

WHITEPAPER

Implementation of ACMG Guidelines

Contents

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|
| Disclaimer | 01 | PM4 | 15 |
| Versions | 02 | PM5 | 15 |
| Introduction | 03 | PP2 | 15 |
| About ACMG | 04 | BP1 | 15 |
| Interpretation Process | 05 | PP3 | 16 |
| Automated Evaluation | 05 | BP4 | 16 |
| Configuration Options | 06 | PP5 | 17 |
| Key Databases | 07 | BP6 | 17 |
| Clinical Evidence | 08 | BA1 | 17 |
| Known Pathogenic | 08 | BS1 | 18 |
| Gene Statistics | 09 | BS2 | 18 |
| Splice-Site Prediction | 10 | BP3 | 18 |
| Conservation | 10 | BP7 | 18 |
| Transcript Selection | 10 | Unimplemented Rules | 19 |
| Allele Frequency | 11 | PS2 | 19 |
| Calibration | 12 | PS4 | 19 |
| Transparency & Clarity | 12 | PM3 | 20 |
| Implemented Rules | 12 | PM6 | 20 |
| PVS1 | 13 | PP1 | 20 |
| PS1 | 13 | PP4 | 21 |
| PS3 | 14 | BS4 | 21 |
| BS3 | 14 | BP2 | 21 |
| PM1 | 14 | BP5 | 21 |
| PM2 | 14 | Further learning resources | 22 |

Disclaimer

VarSome's automated interpretation of pathogenicity based on ACMG guidelines [1] is provided for educational and research use only - it should not be used to provide medical advice in any way.

VarSome attempts to evaluate a subset of these ACMG criteria for which public data is available and according to our interpretation of these criteria. This data may not be reliable and could lead to incorrect conclusions. Other rules cannot be evaluated either because they require additional data sources.

In particular, VarSome's implementation of ACMG guidelines:

- Although it allows you to be more productive and focused, it doesn't fully replace a trained variant curator.
- It is not meant to classify somatic variants.
- It is only meant for early-onset conditions and cancer predisposition. No Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, etc.
- It doesn't know anything about the individual concerned or their family history beyond the single variant you query. You need to use your professional judgment call in combination with patient-specific information.

[1] Standards and guidelines for the interpretation of sequence variants: a joint consensus recommendation of the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics and the Association for Molecular Pathology.
Richards S, et al, 2015, Genet Med
DOI: 10.1038/gim.2015.30

Document Versions

1.0 - March 30, 2020

- Initial version
- ACMG Classification Engine Version: 8.1.6.

Introduction

Next-generation Sequencing (NGS) is becoming increasingly more adopted by the clinical community as a primary tool for diagnostics and monitoring of many diseases, uncovering millions of variants previously unknown. However, the sheer quantity of NGS data presents challenges, especially in the interpretation of the clinical significance of genetic variation, and as such may have serious implications for treatment decisions and further medical outcomes. Thus, innovative analytical approaches are critical for scaling up the adoption and diagnostic yield of NGS-based methodology in clinical settings.

VarSome provides access to over 50 public genomics-related data sets through its purpose-built data storage system called MolecularDB. To assure the highest data quality possible, MolecularDB runs daily comprehensive data integrity checks and ensures genomics data are meticulously integrated and cross-referenced, and insertions and deletions are matched consistently across all the data resource available on VarSome. Besides that, you can rest assured there are always up-to-date data on VarSome. However, that's not all.

In particular, VarSome is also a thriving global Human Genomics Community of healthcare professionals and researchers sharing knowledge in the form of variant classifications, publication links, or discussions, hence further enriching the VarSome's aggregated knowledge base.

One of the benefits of such a massive aggregated and harmonized database is that it can be applied in further downstream processes, such as automated variant classification according to the guidelines of the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics.



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MolecularDB: VarSome's Big Data

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VarSome as the Human Genomics Community

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About ACMG

In 2015, the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ACMG) and the Association for Molecular Pathology (AMP) published updated standards and guidelines for the clinical interpretation of sequence variants with respect to human diseases on the basis of 28 criteria [Richards et al. 2015]. However, variability between individual interpreters can be extensive because of reasons such as the different understandings of these guidelines and the lack of standard algorithms for implementing them. To address these problems, VarSome has implemented 21 ACMG criteria for automated interpretation of the clinical significance of sequence variants with a manual adjustment step. The standards were very much written for interpretation by humans, not machines, they assume the clinician has a deep knowledge of the domain and relevant papers and conditions. Automating these standards is a matter of interpretation, and we have opted to statistically quantify terms such as “hot-spot” or “well known” resulting in many thresholds that are tuned via our calibration process.

