

D.C.H., 3 UNIVERSITIES TEAM UP FOR 'BIOBANK'

The Department of Community Health, in partner with the Van Andel Institute, Wayne State University, Michigan State University and the University of Michigan, is developing a population-based biobank that would provide research opportunities on the leftover blood samples of newborns who go through screenings.

The Michigan BioTrust for Health provides the opportunity for “groundbreaking medical discoveries,” said DCH Director Janet Olszewski.

The state’s newborn screening program, which began in 1965, screens infants for 49 disorders using a drop of blood from their heel.

“By teaming up with state health departments and utilizing existing blood spot archives, we hope to improve our understanding of diseases that are not apparent upon at birth, but have roots in the perinatal period. Measuring the relative abundance of thousands of expressed genes from universally collected neonatal blood spots may open new avenues of research in perinatal markers and determinants of disease development,” said James Resau, director of the division on quantitative sciences at the Van Andel Institute.