



**News Release**  
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**MINISTER CLAUDE BÉCHARD ANNOUNCES A MAJOR INVESTMENT  
IN THE MONTREAL HEART INSTITUTE'S  
RESEARCH CENTRE EXPANSION PROJECT**

**Montreal, October 18, 2005** – At a press conference held this morning, Mr. Claude Béchard, Minister of Economic Development, Innovation and Export Trade, announced an investment of \$15 million in the Montreal Heart Institute's Research Centre. The project, evaluated at \$24 million, is aimed at expanding and renovating the Centre's research infrastructures.

In extending a warm thanks to the minister, Mr. Jean Royer, Chairman of the MHI Board of Directors, pointed out that “by agreeing to support the realization of this important expansion and renovation project, the Government of Quebec decisively sets in motion the ongoing development of the Montreal Heart Institute's Research Centre; this will allow the Institute to pursue its tradition of excellence and to raise its profile both nationally and internationally through an enhanced ability to improve the quality of cardiovascular care and prevention and step up the fight against heart diseases.”

**Project highlights**

The MHI Research Centre Expansion Project stands as a cornerstone in the development of leading-edge research activities at the MHI and as a progressive step forward in terms of its international influence and stature. This construction project, slated for completion in 2008, involves

- expanding the south block (*Pavillon Jean-Louis Lévesque*) by 6,125 square metres, distributed over three floors;
- constructing a space that in future will be laid out and used for catheterization activities for research purposes;
- partially reorganizing the existing first three floors of the Research Centre's South block.

The MHI Research Centre expansion costs are evaluated at \$24 million. In addition to \$15 million from the Ministry of Economic Development, Innovation and Export Trade, the project will receive another \$9 million from the MHI Foundation.

### **Support from Key Players**

After thanking the MHI Foundation for its contribution – a record amount for a single project – Mr. Robert Busilacchi, Executive Director of the MHI, underscored the invaluable support of several other partners. “In accordance with government policy directions, this high-priority development is also an outgrowth of very close collaboration with the *Université de Montréal* and its faculty of medicine, both of which have clearly singled out the MHI as a centre of excellence in cardiovascular medicine. In concrete terms, this led, notably, to several research chairs and grants being awarded.”

“I would also like to thank the *Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec*, the *Agence de développement de réseaux locaux de services de santé et de services sociaux de Montréal* and the *Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux*, which have hereby expressed their high regard for the MHI’s mission of excellence in tertiary cardiology,” added Mr. Busilacchi.

### **Project Spinoffs**

The Research Centre expansion will have several significant effects on the MHI, and these will translate into benefits for patients at the MHI, as well as patients in Québec, Canada and throughout the world.

It will make for:

- the recruitment of many researchers of international stature and further progress for the excellent researchers already present at the MHI;
- the addition of new research laboratories in genetics, arrhythmias, vascular electrophysiology, regenerative medicine, mathematical modelling and metabolomics;
- the expansion of many fundamental research laboratories in vascular pharmacology, endothelial function, proteomics, cardiac biochemistry, cardiovascular imaging, atherosclerosis, coronary procedures, molecular electrophysiology and cardiovascular rheology;

- the expansion and reorganization of the animal housing facility (particularly for transgenic mice);
- the reorganization and expansion of clinical research infrastructures now partly located in temporary structures.

“The Research Centre expansion will have major benefits in terms of the MHI’s capacity to achieve significant breakthroughs in the prevention and treatment of cardiovascular diseases, while generating intellectual property as well as profitable economic spinoffs for Quebec,” said Dr. Jean-Claude Tardif, Director of the MHI Research Centre. “Thus, all aspects of cardiovascular research, from the gene to the large-scale clinical studies, will be developed in all traditional fields as well as emerging ones.”

“The Research Centre expansion will catapult the MHI to new heights in clinical, fundamental, applied and translational research, and position it as a world leader in the field,” concluded Dr. Tardif.

Founded in 1954, The Montreal Heart Institute is an ultra specialized hospital dedicated to care, research, teaching and prevention and to the evaluation of new technologies in cardiology; the MHI is affiliated with the *Université de Montréal* and enjoys an international reputation for excellence.

- 30 -

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