Our guiding principle throughout has been to implement the best algorithms we could, following the advice from our clinical advisors, feedback from the VarSome user community, and using statistically justified thresholds. All the rules provide clear natural language explanations of why they were triggered and which evidence was used, or indeed, a full explanation of why the criteria were not met.

| | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| Rules | | | | | | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PVS1 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PS1 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PS2 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PS3 ? | <input type="checkbox"/> PS4 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PM1 ? Moderate ▾ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PM2 ? Moderate ▾ | <input type="checkbox"/> PM3 ? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PM4 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PM5 ? Moderate ▾ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PM6 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PP1 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PP2 ? Supporting ▾ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PP3 ? Supporting ▾ | <input type="checkbox"/> PP4 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PP5 ? Very Strong ▾ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BA1 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BS1 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BS2 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BS3 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BS4 ? | | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BP1 ? | <input type="checkbox"/> BP2 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BP3 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BP4 ? | <input type="checkbox"/> BP5 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BP6 ? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BP7 ? | |

Figure 1. ACMG Verdict for BRAF:V600E NM_004333.6:c.1799T>A. In this case, 6 ACMG criteria fired automatically.

We also strive to continuously improve our implementation, adjusting rules or thresholds, incorporating new data sources, and adding refinements as new publications and methodology changes are suggested.

To this extent, the main aim of VarSome’s ACMG implementation is to correctly present the most salient data available and help the users to quickly identify those variants that require additional clinical scrutiny. The ACMG classification is provided for research and educational purposes only, as indeed are the ACMG guidelines themselves.

Interpretation Process

Automated Evaluation

VarSome's implementation of ACMG guidelines consists of two major steps:

- Automated scoring and evaluation of 21 criteria
- Manual review and adjustment on specific criteria to arrive at a final interpretation.

During the first step, VarSome's proprietary database consisting of more than 50 different databases serves to obtain necessary annotation information on variants for interpretation of pathogenicity of a given genomic variant. By doing so, VarSome gathers and presents all relevant evidence for subsequent manual review. Users are advised to examine detailed evidence and use prior knowledge on ethnicity and/or disease to perform manual adjustments. In certain cases, we have taken into consideration expert opinions from VarSome's Scientific Advisory Board and VarSome's global community. We have striven to make the best use of the available data and implement as many of the rules as possible. Many of the rules require prior information and judgment calls (such as a variant's de novo status), which whilst we have codified as many as possible, still require a human to review the final verdict. Some rules require information for which we can find no publicly available sources of data, or require patient and family member data.







| Automated criteria | | |
|---|---------------------------|---|
| Rule | Pathogenicity | Explanation |
| PM1  | Pathogenic Moderate | Hot-spot of length 61 base-pairs has 18 non-VUS coding variants (18 pathogenic and 0 benign), pathogenicity = 100.0%, proximity score 12.951 which is more than threshold 2.472. |
| PM2  | Pathogenic Moderate | GnomAD exomes allele count = 1 is less than 5 threshold for dominant gene BRAF (good GnomAD exomes coverage = 82.5). Variant not found in GnomAD genomes (good GnomAD genomes coverage = 30.6). |
| PM5  | Pathogenic Moderate | Alternative variant chr7:140453136 AC⇒CT (Val600Arg) is classified Pathogenic by a VarSome user (confirmed using ACMG). |
| PP2  | Pathogenic Supporting | 232 out of 249 non-VUS missense variants in gene BRAF are pathogenic = 93.2% which is more than threshold of 51.0%, and 243 out of 435 clinically reported variants in gene BRAF are pathogenic = 55.9% which is more than threshold of 12.0%. |
| PP3  | Pathogenic Supporting | Pathogenic computational verdict because 9 pathogenic predictions from Cosmic.FATHMM, DEOGEN2, EIGEN, FATHMM-MKL, M-CAP, MVP, MutationTaster, PrimateAI and REVEL vs 1 benign prediction from MutationAssessor (1 uncertain prediction from DANN). |
| PP5  | Pathogenic Very Strong | UniProt classifies this variant as 'disease' (Colorectal Cancer). Using strength Very Strong because VarSome users have linked 8 articles: 12068308 , 15811117 , 21788131 , 22743296 , 23524406 , 24252190 , 25673558 and 31602213 , stating this variant is pathogenic. |

Figure 2. Review the explanation for every ACMG criterium

Configuration Options

VarSome's implementation of ACMG guidelines comes with several configuration options, all of which may affect the final verdict.

Minimum Clinvar Rating

ACMG classification options

These options are saved for your account and will be used for all subsequent ACMG classifications.

Please note that if ClinVar and/or UniProt are disabled for ACMG classifications, results from these databases will not be shown for any variants you query on VarSome until you re-enable them.

