

The Genomics Resource Center: A Novel, Employer-based Medical Genetics Service

Alan Rope, Catherine Fine, Betsy Swope, Scott Weissman, Lindsey Meyers, William Taggart, Erica Jordan, Steven Bleyl, Erynn Gordon

Introduction

With the knowledge that their employees have an increased awareness and interest in genomic medicine, Genome Medical partnered with a biotech company to provide an online medical genetics platform to better meet the educational and clinical needs of their employees.

Methods

The platform was developed to answer general questions about genetics and health through a private, real-time “Ask an Expert” component that includes points of entry triaged by our clinical care coordinators. The interactive supportive services included a live chat function, phone, email support, an option for scheduling expanded 1-on-1 genetic counseling sessions with counselors board certified and licensed in the employee's state at the time of consultation, and peer to peer consultations for employees whose healthcare providers requested support. Services were available to employees, their spouse, and children. Services (including limited indication-based genetic testing) were supported directly by the employer with no out of pocket costs to employees and were available to all of the approximately 5,500 employees and their eligible family members worldwide. Of note, only the ~4,000 employees within the US were eligible for 1:1 genetic counseling. An exclusive website was created with links to various aspects of the program including an introductory webinar with an overview of the Genomics Resource Center & covered the following topics:

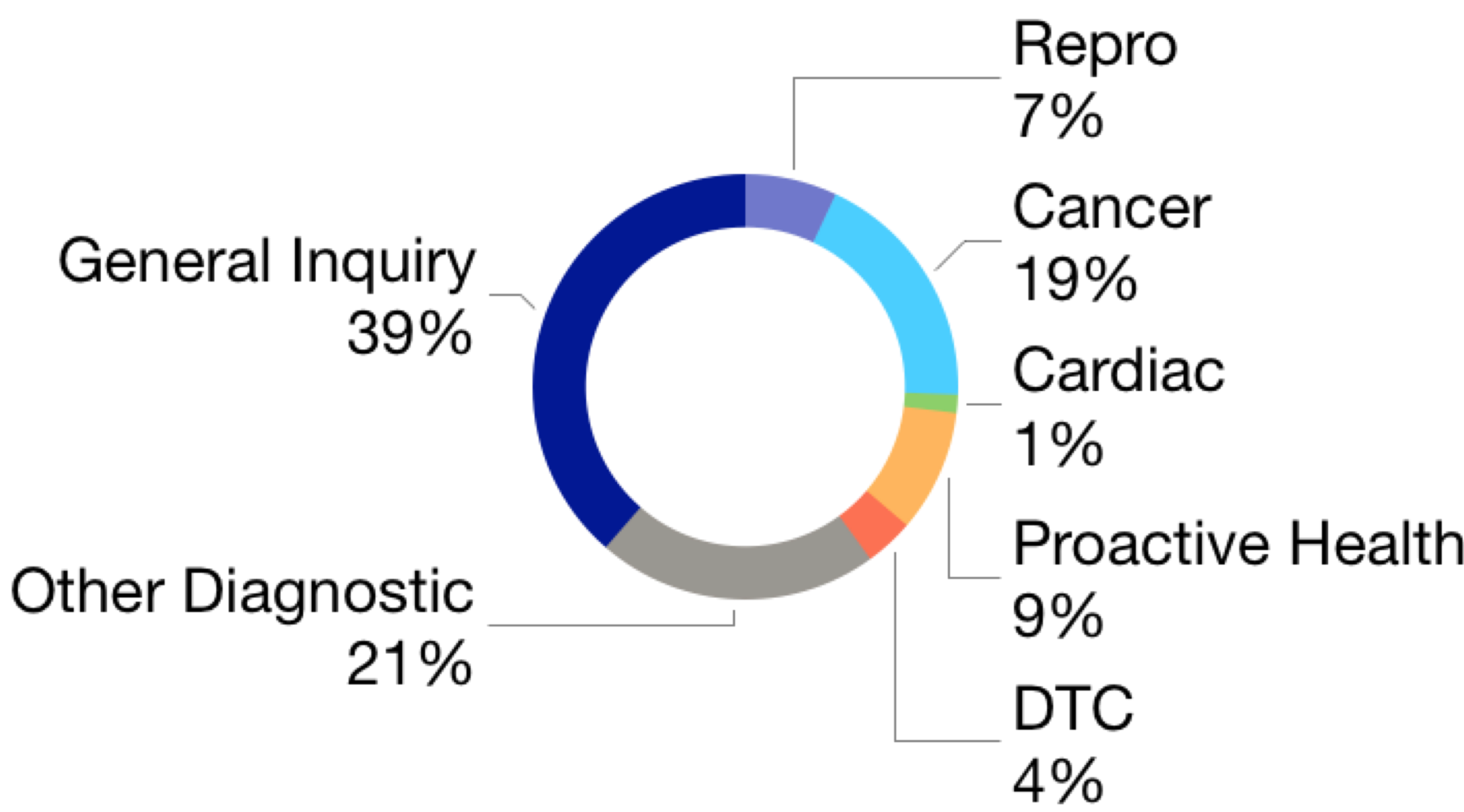
- What kind of questions will be answered through the: “Ask an Expert” service?
- What topics or questions are appropriate for a 1-on-1 consultation?
- Who is eligible to ask a question or schedule a 1-on-1 consultation?

