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MGRC launches genetic screening services



Written by Joseph Chin of theedgmalaysia.com

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian Genomics Resource Centre Berhad (MGRC) has launched a range of comprehensive genetic screening services, as well as an all-in-one test for a multitude of infectious diseases.

The company, which specialises in genome sequencing and analysis services, said on Tuesday, June 28 the services would be available through hospitals and other primary care centres around Malaysia.

MGRC's chief scientific officer, Dr Stephen Rudd, said the tests would be designed to correlate to both inherited and infectious diseases commonly afflicting Asians, hence making these tests more relevant to the Malaysian population.

"Predictive medicine is practised through the application of genetic screening on patients, which can indicate very early whether a patient has genes that predispose him or her to a disease. Genomics is rapidly evolving healthcare in the direction of personalised medicine," he said.

Genetic screening examines a person's genome for known variation markers, some of which are causal for diseases, while others carry a lifetime risk for contracting a genetic illness.

Aberrations in a human genome give rise to different types of diseases, such as cancer, autism, Alzheimer's disease and Down's syndrome. Other genetic variations may be responsible for adverse reactions to drugs.

Apart from tests for genetic diseases, MGRC will soon offer a single, definitive test for a multitude of infectious diseases, streamlining the rapid identification and treatment of disease-causing microbes in humans.

It said current diagnostic tests for dengue are reliable only about five days after symptoms are first observed and once antibodies are present in the blood.

MGRC said its rapid, genetic marker-based test, which does not depend upon the presence of antibodies, would enable earlier detection and correct treatment could be carried out.

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