Use ClinVar:

☒ Yes ☐ No

Minimum ClinVar rating:

☐ Any ☒ 1 star ☐ 2 stars ☐ 3 stars ☐ 4 stars

Use Uniprot:

☒ Yes ☐ No

Save

Figure 3. Default minimum Clinvar rating is 1 star, but you may change it.

Transcript Selection

Rules

Transcript: NM_004333.6, canonical, protein length 767, gene BRAF, missense variant

Transcript: NM_004333.6, canonical, protein length 767, gene BRAF, missense variant

Transcript: ENST00000288602.6, canonical, protein length 767, gene BRAF, missense variant

Transcript: NM_001374258.1, protein length 808, gene BRAF, missense variant

Transcript: NM_001374244.1, protein length 807, gene BRAF, missense variant

Transcript: NM_001354609.2, protein length 768, gene BRAF, missense variant

☒ PVS1 ☐ PM4 ☒ BAI ☐ BP1 ☐ BP2 ☒ BP3 ☐ BP4 ☐ BP5 ☒ BP6 ☒ BP7 ☐ PM3 ☒ PPS ☐ Very Strong

Figure 4. You may specify your preferred transcript.

Did you know?

VarSome Clinical allows you to store the final verdict once you make the judgment to avoid the need to go through the same process should you encounter the same variant again. VarSome Clinical is our CE-IVD-certified and HIPAA-compliant tool for processing and interpretation of NGS data, starting from FASTQ or VCF.

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Key Databases

The VarSome ACMG annotation relies on vast quantities of accurate curated data from the following databases (in no particular order):



Databases versions and dates are stated as of April 1, 2020. We regularly add new and update existing data resources. The same applies to thresholds, which may change from time to time as a consequence of fine-tuning VarSome's ACMG classification engine. For the latest details refer always to [VarSome's online documentation](#).

01. **UniProt Variants**, provided by UNIPROT, version 16-Mar-2016 (circa 90.3k records)
02. **UniProt Regions**, provided by UNIPROT, version 07-Jan-2020 (circa 199k records)
03. **RefSeq**, provided by NCBI, version 98
04. **Mitomap**, provided by CHOP, version 27-Nov-2019 (circa 27.5k records)
05. **dbscSNV**, provided by dbNSFP, version v1.1 (circa 15.0M records)
06. **dbNSFP** genes, provided by dbNSFP, version v3.4
07. **dbNSFP-c**, provided by dbNSFP, version 4.0 (circa 82.8M records)
08. **DANN SNVs**, provided by UCI, using version 2014 (circa 9.41G records) for hg19, unavailable for hg38
09. **Cosmic Licensed**, provided by Sanger, version v90
10. **CGD**, provided by NHGRI, version 11-Feb-2020
11. **ClinVar**, provided by NCBI, version 11-Feb-2020 (circa 623k records)
12. **Ensembl**, provided by EMBL, version 99
13. **ExAC genes**, provided by Broad, version 18-Sep-2018
14. **GERP**, version 2010
15. **gnomAD exomes**, provided by Broad, using version 2.1.1 (circa 17.2M records) for hg19, and using version 2.1.1 (circa 17.2M records) for hg38
16. **gnomAD exomes coverage**, provided by Broad, version 2.1
17. **gnomAD genomes**, provided by Broad, using version 2.1.1 (circa 262M records) for hg19, and using version 3 (circa 708M records) for hg38
18. **gnomAD genomes coverage**, provided by Broad, using version 2.1 (circa 3.14G records) for hg19, and using version 3.0 (circa 3.21G records) for hg38
19. **HGNC**, provided by HUGO, version 12-Feb-2020
20. Papers & classifications contributed by the VarSome community.

Clinical Evidence

Clinical Evidence is the foundation stone of VarSome's ACMG evaluation, and we currently source this from:

- ClinVar
- UniProt
- MitoMap
- Publications linked by VarSome user
- VarSome user classifications

The VarSome options allow the user to specify a minimum number of stars to filter ClinVar, so entries with fewer stars will be ignored, or similarly disable clinical classifications from UniProt.

Known Pathogenic

On a daily basis, we re-annotate all the variants from the clinical evidence sources listed above, this data is then used for all the rules that require clinical evidence or derived statistics. For each variant we record its original "source" classification, allele frequency, coding impact, and we also compute its ACMG classification with the clinical evidence rules disabled (PP5 & BP6).

The strengths of rules such as PS1 and PM5 will be downgraded if a variant has been reported pathogenic but that it is not confirmed through the independent ACMG re-annotation.

