Collaboration: A Mathematical and Medical Partnership

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with thanks to Greenville Health System and Drs. Liz Bouzarth, Kevin Hutson, and Tom Lewis of the Furman Mathematics Department
My research partners for the summer
Kate Causey, Danny Rivers, and Jordan Brown’s first surgical observation at Greenville Health System (GHS)
Goals

Learn

Analyze

Communicate

Discern
Hospital Overview

- Regional Hospital
- University of South Carolina Medical School Greenville

Upsides:
- Particular type of patient
- Opportunities for students like me

Downsides:
- Little data sharing
- Few overworked statisticians
- Pre-existing datasets
Steps in a Study

1. Formulate Question
2. Design Experiment
3. Test
What question are we trying to answer?
1. Formulate Question

- Hepatocellular Carcinoma (HCC)
- Cure: liver transplant or surgery
- Ineligible?
  - Four Treatments
- Question: Of four treatments, which has the best outcome?
• Question: Of four treatments, which has the best outcome?
• BUT!
• How do we define “best outcome?”
  • Survival
  • Days of survival
  • Days of survival past median survival
• OR Tumor Size Change
  • Shrink (positive)
  • None (positive)
  • Grow (negative)
1. Formulate Question

• When we don’t get to ask the question, we make do with what we have.
1. Formulate Question

2. Design Experiment

3. Test

- Hepatocellular Carcinoma
2. Design Experiment

- Pre-Existing data
- Database Design
- Binary Data
- Unknown data
- White, white, or Caucasian
1. Formulate Question
   • Hepatocellular Carcinoma

2. Design Experiment
   • Database design

3. Test
3. Test

- Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
- Research Question:
  - Which babies are at risk?
- 210 babies, 1035 days
Classification and Regression Tree
3. Test

200 college students
(100 prefer salty snacks and 100 prefer sweet)

- 120 students
  GPA > 2.8
  (85 salty and 35 sweet)

- 80 students
  GPA ≤ 2.8
  (15 salty and 65 sweet)
3. Test

- Data Points:
  - Birth Weight
  - Size for Gestational Age (Small, Medium, Large)
  - Gestational Age
  - Glucose Infusion Rate (GIR)

- To determine outcome:
  - Glucose tolerant or intolerant

- Goal: iPhone app to aid clinicians
Summary

1. Formulate Question
   • Hepatocellular Carcinoma

2. Design Experiment
   • Database design

3. Test
   • NICU
What did I learn?

• Communication is KEY
  • I often served as the bridge between the math and the medicine.
Thank You

- Furman Mathematics:
  - Dr. Liz Bouzarth, Ph.D.
  - Dr. Kevin Hutson, Ph.D.
  - Dr. Tom Lewis, Ph.D.

- GHS: Dr. Christine Schammel, Ph.D. Biology, Justin Collins, Consulting Mathematician, and all the physicians, residents, and medical students

- Furman Engaged Organizers
Thank you for coming! Questions?