

**NCI Symposium:  
International Harmonization of Biorepository Practices**

*November 10, 2005*

Marriott at Metro Center  
Washington, DC

Presentation Summary

**WELCOME**

Anna D. Barker

National Cancer Institute

Dr. Barker stated her goals for the workshop: to share experiences about biorepository practices and to come away with action items that will change the world. She expressed her hope that this meeting will be the beginning of an international dialog. A map showed countries working in biobanking. Biobanking should be as good as it can be so that the science it supports will be excellent and will drive forward personalized medicine. Today's discussions will help enable a medical revolution that leads to disease prevention and targeted treatment. The goal is the flow of material and information among biobanking countries and that meeting participants will catalyze the formation of an integrated network of biobanks.

In the United States, each NCI Cancer Center has a repository. Most places conducting clinical trials also have biorepositories. We are awash in biorepositories. The NCI has been working on biorepository guidelines for its community. Early in 2006, NCI will encourage the biorepositories it funds to comply with first-generation guidelines. The goal is to create more specific second-generation guidelines.

NCI brings another asset to the international biorepository community: the cancer bioinformatics grid (caBIG). This resource could help a great deal with harmonization. The *National Biospecimen Network Blueprint* (published in 2003) may be a model for harmonization. Repositories should be open-source; like other users, companies that use repositories should make data available to all.

This meeting is intended to be informal—a conversation about what's working, what's not, what we can do better, how we can work together. Perhaps this will be the beginning of an

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international working group, piloting best practices across borders. We want to come up with demonstration projects to work on. Perhaps caBIG is a resource that people will get aboard.

Dr. Barker summarized the agenda: an informal morning where various speakers will discuss their countries' biorepositories. At lunch, an editor from *Fortune* magazine will speak. In the afternoon, breakout groups will meet and come up with recommendations for next steps.

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