



Nome News Issue 37

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NEW Online Submission, Feedback and Hot Topic Comments Forms

The HGNC now has a new online gene symbol request [form](#). Please complete this form if you wish to request a gene symbol, or to confirm an approved gene symbol. Please note that all non-public data will be treated confidentially.

We always value any feedback from users and have created an online feedback [form](#), please contact us with your comments and suggestions.

To encourage your feedback on our Hot Topics we have also updated our Hot Topic page format so that you can send us your comments directly from the webpage.

New Consensus Keratin Nomenclature

Keratins are a family of fibrous structural proteins that provide mechanical support. In mammals there are soft cytokeratins and harder hair keratins. In 1982 a nomenclature was devised to name the dozen or so keratin genes and proteins known at that time. However in recent years many more novel keratin genes and their encoded proteins have been identified and their naming could not be adequately encompassed by the original nomenclature system. At the 2004 Gordon Conference on Intermediate Filaments in Oxford an initiative to achieve international consensus led to the formation of a broad-based Keratin Nomenclature Committee that included active investigators in the keratin field and members of the HGNC and MGNC. This committee evaluated several potential nomenclature schemes and, after extensive deliberation and consultation with other colleagues in the intermediate filament field, arrived at the consensus nomenclature system that is detailed in the following publication:

Schweizer J...Wright MW *et al.* **New consensus nomenclature for mammalian keratins.** J Cell Biol. 2006 Jul 17;174(2):169-74. PMID: [16831889](#)

This revised nomenclature accommodates functional genes and pseudogenes, and offers the flexibility needed to incorporate additional keratins from other mammalian species. We would like to thank all of the members of the keratin nomenclature committee for their hard work in reaching a resolution, especially Drs Jurgen Schweizer and Mike Rogers of the German Cancer Center who led this initiative.

If you would like to be added to our Nome News mailing list or if you have questions or comments on any human gene nomenclature issue, please email us at: hgnc@genenames.org

Hot Topic

Should potentially offensive gene names be changed?

How would you feel if you were told you carried a mutation in the gene, Lunatic Fringe homolog (*Drosophila*)? Two percent of human genes are named based on their known ortholog or paralog in *Drosophila*; some of these *Drosophila* genes have whimsical names such as "lunatic fringe" and have recently been criticised as 'inappropriate, demeaning and pejorative' in humans. We do not intentionally agree to names which are likely to be offensive and have occasionally changed gene names on these grounds. Should such names be changed?

Click here for further details and to express your opinions.

Meetings Attended

RNA Society Conference

Kate attended the [RNA Society](#) Conference in Seattle, USA, from 20-25th June. This was the HGNC's first meeting with the RNA research community. Kate presented a poster on the nomenclature issues for genes encoding RNAs.

GO Annotation Camp

In July, Ruth enjoyed attending the GO Annotation Camp at Stanford University. The camp was split into 2 sections, consortium members attending the first part and discussing: reference genome annotation; evidence code definitions; the AmiGO browser. The second part of camp was devoted to training new GO curators and/or users in the process of making manual annotations from the primary literature.

International Congress of Human Genetics

Elsbeth was lucky enough to attend the International Congress of Human Genetics meeting in sunny Brisbane, Australia, from August 6th to 10th. As well as several fascinating talks covering historical aspects of modern genetics, popular topics discussed in this meeting included copy number variation, genome evolution and complex genetic disorders. Elspeth was pleased to report that nearly all of the posters contained approved gene nomenclature.

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