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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health  
Genome BC

### **Genomics research will advance treatment for B.C. patients**

VICTORIA – The Province is accelerating the future of patient care and advancing testing for cancer, heart disease, transplants and infections with eight new genomics research projects, in partnership with Genome BC and Genome Alberta.

Genomics is the study of an organism’s genetic material and how genes work together. In medicine, genomics is used to develop personalized treatments based on a person’s genetic makeup. Researchers from B.C.’s health authorities and the University of British Columbia are involved in all eight genomic research projects.

“Genomics is transforming health care, offering new ways to diagnose, treat and prevent diseases,” said Josie Osborne, Minister of Health. “By supporting Genome BC, we are helping to advance research to improve patient outcomes and make precision medicine more accessible to people across British Columbia. These efforts will contribute to faster diagnoses, more precise treatments and improved health-care outcomes for patients.”

The eight research projects are part of Genome BC’s and Genome Alberta’s Healthy Outcomes through Genomic Innovations program, which aims to help new innovations in genetic testing and precision medicine reach hospitals and clinics faster.

“This initiative is designed to drive the adoption of genomics-based technologies into clinical practice, focusing on projects that deliver tangible patient benefits in the near future,” said Suzanne Gill, president and CEO, Genome BC. “Whether it’s detecting cancer earlier, improving transplant success or tailoring medications to an individual’s genetic makeup, these projects are about making health care work better for everyone.”

These projects, valued at almost \$6 million, of which \$1.7 million came from the Province via Genome BC, will allow care providers to get new tools to enhance diagnosis, treatment and patient care sooner. The projects focus on:

- safer chemotherapy for children;
- improving kidney transplant monitoring;
- more precise cancer testing;
- heart-failure detection;
- at-home lung cancer screening;
- faster diagnosis of blood-stream infections;
- combating drug-resistant infections in hospitals; and
- standardizing formats for genetic drug sensitivity test results.

“Genomic research is advancing our understanding of the genetic underpinnings of disease, driving precision medicine and transforming health care,” said Dr. Paul Keown, lead researcher

on one of the projects and professor in the faculty of medicine at the University of British Columbia, speaking on behalf of fellow researchers Dr. James Lan and Karen Sherwood. “We are working on innovations that are close to adoption by the health-care system. These projects will deliver meaningful results that directly improve patient care.”

The research projects are part of B.C.’s Life Sciences and Biomanufacturing Strategy and the broader StrongerBC Economic Plan, which seeks to foster innovation, create high-paying jobs and enhance health and pandemic preparedness domestically and internationally.

Genome BC is a not-for-profit organization that has advanced genomics research and innovation since 2000, growing a world-class life-sciences sector in B.C. The organization strives to enhance health care and address environmental and natural-resource challenges, improving the lives of British Columbians. Genome BC supports responsible research and innovation, fostering an understanding and appreciation of the life sciences among educators, students and the public.

**Learn More:**

For details about the eight genomic research projects, visit: <https://www.genomebc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/BACKGROUNDER-Healthy-Outcomes-Through-Genomic-Innovations-Announcement.pdf>

For information about Genome BC, visit: <https://www.genomebc.ca/>

To read the Life Sciences and Biomanufacturing Strategy, visit: [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/initiatives-plans-strategies/technology-industry/life-sciences-biomanufacturing/bc\\_life\\_sciences\\_biomanufacturing\\_strategy\\_final\\_april\\_2023.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/initiatives-plans-strategies/technology-industry/life-sciences-biomanufacturing/bc_life_sciences_biomanufacturing_strategy_final_april_2023.pdf)

**Contacts:**

Ministry of Health  
Media Relations  
250 952-1887

Genome BC  
Brad Lyle, Communications Manager  
blyle@genomebc.ca  
778 999-8195

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