

October 28, 2014

Media Statement

WA GENETIC DISCOVERY EMBRACED BY NATIONAL HEALTHCARE COMPANY

WA research that can be used to predict the specific health complications individuals with type 2 diabetes may develop, based on their personal genetic signature, is soon to be used by an Australian genome-based healthcare company to advise patients.

Fitgenes is embracing the technology developed by Professor Grant Morahan from the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research to better identify lifestyle interventions that can support patients in improving their health outcomes.

“We are very excited that our understanding that the specific genetic signature a person with type 2 diabetes is now being taken from the laboratory and into a patient care setting,” said Professor Morahan, who will discuss the advance on November 13, the eve of World Diabetes Day, when he presents a public talk to supporters of Perth charity Diabetes Research WA.

“With Fitgenes help, people with Type 2 diabetes who are, for example, more likely to develop heart disease can receive nutrition, exercise and lifestyle advice that is tailored to their own genetic make-up. Hopefully, this will help them reduce the chances of that health complication arising in the future.

“We are also partnering with Fitgenes to use the same type of knowledge in relation to other diseases we are investigating.”

Professor Morahan said this type of ‘precision medicine’ would become more widely used in the years ahead.

“A combination of genetic and clinical diagnoses will be important for future advances in medical research and in treating disease,” he said.

Diabetes Research WA executive director Sherl Westlund said the development underscored Professor Morahan’s dedication to changing the future for people with type 2 diabetes since he came to Perth nearly 10 years ago.

“Taking scientific discoveries from the bench to the bedside takes an incredible amount of tenacity and vision, as well as funding, and we’re excited about the potential this partnership has to improve the lives of those with type 2 diabetes,” she said.

Diabetes Research WA was integral in bringing Professor Morahan to Perth, along with The University of Western Australia, the Perkins Institute of Medical Research (formerly the Western Australian Institute for Medical Research), and a number of corporate and individual donors who raised \$2.3 million.

To find out more about the November 13 evening seminar, please visit diabetesresearchwa.com.au or call (08) 9224 1006 for more information.

-ends-

MEDIA CONTACT:

Natalie Caudle natalie@capturemedia.com.au, 0407 984 435