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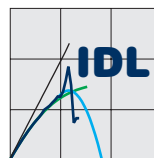
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www.supercentenarians.org

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International Database on Longevity (IDL)



A research database including validated
demographic data on individuals having
reached the age of 110 years and over

www.supercentenarians.org

INTERNATIONAL DATABASE ON LONGEVITY (IDL)

Many researchers interested in extreme human longevity and its limits collaborate at an international level to gather validated demographic data on individuals having reached the age of 110 years and over. This group of researchers met in June 2000 in Rostock, Germany, and in June 2001 in Copenhagen, Denmark. At these research meetings it was decided to establish the International Database on Longevity (IDL).

RATIONALE

A fundamental question in aging research concerns the trajectory of mortality at the highest ages. At present it is uncertain whether human mortality after age 110 is slowly increasing, level, slowly decreasing, or rapidly decreasing. This uncertainty arises because reliable data on mortality after age 110 have not yet been collected. A concerted, international research effort is presently undertaken with the goal of establishing a database that will allow the best possible description of the mortality trajectory beyond the age of 110. Specifically, the objective of this concerted effort is to gather complete lists of validated supercentenarians (i.e., persons aged 110 and above) in as many countries as possible. These lists should be free of ascertainment bias. They will be assembled in the International Database on Longevity (IDL). The IDL will be a research database available on the internet to qualified scholars. Access to the IDL will be free of charge.

CONTENTS

The database will contain complete and validated lists of supercentenarians, arranged by nationality at birth. These lists will include supercentenarians who are alive as well as person who have died. For each supercentenarian, the database will include an anonymous case number, information on his/her date of birth, date of death (if known), sex, on the methods used to validate the person's age, and how the person was ascertained. The database will be physically housed at the University of Montpellier 1, France.



Jeanne Calment
1875-1997

CONFIDENTIALITY

A very important and unique feature of the emerging database is its focus on persons whose age has been thoroughly validated. For the validation of the age of the supercentenarians it will in many instances be necessary to work with personalized information. For example, in some countries the name of the person is needed to retrieve and match birth and death certificates.

Appropriate procedures and rules will be designed to protect the confidential nature of personalized information, taking into account prevailing data protection laws in different countries. Data protection procedures and rules adopted by IDL are governed by the general principle that identification of individual persons should not be possible from the information that will eventually be included in the public database. For example, among these rules is the regulation that only specially trained validation personnel

will have access to personalized information. Personalized information will not be made available to researchers and other individuals who are external to the validation process, and it will not be included in the public version of the database.

PRESERVATION AND MAINTENANCE

The IDL will be established at the University of Montpellier 1 as a part of the agreement between INSERM and the University of Montpellier 1 for the preservation and maintenance of international biomedical databases. The need to update the database with new data will be evaluated every four years.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

An international Consortium will be founded to manage this broad research initiative. The Consortium will oversee the development and implementation of the database, it will establish rules and principles of conservation and access, and it will give special attention to issues of confidentiality. The Consortium will be established by three participating organizations: the National Institute on Health and Medical Research, INSERM (France), the National Institute for Demographic Studies, INED (France), and the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, MPIDR (Germany). The Consortium will be headed by an Executive Scientific Committee consisting of Jean-Marie Robine (INSERM), Jacques Vallin (INED) and James Vaupel (MPIDR). The Executive Scientific Committee will be assisted by a Scientific Advisory Board.



Christian Mortensen
1882-1998