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## Introduction

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Biotechnology, applied genetic research and information technologies are emerging as key technological engines reshaping medical research, clinical care and healthcare delivery. They are transforming biology and medicine from descriptive, empirical disciplines into evidence-based, information-driven communities of innovation. Such an environment carries increased opportunity for the development of intellectual property and the potential for related innovation-based profit. The goal of the special issue is to identify and analyse the relationships between intellectual property rights, innovation and global healthcare, informing the available evidence and analysis and the perspectives of relevant stakeholders.

In this issue of *IJIPM*, Jordan Paradise examines broad questions of ownership in genetic material, patient advocacy efforts in collaborative research and limitations in the traditional distinction between IP ownership and inventorship. Her insightful article, 'Patient advocacy group collaboration in genetic research and the scope of joint inventorship under US Patent Law', outlines the challenges of emerging genomics applications and the need for a consumer voice in the process.

In their papers entitled 'Compulsory licensing for access to medicines in the developing world', and 'Patent reform and compulsory licensing: a case study from India', Sagarika Chakraborty and Angira Singhvi discuss how compulsory licensing promotes social well-being to the extent that it may obviate the drawbacks of a patent system, arguing that there is no risk of decreasing investment in research in most developing countries where markets may not be seen as significant by multinational companies.

Richard Churchill et al. echo this theme in their paper, 'Social justice and IP rights: Thailand's argument for non-negotiated compulsory licensing', where they summarise Thailand's justification for unilateral licensing of drug patents where it supports the social values of the Thai healthcare system.

In a review of how economic powers are working together to address the safety issues of cross-border health and medicine, Jameson et al. provide working models for managers in their paper 'Using IP law as a medical patient safety tool: efforts from the US and China'.

Finally, Peo et al. present an example of how IP issues are being addressed in an innovative online cancer research network in the paper 'Issues and challenges in managing genetic intellectual property across complex collaborative networks: a proposed model for managers'.

While the concept of 'medicine without borders' continues to grow as both, a practice and an economic force, the management of intellectual property within this environment remains a challenge. This issue is provided as a collection of innovations and ideas managers can use as they face such challenges.