



**INSTITUT DE
CARDIOLOGIE
DE MONTRÉAL**

AFFILIÉ À
Université 
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**PRESS RELEASE
For immediate distribution**

Reducing the length of hospital stays, easing crowding in emergency rooms
and improving the quality of life of patients:

The Montreal Heart Institute marks the 10th anniversary of its Heart Failure Clinic

Montreal, November 4, 2010 – With convincing results in the form of lower readmission rates, shorter hospital stays and less crowding in emergency units, the Montreal Heart Institute's Heart Failure Clinic (CLIC) has much to be proud of as it marks its 10th anniversary. Based on an innovative and interdisciplinary model, the aftercare offered by this clinic has made it possible to improve the quality of life of hundreds of patients with heart failure.

The power of teamwork

The Heart Failure Clinic's greatest asset is its multidisciplinary team. All of its members work together to offer these fragile clients the best care possible. With a pivot nurse (nurse assigned to the patient), nurse clinicians and nurse practitioners, a dietician, several dedicated cardiologists, a medical secretary, an intermediate clerk, a social worker and a pharmacist, the clinic has proven to be an innovative and highly effective model. And with 400 patients who are rigorously followed, the CLIC is currently the largest clinic in Quebec dedicated solely to patients with heart failure.

Dr. Anique Ducharme, cardiologist, in charge of the clinic since its inception, is especially proud of the work it has accomplished: "We've come a long way! Just ten years ago, the only recourse for patients with heart failure was often to check themselves into emergency in the event of decompensation. This tenth anniversary is therefore an opportunity to celebrate the extraordinary and complementary areas of expertise that allow us to transform patients' lives by giving them constant support."

Heart failure

An estimated 500,000 Canadians suffer from heart failure. This condition is among the leading causes of admission to emergency units, and it also gives rise to repeated hospitalizations and dramatically reduces survival rates among these patients. Persons with heart failure live with symptoms such as shortness of breath, fatigue and ankle swelling. When heart failure increases in severity, the patient may experience respiratory difficulty even at rest. The MHI founded the Heart Failure Clinic with the objective of supporting patients with heart failure who too often found themselves in emergency for lack of timely access to the proper resources.

The people followed at the MHI's Heart Failure Clinic feel supported and are given the tools to control their symptoms: "Their approach is very warm and reassuring, which is unique to the

Institute. I'm treated like a parent, and the care is remarkable," says Ms. Nicole Thiffault, a patient at the clinic since its creation.

Capsule history

In the late 1990s, a group of MHI researchers interested in the problem of patients with heart failure set up a care management program that was unique at the time. For six months, patients saw their cardiologists for regular and frequent appointments. MHI specialists therefore had the opportunity to gain an overview of the situation with heart failure patients and to adjust their medication and answer their questions. The pilot project quickly yielded conclusive results, so much so that turning back was unthinkable. The shorter hospital stays, the easing of emergency crowding, and most of all, the improved quality of life of these patients were reason enough to continue our efforts in this direction.

Today, the Clinic's health hotline and the exercise program offered by the MHI's Centre for Preventive Medicine and Physical Activity (ÉPIC Centre) are two prime examples of the attention paid to persons with heart failure, who represent a fragile clientele. The services offered by this dedicated team include a complete assessment, teaching, support as well as regular and optimal follow-up.

About the Montreal Heart Institute

Founded in 1954 by Dr. Paul David, the Montreal Heart Institute constantly aims for the highest standards of excellence in the cardiovascular field through its leadership in prevention, ultra-specialized care, training of professionals, clinical and fundamental research, and assessment of new technologies. It is affiliated with the Université de Montréal and its clinical outcomes are among the best in the world. To learn more about the Institute, please visit our website at www.icm-mhi.org.

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