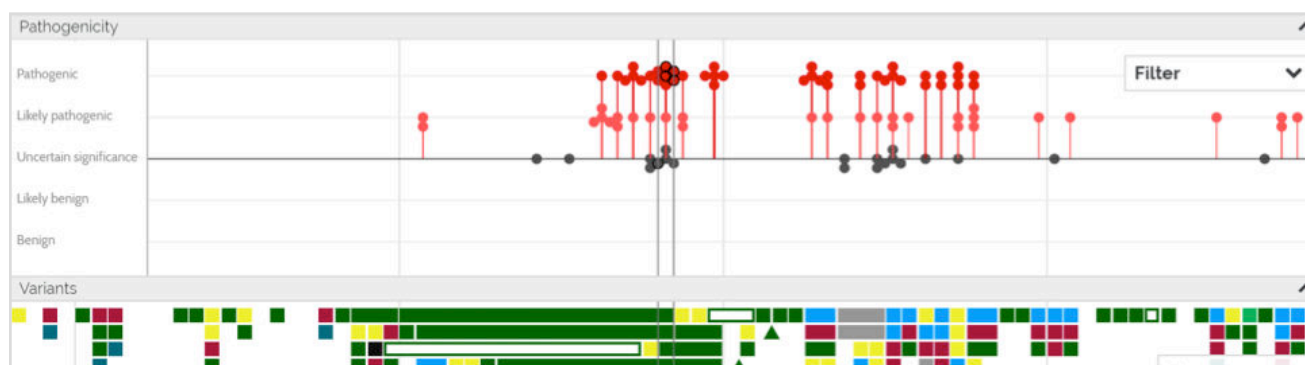


Figure 5. Known Pathogenic database is displayed in VarSome as a "lollipop graph" in the genome browse on gene pages. The graph can be filtered by coding impact, or various types of null variants.

Gene Statistics

This database is also rebuilt daily, derived from the known pathogenic variants: it keeps track of how many variants are benign/pathogenic for each gene, along with their coding impacts - these are used in rules PP2 and BP1 for example.

We derive a “benign cut-off frequency” from these variant classifications & their allele frequencies for use in rule BS1.

