

For Immediate Release

Hong Kong Genome Institute Welcomes 2024 Policy Address

(Hong Kong, 16 October 2024) The [Hong Kong Genome Institute](#) (HKGI) welcomes the 2024 Policy Address delivered today by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, particularly the chapter titled “*Deepen Reform of the Healthcare System*”. The chapter outlines a series of initiatives, including the formulation of a directory for inherited and rare diseases and the promotion of precision medicine, leveraging HKGI’s unique genome database as well as the experiences and global networks accumulated through the diagnoses and research of various genetic, rare and common disorders. HKGI notes that these initiatives not only demonstrate the continued commitment of the HKSAR Government to advancing genomic medicine and associated innovations, but also further reinforce HKGI’s pivotal role in driving the integration of more precise diagnoses, personalised treatments, and disease prevention plans into routine clinical care in Hong Kong.

Dr Lo Su-vui, Chief Executive Officer of HKGI, remarked, “We have been collaborating closely with the Department of Health, the Hospital Authority and the medical schools of the two local universities since 2021 to establish a multi-disciplinary team to implement the Hong Kong Genome Project (HKGP). Being the city’s first large-scale whole genome sequencing project, HKGP covers undiagnosed disorders, hereditary cancers, as well as cases related to genomics and precision health, such as renal and heart diseases and osteoporosis. Through cutting-edge whole genome sequencing technology, HKGP benefits patients and their families with insights on diagnoses, treatment and prevention. To date, with concerted efforts, we have successfully recruited close to 40,000 participants for HKGP. The invaluable experience and international networks we have gathered and cultivated in medical practice and research of various diseases will undoubtedly contribute to the relevance and comprehensiveness of the directory. This will also allow medical professionals to deliver effective treatments, benefiting patients at large.”

Dr Lo continued, “Through HKGP, we have already started building a genome database that not only consists primarily of Southern Chinese, but also covers clinical data and genomic information, making it a unique and valuable resource for medical research and drug development. We have also developed the Synergistic Research Environment, a secure platform that enables approved researchers, academic institutions and enterprises to utilise de-identified and encrypted information from the genome database. This will promote innovations and applications of genomic medicine as well as expedite clinical trials of new therapeutics, paving the way for faster and more precise drug development to transform public healthcare services.”

With the strong support of the HKSAR Government and the Health Bureau, HKGI will continue to work closely with the Hospital Authority and various stakeholders to integrate genomics into medicine, advance research, nurture talent and enhance public genomic literacy in

pursuit of its vision to “avail genomic medicine to all for better health and well-being”. Moreover, by staying aligned with the HKSAR Government's initiative to establish the Greater Bay Area International Clinical Trial Institute in the Hetao area and relevant policies aimed at bringing the benefits of good drugs and research and development to Hong Kong patients, HKGI will remain committed to supporting the city’s development as an international Health and Medical Innovation Hub that benefits the wider community.

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Hong Kong Genome Institute (HKGI) welcomes 2024 Policy Address which further reinforces HKGI’s pivotal role in driving the integration of more precise diagnoses, personalised treatments, and disease prevention plans into routine clinical care in Hong Kong.

High-resolution photo can be downloaded [here](#).

About Hong Kong Genome Institute

The Hong Kong Genome Institute (HKGI), established and wholly owned by the Hong Kong SAR Government, commenced full operations in 2021. With the vision “**to avail genomic medicine to all for better health and well-being**” and supported by the Health Bureau, HKGI works in close collaboration with the Department of Health, Hospital Authority, medical schools of local universities and other stakeholders to accelerate the development of genomic medicine in Hong Kong along four strategic foci: integrate genomics into medicine, advance research, nurture talents and enhance public genomic literacy.

As the first step towards achieving its vision, HKGI launched the Hong Kong Genome Project (HKGP) in 2021 focusing on diseases and research cohorts that would benefit from whole genome sequencing. They include undiagnosed diseases, hereditary cancers and cases related to genomics and precision health. Being the city’s first large-scale genome sequencing project, HKGP serves as a catalyst to benefit patients and their families with more precise diagnosis and personalised treatment. It also aims to establish genome database of the local population, testing infrastructure and talent pool to address the healthcare needs of Hong Kong in the long run.

For more information, please visit <https://hkgp.org/en>.

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