Other webinars and educational video content were developed and made available such as:

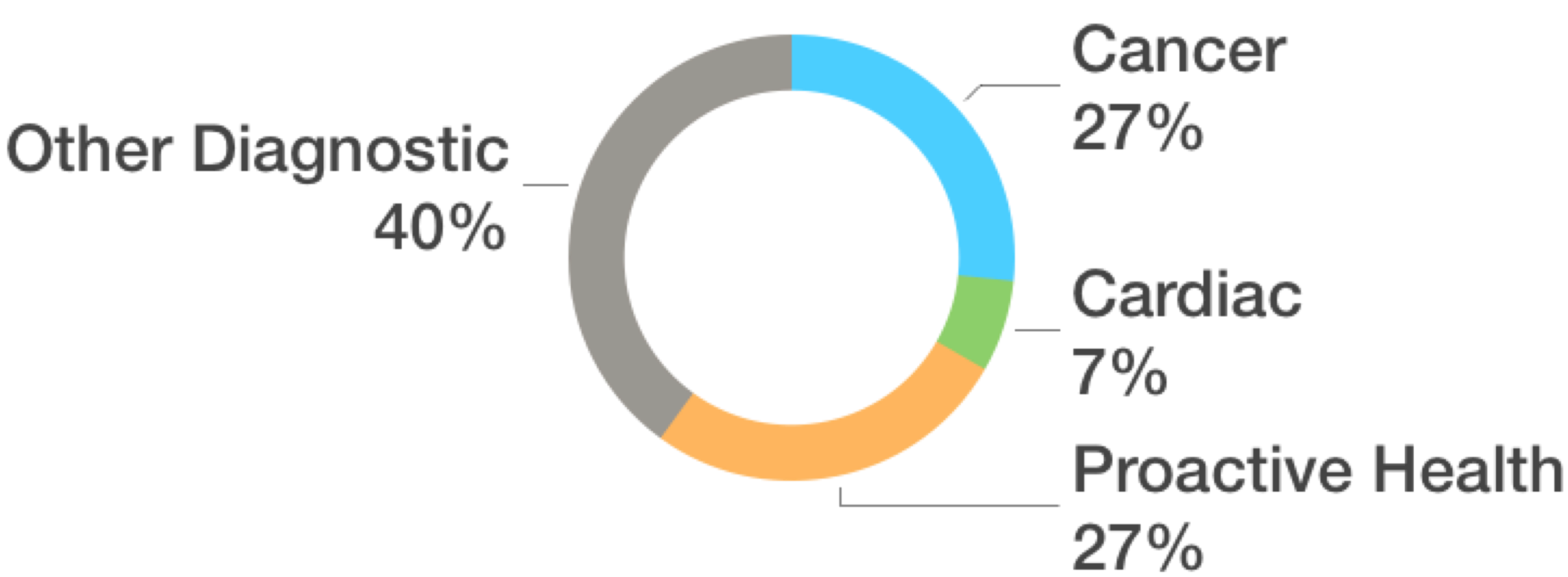
- Understanding hereditary cancer and your potential risks
- What to expect when consulting with a genetic expert
- What you need to know about genetic test results.

