



**phg**foundation  
making science work for health

2 Worts Causeway Cambridge CB1 8RN (UK)

**Tel** +44 (0)1223 740200 **Fax** +44 (0)1223 740892

[www.phgfoundation.org](http://www.phgfoundation.org)

## **CAMBRIDGE LEADS THE WAY WITH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE NEXT BIG STEP IN PUBLIC HEALTH**

Cambridge think tank the PHG Foundation is hosting a group of leading international research scientists on Tuesday to discuss the next big step in public health - how practically to use cutting-edge science to reduce over-diagnosis and help patients make better-informed choices about screening and treatment.

A recent report from Cancer Research UK about breast cancer screening highlighted the importance of providing better information to enable individuals to make decisions about whether or not to be screened and potentially undergo treatment.

As part of a European-wide collaboration, the PHG Foundation has been investigating how genomics can be used to reduce harm from screening programmes and improve the guidance given to individuals who have been offered screening for cancer.

The topic will be up for discussion at the PHG conference, *Translating genomics: Making science work for health*, when leading experts will be speaking on how we can use genomics to improve prevention and treatment for the 'big' public health concerns: cancer, heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

*In addition, Professor Dennis Lo, of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, will update the audience on his research into non-invasive prenatal diagnosis for Down's syndrome using fetal DNA in maternal plasma.*

*The PHG Foundation is currently working with Prof Lo as he leads the world's first formal clinical trial taking his scientific discovery a step closer to reality. The result*

**Director:** Dr Hilary Burton

*could be simpler and earlier genetic analysis of the fetus, which could ultimately replace more invasive techniques that carry a risk of miscarriage.*

*The Foundation's Director Dr Hilary Burton said:*

*"The conference marks a turning point in the PHG Foundation's mission. Over the last 15 years we have been successful in raising the profile of genomics in mainstream medicine but the challenge is still to make sure that everyone can access services that utilise the best of 21<sup>st</sup> century science wherever they live. The next big thing for us is the prospect of personalised medicine, and the hugely exciting possibilities it presents for 'stratified prevention' to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public health programmes – and to minimise the potential harms."*

*Contact: Rebecca Bazeley +44 (0)7505092081  
rebecca.bazeley@phgfoundation.org*

*Notes to editors:*

*Biographies on key note speakers can be found at:  
[www.phgfoundation.org/15years](http://www.phgfoundation.org/15years)*

*The one-day conference *Translating genomics: Making science work for health*, is on 4 December 2012 at Robinson College, Cambridge.*

*The PHG Foundation is a not for profit think tank based in Cambridge and with a global reach. Our aim is to make science work for health by identifying the barriers to innovation and uncovering solutions for implementation that are safe, effective and equitable.*