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GIS, Sengenics sign cancer biomarker discovery deal

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Singapore: Genome Institute of Singapore (GIS) of Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) and Sengenics have partnered for cancer biomarker discovery with the aim to identify and validate auto-antibodies that can be used to detect early-stage cancers.Ã?Â As part of the collaboration initiative, Sengenics will establish its research biomarker discovery facility at GIS in 2013.

The partnership leverages on Sengenics' strategic partner, Oxford Gene Technology's (OGT) proprietary proteomics microarray platform, considered to be a world-first, as all the proteins on the microarray are full-length, correctly folded and hence functional. The unique components of the technology will enable researchers to identify auto-antibody interactions in the blood before the cancer reaches an advanced stage.

The initial GIS-Sengenics collaboration will focus on two key cancers this year that are highly prevalent in the region, including gastric and breast cancers.

"Given the performance and track record of the OGT protein array technology, we are excited at the potential of discovering both novel and existing biomarkers for these two important cancers," said Dr Arif Anwar, executive director, Sengenics.

Mr Johan Poole-Johnson, Sengenics commercial director, added that, "Our end-goal is to transfer the biomarker signatures identified specific to Singaporean genetic profiles onto a low-cost prognostic test. We envisage to complete the first phase of the project within 12 months."

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