

21CGH Newsletter



In this issue:

- **21CGH Cohorts**
- **Data Management in 21CGH**
- **GHI Bid Update**

Chancellors Award

On 4th August HRH Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh, Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh, presented his Chancellors award at the Palace of Holyroodhouse to 21CGH Principal Investigator Professor David Porteous. The citation noted among Prof Porteous' many achievements his groundbreaking studies into the genetic background of bipolar affective disorder and schizophrenia. The Chancellors awards are presented in recognition of innovation, relevance, creativity and personal dedication.



HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and Prof Porteous

Blood Donor Control DNA

Professor David Porteous (University of Edinburgh) and Dr Marc Turner (SNBTS) are leading a proposal to collect control DNA from 6,000 blood donors, submitted to the CSO on 1st October. Thanks to all who responded to emails about this proposal and for the level of support it generated. The outcome is expected in December.

21CGH Cohorts

An aim of the 21CGH project is to collect and analyse at least 2,000 control DNA samples to add value to existing cohorts throughout Scotland. Collection is now projected to start early in 2005. Around 500 subjects will be drawn from the APOSS study of osteoporosis led by Profs David Reid and Stuart Ralston, University of Aberdeen; the DARTS study of type 2 diabetes, led by Prof Andrew Morris, University of Dundee; and the SCOTVAR study of genetic variation in the population of Scotland, led by Profs Harry Campbell and Alan Wright, University of Edinburgh and MRC Human Genetics Unit. Up to 1,000 subjects will be sampled from the BRIGHT study of the genetics of hypertension, led by Prof Anna Dominiczak, University of Glasgow.

Participants will be recruited by a variety of methods depending on the cohort, including Primary Care. In addition to cohort-specific data and samples, a 21CGH questionnaire will be completed and 21CGH-specific DNA, peripheral blood lymphocytes and plasma isolated from blood. This will allow a common minimum dataset to be recorded across all control samples, which should become a useful resource for future studies. Information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires and ethical committee submissions are currently being prepared by 21CGH Law & Ethics Research Fellow Dr Rena Gertz and Project Manager Dr Shona Kerr.

Data Management in 21CGH

Alan Blaikie (pictured) has joined 21CGH as Data Sets Manager, with responsibility for co-ordination and development of all IT aspects of the project.

An early task will be to specify and develop electronic data entry forms for research nurses to input phenotype information using mobile devices, for entry into the phenotype database. He will develop applications for database storage of genotype and phenotype data, following appropriate levels of security and confidentiality. The data that will be generated and managed in 21CGH is not particularly extensive or complicated, but the solutions designed will be scalable for future work. It is therefore anticipated that Alan will play a key networking role in data management



infrastructure building for other genetics initiatives throughout Scotland.

IBM Healthcare and Life Sciences is holding a one-day workshop in Edinburgh on Wednesday 3rd November to provide a framework for some of the informatics questions that need to be answered in 21CGH and the users, data, systems and considerations involved. Anyone interested in participating should contact Alan.Blaikie@ed.ac.uk or 0131 537 3364.

GHI Bid Update

An application to the Genetics and Healthcare Initiative, entitled "The Scottish Family Health Study", was submitted to the CSO at the end of August '04 with agreement from all partner institutions and associated members of the Executive Writing Group. This complex and challenging process was led by Prof Andrew Morris, University of Dundee, with co-investigators from the Universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow, including the 21CGH Science Management Group. There will be synergy with the 21CGH project, for example nominated theme leaders in Laboratory Integration and in Public and Patient Involvement are funded by 21CGH. The proposal has gone out for peer review and there is expected to be some indication of the likely outcome by early November.

Conference Alert:

Innogen International Conference: **Evolution of the Life Science Industries**. Edinburgh 23-25 Feb 2005. See www.innogen.ac.uk. Topic areas include Genetic Databases, with a talk by Dr Kari Stefansson (deCODE Genetics, Iceland) among the expected highlights.