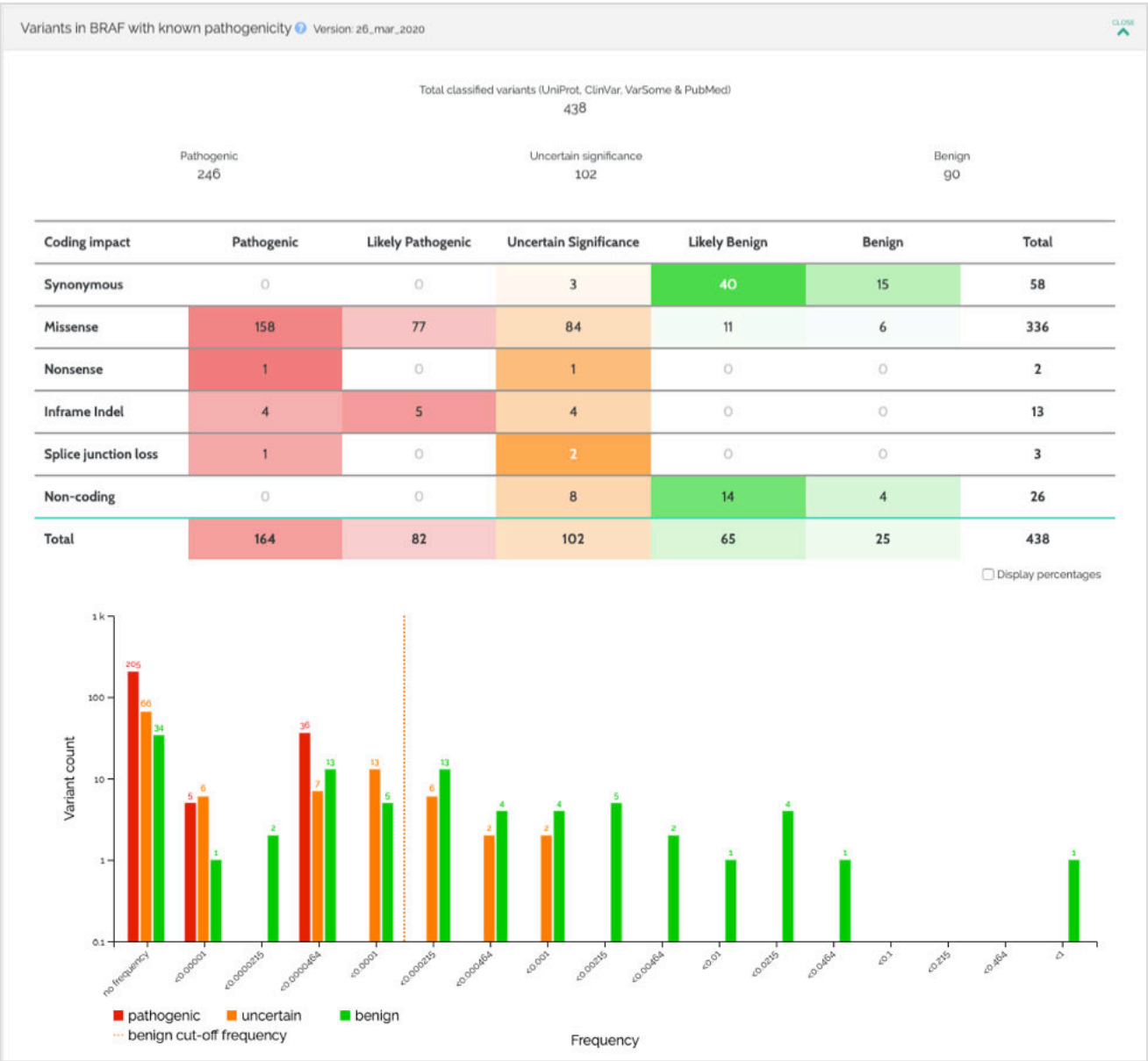


Figure 6. The gene statistics are displayed in VarSome's gene pages.

Splice-Site Prediction

We use the scSNV database for splice-site prediction. This is only available for single-nucleotide variants. We use both the 'ADA Boost Splicing' threshold (**0.708**) and 'Random Forest Splicing' threshold (**0.515**) to identify potentially splicing variants for rule BP7.

Conservation

We use GERP++ for conservation tests, this is available for nearly all positions in the hg19 genome. A position will be considered highly conserved for rules BP7 and BP4 if GERP Rejected Substitutions (GERP_RS) is greater than **6.8**.



Note however that GERP is not available for hg38 and we therefore skip conservation tests - one of the reasons for which hg38 annotations may be slightly less accurate than for hg19.

Transcript Selection

All the ACMG rules are evaluated against a single transcript. Selecting this transcript is clearly of critical importance and can modify the outcome of the classification. Transcripts are prioritised according to the following criteria:

- Most severe coding impact, or within +/- 2 bases of the splicing site
- Canonica
- Longest transcript

The above criteria can be overridden by users by selecting a different transcript in the VarSome user interface.

Transcript Selection

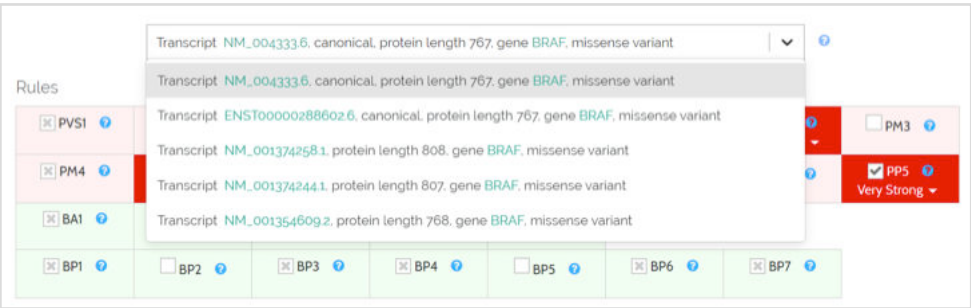


Figure 7. You may specify your preferred transcript.

Did you know?

VarSome Clinical allows you to store the final verdict once you make the judgment to avoid the need to go through the same process should you encounter the same variant again. VarSome Clinical is our CE-IVD-certified and HIPAA-compliant tool for processing and interpretation of NGS data, starting from FASTQ or VCF.

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The Ensembl Transcript Support Level (TSL) is a method to highlight the well-supported and poorly-supported transcript models for users, based on the type and quality of the alignments used to annotate the transcript. We disqualify Ensembl transcripts that have a TSL with a value different from 1.



Some variants can be in multiple transcripts associated with multiple genes, although it is rare for a variant to be coding in multiple genes. The rules above will first determine the transcript to use, from which the gene is then derived.

Allele Frequency

VarSome currently uses GnomAD exomes & genomes to evaluate allele counts and frequencies, it uses both the frequency data and the coverage data reported for both these databases.

Frequencies will not be considered valid if:

- Coverage is less than **20**
- the Allele Number is less than **1000**
- the GnomAD quality filter is suspect (ie: not PASS)

Rules BA1 and BS1 will iterate through the various ethnicities to see whether the variant is common in a sub-population.



Further databases such as BRAVO and TwinsUK will be incorporated in future.

Calibration

Many of the rules implemented here rely on thresholds, PM1 is a good example where defining a “hot-spot” is clearly a fuzzy measure. In practice we carefully adjust these thresholds through statistical regression against a large population of reliably curated variants. When calibrating, we disable the clinical evidence rules (PP5 and BP6) in order to ensure that the classifier works well in the absence of variant-specific evidence, and thus can be extrapolated reliably beyond the test population. The calibrations are 'fair' in that they do not over-emphasise pathogenic vs benign or uncertain variants, we simply seek to maximise overall accuracy.

