

Clinical research experts comment on the state of their fields

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In an Editorial published this week in *PLOS Medicine*, editors ask an international panel of eleven expert researchers and clinicians spanning a range of specialties to answer questions on their field and what developments they hope and expect to see in 2016.

The panel includes Ewan Birney, the Joint Director of the European Bioinformatics Institute. He comments on the clinical genomics field, citing examples of how systematic genomic data can impact diagnosis and discovery and he discusses technologies that are driving down costs and making sequencing more accessible. Birney notes: "the question about personalized [genomic data](#) is not about whether these data will be freely available but rather how they will be integrated into the health care systems around the world."

Philipp du Cros of Médecins Sans Frontières was asked about combating tuberculosis (TB) and points to the challenge of multidrug-resistant (MDR) TB and strategies to decrease its burden. He notes that standard MDR-TB treatment is inadequate, and says "In 2016, a more urgent scale-up of [new drugs bedaquiline and delamanid] is required...in the longer term, clinical trials are needed to define the best drug combinations enabling shorter, more effective regimens."

Nick Wareham of the University of Cambridge discusses the growing diabetes epidemic and says the greatest impact in the fight to reverse the increase in incidence will likely be seen from population approaches designed to change behaviors in large groups of people at low and

moderate risk of diabetes, rather than focusing on those at high risk. He adds: "Perhaps the biggest initial step is for governments to recognize and accept that diabetes is a clinical manifestation of a societal problem that requires societal solutions."

Other topics include improving cancer diagnosis, identifying treatments for neurodegenerative diseases, training for and practicing health care in resource-limited settings, improving recognition and treatment of [mental health disorders](#), curbing overdiagnosis and overtreatment, and identifying the best strategies to combat the HIV epidemic. This interesting spread of topics and opinions hints at some potentially interesting areas to keep an eye on in 2016.

More information: Andrew Beck et al. Progress in Medicine: Experts Take Stock, *PLOS Medicine* (2015). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pmed.1001933](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1001933)

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