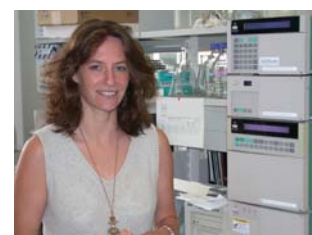


Press Release – 06.02.06

Developing microarray-based genetic tests for use in NHS laboratories

Researchers at the Oxford Genetics Knowledge Park (GKP) are using custom-made microarrays provided by OGT Services to develop genetic tests for use in NHS Regional Genetics Laboratories. The Oxford GKP is focusing on complex diseases, such as colorectal cancer, cardiovascular diseases and learning disabilities, as part of a network of six Genetics Knowledge Parks that was set up in 2002 to translate genetics from research into clinical practice.



“We are setting up tests or technologies that already exist in research fields and could be suitable for complex disease testing within NHS Regional Genetics Labs. Until now, the NHS has largely focused on genetic testing for single gene disorders,” explained Dr Jenny Taylor, Programme Director at the Oxford GKP.

“We knew that the NHS genetics laboratories would need off-the-shelf products, so we were looking for someone to tailor-make microarrays for complex diseases. I went to a number of companies and OGT obviously had the array technology, and were happy to diversify into synthesising oligonucleotide arrays for chromosomal abnormalities and array-based CGH. We have completed proof-of-principle studies to ensure that the oligonucleotide arrays work, using colorectal cancer and learning disability samples with known chromosomal abnormalities, and we now need to extend these studies.”

“The advantages of using these microarrays include higher resolution, which is really important, and the fact that they are affordable; the cost of these tests is the NHS labs’ main concern. The Oxford Region NHS Genetics Laboratory has now bought a platform that will be compatible with OGT’s microarrays and I am sure that this technology will be applicable to other diseases.”



About OGT

Oxford Gene Technology (OGT) is a privately owned company founded in 1995 by Professor Sir Edwin Southern. The mission of the company is to develop advanced molecular tools for biologists and to make them widely available through licensing and service activities. The key business areas of OGT include

- licensing which has successfully provided access for a number of companies to OGT's fundamental intellectual property, particularly in the area of microarrays
- a services business which provides a flexible and cost-effective, customised DNA microarray service covering a range of applications and offers specialist support to assist customers with every aspect of their research.
- Tridend, which is developing 'mass tags' to enhance the amount of information that researchers can generate from mass spectrometry experiments in proteomics and genomics
- Oxamer, which is generating novel array formats based on electrochemical deposition methods for use in life science and diagnostics

OGT's intellectual property covers four general areas that are relevant to the biological sciences; these incorporate microarrays, genomics, proteomics and electrochemistry.

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