We reserves the right to adjust the implementation of the rules and the calibrated thresholds at any time. In practice this has allowed us to deliver continual improvements in the overall quality of our automated classification - but it also entails that results may change if when re-annotating a variant several months later: methodologies, thresholds, and the clinical data used to calibrate them, may all have changed.

AI and Machine Learning

Although we use machine-learning techniques to adjust the thresholds used, we do not use neural-networks in the actual classification itself. We believe it is important to have fully transparent, justifiable and explainable rules, as opposed to inscrutable black-boxes. The 'AI' aspect is also well captured in the computational evidence, DANN being a prime example of how powerful such an approach can be.

Transparency & Clarity

Each ACMG rule implemented in VarSome provides a detailed explanation of why it has been triggered or not. This makes the workings of the system clear and transparent, whilst also ensuring that the explanations are always fully consistent with the coded logic.

All thresholds used are explicitly visible in the explanation, and the annotation itself only uses the data available in the VarSome's aggregated database. This not only guarantees consistency, but it also makes it possible for the user to verify the classifications by looking up the corresponding data.

VarSome's ACMG annotation methodology is constantly under review following feedback from its global community and from our Scientific Advisory Board.

Implemented Rules



Databases versions and dates are stated as of April 1, 2020. We regularly add new and update existing data resources. The same applies to thresholds, which may change from time to time as a consequence of fine-tuning VarSome's ACMG classification engine. For the latest details refer always to [VarSome's online documentation](#).

PVS1

Null variant (nonsense, frameshift, canonical ± 1 or 2 splice sites, initiation codon, single or multiexon deletion) in a gene where LOF is a known mechanism of disease. (Pathogenic, Very Strong)

The rule first establishes whether this is a null variant by checking its coding impact on the transcript:

- nonsense variant
- frameshift variant
- exon deletion variant
- within ± 2 bases of transcript splice site
- start loss variant

We determine that LOF is a "Known Mechanism of Disease" from either:

- The gene statistics: if at least **5** variants in this gene are known to be pathogenic
- ExAC probability of loss-of-function tolerance is greater than **0.7**

Purely for information, a list of possible associated diseases is sourced from CGD and reported in the rule explanation.



Rule PVS1 disables rule PM4 in order to avoid double-counting the same evidence.

PS1

Same amino acid change as a previously established pathogenic variant regardless of nucleotide change. (Pathogenic, Strong)

This rule only applies to missense variants, it considers all possible **equivalent** amino acid missense variants (ie: resulting in the same amino-acid). If any clinically reported pathogenic variants are identified in the known pathogenic database, we then check whether they are confirmed pathogenic using the ACMG annotation, and the rule triggers with the corresponding strength and explanation.

PS3

Well-established in vitro or in vivo functional studies supportive of a damaging effect on the gene or gene product. (Pathogenic, Strong)

BS3

Well-established in vitro or in vivo functional studies show no damaging effect on protein function or splicing. (Benign, Strong)

These two rules leverage the known pathogenic database, looking for papers that refer to in-vitro or functional studies. VarSome user contributions are particularly helpful as users are asked to manually confirm the studies referred to in the paper. For papers linked by ClinVar, UniProt & MitoMap, we automatically scan the title & abstract and look for potential studies.

Ultimately the papers highlighted by this rule must be reviewed by an experienced clinician.

PM1

Located in a mutational hot spot and/or critical and well-established functional domain (e.g., active site of an enzyme) without benign variation. (Pathogenic, Moderate)

This rule relies heavily on the known pathogenic database to evaluate how many coding pathogenic variants are found near the variant being considered.

- Hot-Spot: using a region of **30** base-pairs either side of the variant, we check that there are at least **5** pathogenic variants, then weights them by distance to compute a “proximity score”. The rule triggers if the this score is greater than **2.472**.
- Protein Domains: for each UniProt functional domain, the rule will trigger if at least **5** pathogenic variants are found within the domain, and the ratio of pathogenic to non-VUS variants is greater than **0.172**.

The thresholds used by rule PM1 have been established through a careful calibration process and may change over time as further clinical evidence becomes available.

PM2

Absent from controls (or at extremely low frequency if recessive) in Exome Sequencing Project, 1000 Genomes Project, or Exome Aggregation Consortium. (Pathogenic, Moderate)

This rule first uses data from CGD to establish whether the gene is recessive or dominant.

- BP1 conversely checks that the ratio of benign missense variants over all non-VUS missense variants is greater than **0.51**, with a secondary requirement that the ratio of benign variants over all clinically reported variants is greater than **0.24**.