Patient needs are dynamic and can be served by multifaceted interactive supportive services including live chat, phone, email, expanded 1-on-1 genetic counseling sessions & peer to peer consultations for employees whose healthcare providers requested support.

Resource Center Inquiries



Genetic Counseling Referral Reason (self-referred)



Conclusions

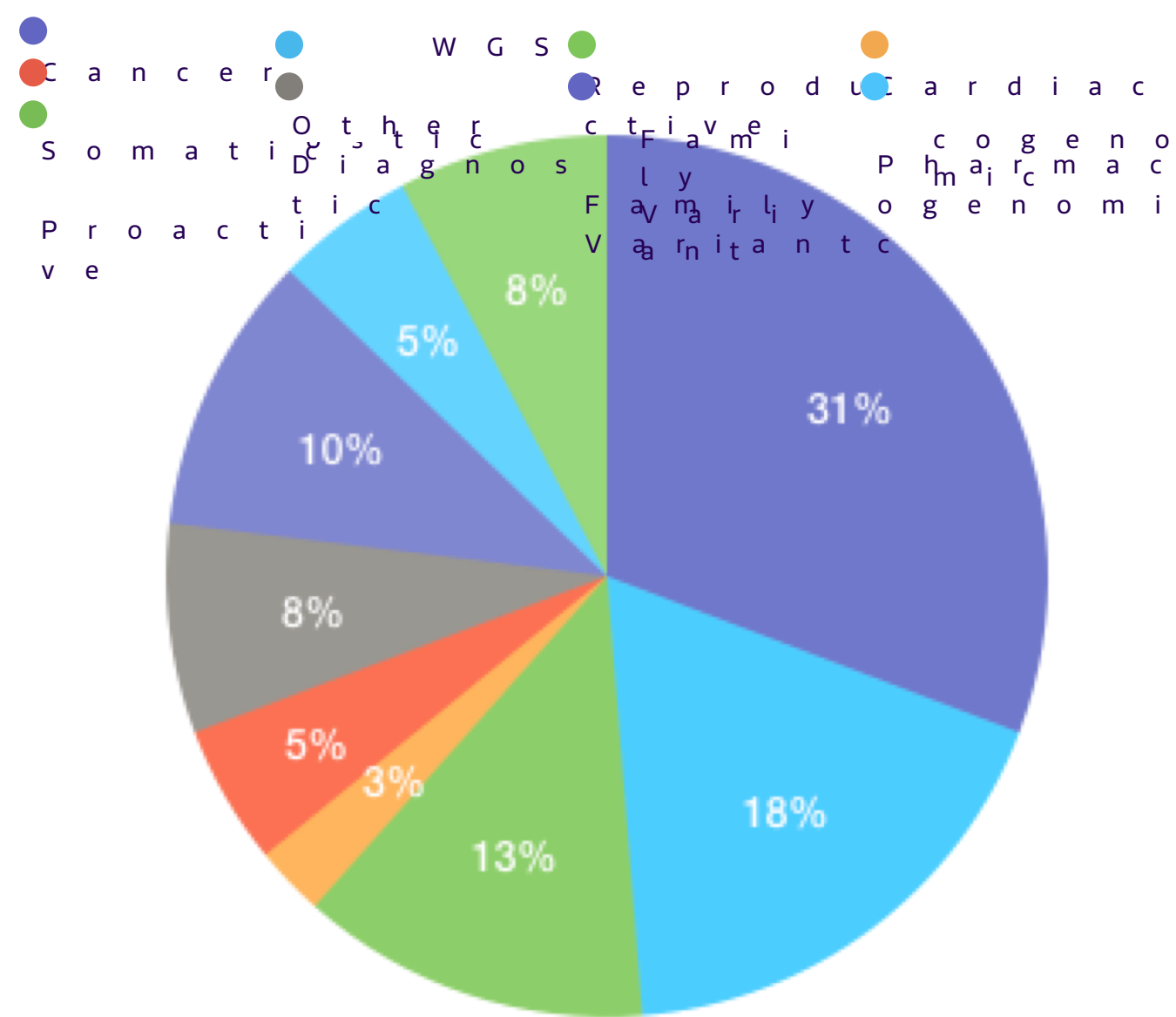
We have created an innovative and successful tool to improve access to medical genetics within an employer-sponsored program; serving the needs for interested individuals who do not require formal consultation and improving access to those with clinical indications. This format has the capacity to be scalable and transferable to other settings including academic centers, health care organizations, and other corporate programs.

