



BlueGnome Ltd, Breaks House, Mill Court, Great Shelford, Cambridge, CB2 5LD, UK
tel: +44 (0) 1223 844441 fax: +44 (0) 1223 844445 www.cambridgebluegnome.com

Press Release

SAFER AND MORE EFFECTIVE CLINICAL TRIALS COME A STEP CLOSER WITH WELLCOME AWARD

'Spend a penny and save \$242m'

A simple urine sample could soon be used to predict the complex toxic effects of new drugs making clinical trials safer, more effective, and saving the industry millions of pounds.

New technology - being funded through the Wellcome Trust - and developed by Cambridge company BlueGnome, for the first time provides a means of identifying patterns of metabolites in urine which are closely correlated with toxic changes in gene expression in the liver.

Clinical trial patients currently have to show physical symptoms such as sickness or jaundice before toxic effects are identified. BlueGnome's data fusion technology BlueFuse, means that biomarkers in a urine sample will identify in the very initial stages of the trial if an individual is likely to have a reaction. This would quickly eliminate these patients from the study and flag up any potential dangers.

Nick Haan, CEO of Blue Gnome, said: "Clinical trials - when new drugs are first administered in humans - are high cost and high risk. High cost due to the number of people and the amount of regulation involved and high risk because pharmaceutical companies are forced to select the one drug that is most likely to clear the huge regulatory hurdles that lie between a billion dollar blockbuster and a share price sapping failure. Our BlueFuse data fusion technology has far reaching implications for the industry."

The savings to be gained by increasing the success rate of clinical trials from one in five to one in three are estimated at \$242 million. (Tufts CSDD 2002). Ultimately, the technology could be used in personalised medicine to determine allergic reaction to medicines, appropriate dosages, and which drugs will be most successful for an individual given their genetic make up.

The £250k round of funding from Wellcome Trust and the University of Cambridge Challenge Fund is directed at projects that will provide a 'long term benefit to public health'. Bill Matthews, Fund Manager of the University Challenge Fund, comments that the investment will support the development of further products from BlueGnome. "BlueGnome is an excellent example of successful technology transfer. Their first product, BlueFuse for Microarrays, has delivered an immediate revenue stream but, more importantly, it also provides a capability that is prerequisite to the identification and commercial exploitation of biomarkers."

9th January 2004