The calibration section explains how these thresholds are established.

PP3

Multiple lines of computational evidence support a deleterious effect on the gene or gene product (conservation, evolutionary, splicing impact, etc.) (Pathogenic, Supporting)

BP4

Multiple lines of computational evidence suggest no impact on gene or gene product (conservation, evolutionary, splicing impact, etc.) (Benign, Supporting)

These two rules use a very similar implementation. The data-sets used are static, many are sourced from dbNSFP which covers all non-synonymous coding single-nucleotide variants.

Based on combined accuracy tests, we have selected the following sub-set of in-silico prediction tools:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| — DANN | — Polyphen-2 (only for users of VarSome Clinical) |
| — DEOGEN2 | — MVP |
| — FATHMM-MKL | — EIGEN |
| — M-CAP | — REVEL |
| — Mutation Assessor | — SIFT |
| — Mutation Taster | — GERP: a simple conservation test is used if no other data is available. |
| — Primate AI | |

As more tools become available this list will change. Some tools have far greater coverage than others, for example DANN is available for all SNVs, where most other tools are only available for non-synonymous coding SNVs. The GERP score is available for nearly all positions and is used to establish whether the position is conserved.

Wherever possible we use the default pathogenic/benign predictions from each tool, however for some tools (DANN, SIFT and GERP) we use internally calibrated thresholds. The algorithm counts the number of pathogenic & benign predictions, and will trigger if the ratio of pathogenic classifications to total classifications (respectively benign) exceeds the **0.53**. We have found this to be significantly more accurate than the unanimous verdict strictly required by the ACMG Guidelines.

In order to avoid double-counting, rule BP4 will not be evaluated if rule BP7 was triggered. It also explicitly checks for conservation itself rather than relying on the in-silico tools alone.

- BP1 conversely checks that the ratio of benign missense variants over all non-VUS missense variants is greater than **0.51**, with a secondary requirement that the ratio of benign variants over all clinically reported variants is greater than **0.24**.

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In order to avoid double-counting, rule BP4 will not be evaluated if rule BP7 was triggered. It also explicitly checks for conservation itself rather than relying on the in-silico tools alone.

Statistically, if a variant is not found in any static in-silico database, it is most likely to be pathogenic. To refine this somewhat extreme prediction, we use GERP as a simple fall-back in the absence of any other prediction, returning a pathogenic prediction if GERP_RS is greater than **3.597**, or benign if the variant is non-truncating and GERP_RS is less than **3.561** (note that these thresholds are lower than that used for conservation).

PP5

Reputable source recently reports variant as pathogenic, but the evidence is not available to the laboratory to perform an independent evaluation. (Pathogenic, Supporting)

BP6

Reputable source recently reports variant as benign, but the evidence is not available to the laboratory to perform an independent evaluation. (Benign, Supporting)

Similarly to rules PS3 and BS3, these two rules leverage the known pathogenic database to report whether the variant has been clinically reported (see clinical evidence, but without any reference to in-vitro or functional studies).

The default strength for these rules is **Supporting**, per ACMG Guidelines, however our implementation will use stronger rule strengths if borne out by the available. Whilst this is not strictly in-line with guidelines, it does allow us to highlight clinical evidence, and users are always free to manually change the strength used when reviewing the verdict.

Strength **Supporting** is used by default, but for the following exceptions:

ClinVar

- **Very Strong** if 'practice guideline' = 4 stars, or 'reviewed by expert panel' = 3 stars
- **Moderate** if consistent submissions from multiple sources = 2 stars

VarSome user entries

- **Very Strong** if more than 3 VarSome users have linked publications and classified the variant
- **Strong** if only 2 publications linked by users
- **Moderate** if only 1 publication linked by users

In order to avoid double-counting, these rules will not be evaluated if rules PP3 or BS3 have triggered.

BA1

Allele frequency is >5% in Exome Sequencing Project, 1000 Genomes Project, or Exome Aggregation Consortium. (Benign, Stand Alone)

Rule BA1 is applied if the allele frequency is greater than the threshold 0.05. This is in strict concordance with the ACMG Guidelines and determines a variant to be stand-alone benign for Mendelian disease.

The BA1 Exceptions have also been implemented, as recommended by ClinGen.



That rules BS1 and BS2 may trigger at much lower frequency thresholds.

BS1

Allele frequency is greater than expected for disorder. (Benign, Strong)

Here we find the highest GnomAD allele frequency for the variant across the main population ethnicities and compare this to the benign cut-off frequency derived from the gene statistics. If there are too few known variants (fewer than **5**), we use a much higher default threshold, **0.015**, for rare diseases.

In order to avoid double-counting, rule BS1 is not evaluated if either rules BA1 or PM2 were triggered first.

