSGRC Consultant

Celia.Kaye@ucdenver.edu

THI staff contact information:

Ankit Sanghavi, Project Administrator

asanghavi@texashealthinstitute.org

Sherry Wilkie-Conway, Project Oversight

swilkie@texashealthinstitute.org

Stephanie Sondrias, Events Manager

sondrias@texashealthinstitute.org

**HAVE YOU VISITED OUR NEW
Website:**

www.MountainStatesGenetics.org

Acknowledgement

This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under [Grant UH7MC30776](#), The Mountain States Regional Genetics Network. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.