Results

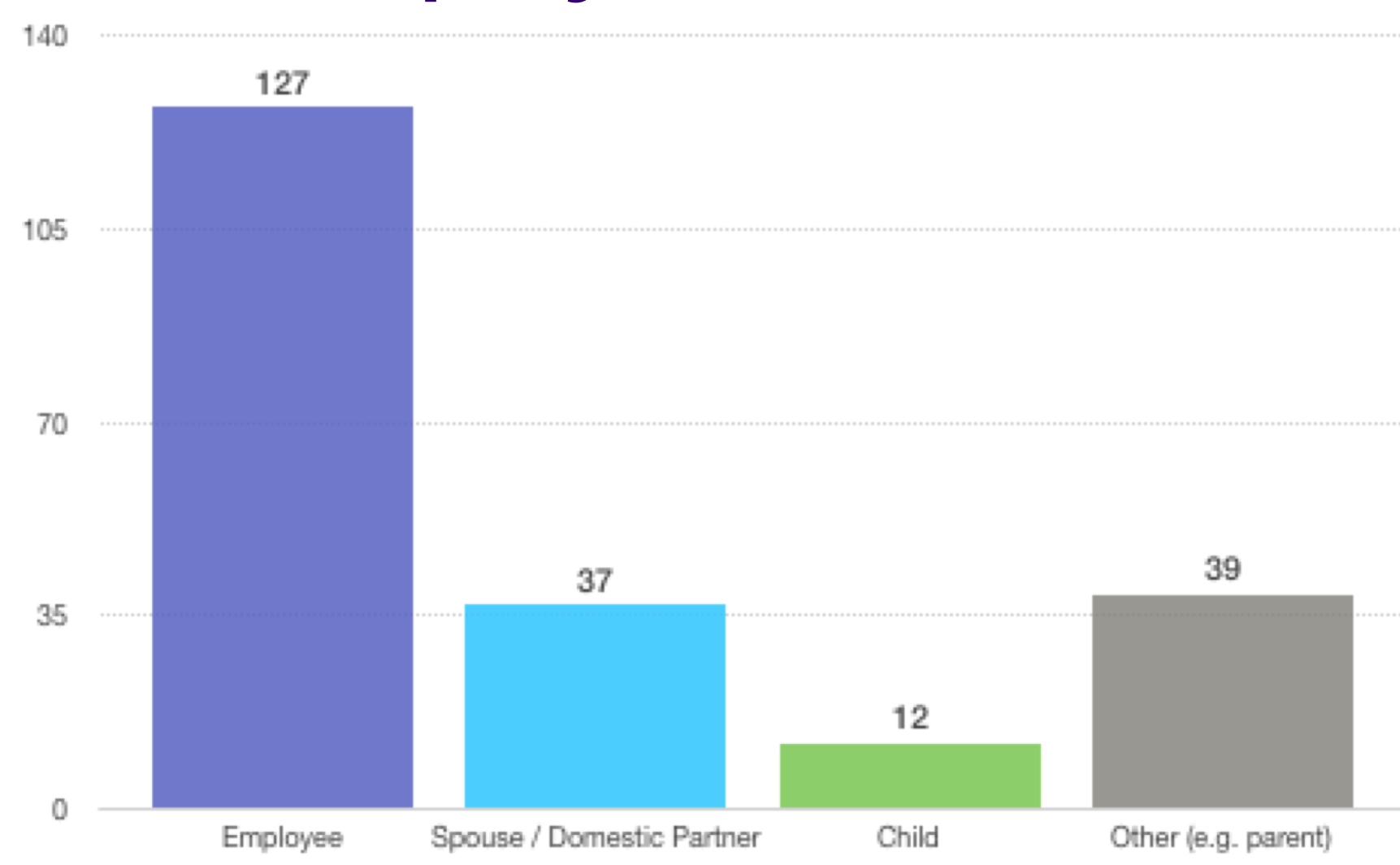
Since launching the program Genome Medical has supported:

215
Resource center inquiries
Inquiries to the resource center were most often about the employee themselves (59%) with 41% about family members.

130
Patients seen for genetic counseling



Focus of Inquiry to Resource Center



Mode of Contact to Resource Center

