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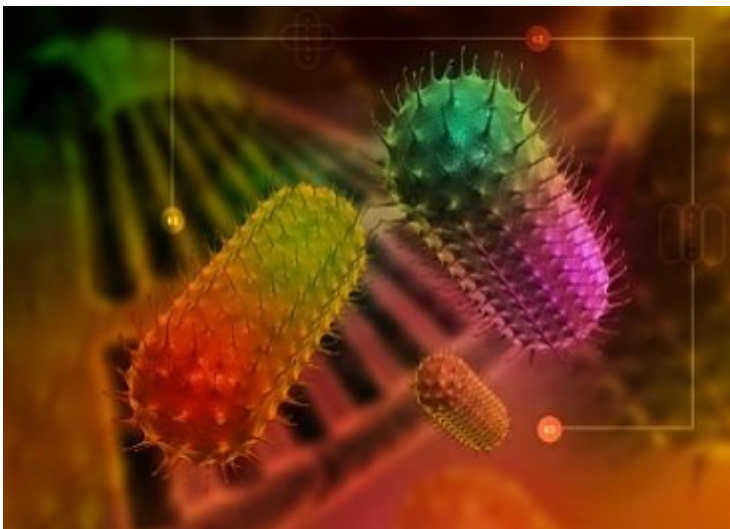
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bioMérieux, Illumina launch 'bioMérieux EpiSeq'

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bioMérieux and Illumina announce the launch of bioMérieux EpiSeq, an innovative next-generation sequencing (NGS) service dedicated to the epidemiological monitoring and control of healthcare-associated infections. The bioMérieux EpiSeq service is the first result of the collaboration agreement signed by bioMérieux and Illumina in November 2014 bringing together the companies' respective leadership positions in microbiology and NGS to jointly develop applications for microbiology sequencing.

By giving hospitals an improved understanding of the genetic markers of virulence and resistance, the service can help them understand how bacteria are transmitted, while enabling better containment of an epidemic, limiting the spread of infectious agents and improving surveillance approaches.

"We are proud to partner with bioMérieux to bring this first-of-its-kind offering to market. NGS can be used to better characterize and understand infection-causing bacteria on a whole genome basis. With the growth of antibiotic resistant strains, this unique offering couldn't be more timely or important to the future of public health," said Mr Jay Flatley, CEO of Illumina.

Hospitals facing a suspected epidemic or health crisis will be able to send bacterial isolates to a service laboratory designated by bioMérieux and equipped with an Illumina MiSeq sequencer. The genomic data is stored in a secure cloud platform and analyzed using the database and software developed by bioMérieux. Results showing the genomic profile of the infectious agents and the genetic variations identified by sequencing will be sent by bioMérieux to healthcare professionals in a customized, easy-to-interpret report.

The bioMérieux EpiSeq service will first be launched in Europe followed by North America and Asia. The menu will initially consist of *Staphylococcus aureus* and will subsequently be expanded to include the other bacterial species most commonly responsible for healthcare-associated infections.

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"In line with our pioneering spirit, we are very pleased to be the first company to offer our customers an innovative sequencing solution in bacterial epidemiology. The bioMérieux EpiSeq service addresses major public health challenges, combatting infectious diseases and resistance to antibiotics," said Mr Jean-Luc Belingard, chairman of bioMérieux. "The launch of bioMérieux EpiSeq marks a new and productive step in our partnership with Illumina for the application of NGS to bacterial genomes. This new offer represents a valuable innovation and opens up new prospects that can bring this revolutionary technology to tomorrow's healthcare."

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