



**INSTITUT DE
CARDIOLOGIE
DE MONTRÉAL**



PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

**THE MONTREAL HEART INSTITUTE
SECURES A GRANT OF CLOSE TO \$ 5 MILLION
AS PART OF THE GÉNOME QUÉBEC COMPETITION FOSTERING
PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND RESEARCH CENTRES**

Montreal, October 3, 2007 – The Montreal Heart Institute (MHI) has learned with great pride that its research project based on a mixed academic/private partnership in pharmacogenomics has been selected for the new *PRIVAC* competition launched by Génome Québec.

Pharmacogenomics is a rapidly growing field where genomic information is integrated so as to customize treatment and thereby improve the effectiveness and reduce the toxicity of medications. The importance of these issues is better understood when it's considered that in Canada, adverse drug reactions alone account for an estimated \$10 billion in annual health care costs. The challenge now lies in ensuring that scientific and technological advances and breakthroughs in pharmacogenomics translate into techniques, approaches and procedures that can be applied in clinical medicine. This concern is central to the project receiving the grant today. In partnership with VIA Pharmaceuticals of California, and thanks to financing from Génome Québec and MDEIE, the MHI research team led by principal researchers Drs. Jean-Claude Tardif and Michael Phillips will develop the clinical infrastructure required to conduct pharmacogenomic clinical trials in Québec, Canada and elsewhere in the world.

This structuring project is consistent with large-scale MHI projects that have received major investments in recent years: two projects in pharmacogenomics and clinical research financed by the Canada Foundation for Innovation and the Government of Québec; the construction of the Université de Montréal's Beaulieu-Saucier Pharmacogenomics Centre at the MHI; and a research project financed by Génome Québec and Genome Canada on pharmacogenomics applied to the cardiovascular field. These investments have totalled more than \$50 million.

“The new technologies and approaches developed will have a major impact on our capacity to conduct large-scale clinical trials and will make us that much more competitive internationally,” said Dr. Jean-Claude Tardif, director of the MHI Research Centre and professor of medicine at the Université de Montréal. Dr. Tardif is in charge of the project.

Mr. Robert Busilacchi, Executive Director of the MHI, singled out the colossal effort made by a generous couple to support pharmacogenomics: “The exceptional donation made by Mr. Michel Saucier and Ms. Gisèle Beaulieu in 2005 for the construction of the Pharmacogenomics Centre created a leverage effect that, in conjunction with other investments, made it possible to undertake the project announced today.” Mr. Busilacchi also emphasized that the project is consistent with the MHI’s strategic vision whereby its choices are meant to make the Institute a world-wide leader in selected areas.

About the Montreal Heart Institute

Founded in 1954, 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. The MHI Research Centre officially came into existence in 1976 and has made enormous strides since its creation. Today, there are approximately 450 employees, students and researchers at the MHI Research Center. The MHI’s outstanding feature is the balance it achieves between basic research, clinical research and clinical care. Its prime focus areas of research are vascular diseases, myocardial function and electrophysiology. Genetics, genomics (including pharmacogenomics), biomarkers and preventive cardiology are other areas of focus. To learn more about the Institute, please visit our website at www.icm-mhi.org.

About the Université de Montréal

Founded in 1878, the Université de Montréal now has 13 faculties, and with its two affiliate schools, HEC Montréal et l’École Polytechnique, constitutes the leading centre for higher learning and research in Québec, the second in Canada, and one of the largest in North America. Its faculty of medicine is the largest in Canada in terms of student enrolment, and one of the major centres for health research in the country. Since 1999, its graduates have ranked first on the Medical Council of Canada’s national examinations.

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