BS2

Observed in a healthy adult individual for a recessive (homozygous), dominant (heterozygous), or X-linked (hemizygous) disorder, with full penetrance expected at an early age. (Benign, Strong)

The rule first determines the mode of inheritance of the gene from CGD, then compares the allele count (see allele frequency for quality checks) against the appropriate threshold:

- allele count greater than 3 for recessive or X-linked genes
- allele count greater than 5 for dominant genes

In order to avoid double-counting, the rule is not evaluated if rules BA1 or PM2 were triggered first.

BP3

In-frame deletions/insertions in a repetitive region without a known function. (Benign, Supporting)

This rule is closely related to PM4: it uses UniProt to ensure the variant isn't in a domain with a known function, checks that the variant is indeed in a repeat region, and verifies that there are no known clinically reported pathogenic variants within 3 base-pairs of the repeat region under consideration.

BP7

A synonymous (silent) variant for which splicing prediction algorithms predict no impact to the splice consensus sequence nor the creation of a new splice site AND the nucleotide is not highly conserved. (Benign, Supporting)

This rule applies to synonymous variants only that are not deemed highly-conserved in GERP (see conservation).

Splicing is checked as follows:

- the variant is found further than **3** bases from a splice site, and there is no scSNV splice-site prediction
- not predicted splicing using scSNV (see splice-site prediction for more information).

Unimplemented Rules



Databases versions and dates are stated as of April 1, 2020. We regularly add new and update existing data resources. The same applies to thresholds, which may change from time to time as a consequence of fine-tuning VarSome's ACMG classification engine. For the latest details refer always to [VarSome's online documentation](#).

The following rules are not implemented or not currently available to VarSome users - in most cases this is because the necessary data required to evaluate the rules is not in the public-domain, or the rules require patient-specific information, sometimes on a per-variant basis. Should they have more evidence, users can manually toggle rules on or off in VarSome, or adjust the strength used, and the resulting classification will be re-evaluated immediately.

PS2

De novo (both maternity and paternity confirmed) in a patient with the disease and no family history. (Pathogenic, Strong)

Did you know?

PS2 criterium is not implemented in the free VarSome.com, as it requires a patient-specific information. PS2 criterium is implemented in VarSome Clinical, the CE-IVD and HIPAA-compliant fully-fledged platform for interpretation of NGS data, starting from FASTQ or VCF, for gene panels, exomes, and whole genomes.

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PS4

The prevalence of the variant in affected individuals is significantly increased compared with the prevalence in controls. (Pathogenic, Strong)

This rule has not been implemented.

PM3

For recessive disorders, detected in trans with a pathogenic variant (Pathogenic, Moderate)

This rule has not been implemented.

PM6

Assumed de novo, but without confirmation of paternity and maternity. (Pathogenic, Moderate)

Did you know?

PM6 criterium is not implemented in the free VarSome.com, as it requires a patient-specific information. PM6 criterium is implemented in VarSome Clinical, the CE-IVD and HIPAA-compliant fully-fledged platform for interpretation of NGS data, starting from FASTQ or VCF, for gene panels, exomes, and whole genomes.

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PP1

Cosegregation with disease in multiple affected family members in a gene definitively known to cause the disease. (Pathogenic, Supporting)

Did you know?

PP1 criterium is not implemented in the free VarSome.com, as it requires a patient-specific information. PP1 criterium is implemented in VarSome Clinical, the CE-IVD and HIPAA-compliant fully-fledged platform for interpretation of NGS data, starting from FASTQ or VCF, for gene panels, exomes, and whole genomes.

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PP4

Patient's phenotype or family history is highly specific for a disease with a single genetic etiology. (Pathogenic, Supporting)

This rule has not been implemented.

BS4

Lack of segregation in affected members of a family. (Benign, Strong)

Did you know?

BS4 criterium is not implemented in the free VarSome.com, as it requires a patient-specific information. BS4 criterium is implemented in VarSome Clinical, the CE-IVD and HIPAA-compliant fully-fledged platform for interpretation of NGS data, starting from FASTQ or VCF, for gene panels, exomes, and whole genomes.

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BP2

Observed in trans with a pathogenic variant for a fully penetrant dominant gene/disorder or observed in cis with a pathogenic variant in any inheritance pattern. (Benign, Supporting)

This rule has not been implemented.

BP5

Variant found in a case with an alternate molecular basis for disease. (Benign, Supporting)

This rule has not been implemented.

Further learning resources



VarSome Clinical is a CE-IVD-certified and HIPAA-compliant platform allowing fast and accurate variant discovery, annotation, and interpretation of NGS data for whole genomes, exomes, and gene panels. VarSome Clinical helps molecular geneticists and clinicians reach faster and more accurate diagnoses and treatment decisions for genetic conditions.

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