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Press Release

BlueGnome completes initial validation of new ultra robust array format.

International study confirms utility of microarray for investigation of haematological malignancies.

BlueGnome announced today that it has completed the initial validation of a new microarray designed to accelerate investigations into the cytogenetics of the most common haematological malignancies.

Routine investigation of leukaemias and lymphomas currently use a combination of G-band karyotyping and fluorescent in-situ hybridization (FISH) to characterize the percentage of malignant cells in the sample and the nature of any associated chromosomal abnormalities. Both these techniques require the cells to be cultured which introduces the possibility that differential growth rates between malignant and healthy cells will result in presence of certain malignancies being under-estimated or in some cases missed altogether. BlueGnome's haematology array uses arrayCGH approaches to overcome these limitations.

The haematology array is the first to utilize BlueGnome's new Focus format, an ultra robust arrayCGH microarray which combines on-chip controls, novel replication strategies and advanced mathematics to deliver high sensitivity investigation of disease specific regions and genome wide screening for larger structural abnormalities while avoiding all known copy number polymorphisms (CNPs).

Validation of the haematology array is being completed in collaboration with nine International cytogenetics laboratories. Dr Nick Haan, BlueGnome CEO, explained, "Routine haematology investigations take microarray technology in a new direction where sensitivity is critical. The new Focus format has enabled us to detect clinically relevant imbalances in as little as 10% of the sample cell population. In some cases these imbalances were absent in the cell cultures and so would not have been reported by existing techniques". Eigil Kjeldsen, Head of Cancer Cytogenetics at Aarhus University Hospital concurred, "The challenges associated with culturing certain cell types, for example childhood ALL, are well recognized. We expect to see increasing use of microarrays in our laboratory in order to provide the maximum amount of information as early as possible in the investigation".

The BlueGnome Focus haematology array, version 1.0, investigates copy number imbalance in 50 regions of known clinical significance and larger scale alterations in the backbone. The haematology array will be available for research use only from September 2008 onwards. Version 2.0, with additional disease coverage, will be available in the New Year.

About BlueGnome

BlueGnome (www.cytochip.com) is a specialist developer of microarrays, consumables, software and FISH probes to improve the speed and resolution of cytogenetic investigations.

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