



**INSTITUT DE
CARDIOLOGIE
DE MONTRÉAL**

AFFILIÉ À
Université 
de Montréal

**PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release**

**Organ recipient to cross finish line at the Montreal Heart Institute
after cycling 700 kilometres across Canada**

Montreal, August 27, 2010 – Sylvain Bédard, heart transplant recipient, has chosen the Montreal Heart Institute (MHI) as the place where he will complete his grand tour across Canada, *Transformative Journey: Engaging Life after Transplantation*. Bédard will ride the last remaining kilometres of a journey that took him all over Canada to spread the message that anything is possible, even after undergoing a heart transplant. To further illustrate this, 700 kilometres of the tour were travelled by bicycle.

At around 2 pm, at the same place where he received his new heart ten years ago, Bédard will be crossing the finish line. He will be accompanied by his five children as well as MHI chief of surgery, Dr. Michel Pellerin, and cardiologist Dr. Anique Ducharme. Also attending the closing ceremony will be professionals from the transplant clinic and several MHI staff members, as well as representatives from Québec-Transplant. The athlete will be presented an official MHI shirt to mark his outstanding contribution of support to transplant recipients and their families. Along the tour route, made possible by a grant from Novartis, Bédard spoke at various places around the country to convey a message of hope to recipients, telling them they are not alone in living through the aftermath of a transplant.

“MHI specialists were very much involved in helping big dreams come true. During the ten years following my transplant, I conquered both real and psychological mountains,” says Bédard. In 2003, he became the first Canadian recipient of a heart transplant to reach the top of Mont Blanc in France. This expedition as well as one up Mont Sajama, Bolivia, was led by Dr. Michel White, cardiologist at the MHI.

“At the MHI transplant clinic, we rigorously follow the health of 216 patients and appreciate the importance of an accomplishment such as this bicycle tour. For transplant recipients, the advantages of physical exercise are widely known: lessening of side effects related to medication, improving quality of life and reclaiming full independence. Sports are key for keeping a healthy body and a new heart,” stresses Dr. Michel Pellerin. Our specialized and dedicated cardiac transplant team is also committed to spreading awareness among the public about the importance of organ and tissue donation, as each day we continue to work at improving the health of persons suffering from a poor heart. What Bédard accomplished shows perfectly the significance of signing one’s health insurance card.

The first heart transplant in Canada was performed at the MHI in 1968. Over the past ten years, more than 125 patients have received heart transplants at the MHI. Specialized staff and cutting-edge technology make it possible for each patient to receive the best care regarding their specific condition. The MHI provides complete heart transplant service, including temporary and permanent mechanical support.

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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