

ABQJournal Online » Editorial: Genomes on the Cheap

A University of New Mexico researcher is honing a new tool for the arsenal of treatments to fight cancer and other diseases. And at what might be a bargain basement price.

Jeremy Edwards, a professor of molecular genetics and microbiology and a researcher at the UNM Cancer Center, is working under a three-year, \$2.8 million grant received in September 2010 from the National Institutes of Health to bring the cost of sequencing the human genome under \$1,000. He's optimistic it can be done for \$300, maybe even \$100 by 2013.

He says new DNA sequencing tools developed by UNM and Harvard Medical School could make genome sequencing a routine tool in fighting cancer and other diseases. Edwards is on a mission to find a fast, inexpensive way to analyze the genomes of cancerous cells, "figure out the exact cause of the cancer" and eventually develop drugs to target specific illnesses.

Edwards' work is pushing UNM forward as a research university, one of its stated missions. The promise it holds for people with cancer or other dreaded diseases makes it all the more significant.

This editorial first appeared in the Albuquerque Journal. It was written by members of the editorial board and is unsigned as it represents the opinion of the newspaper rather than the writers.