



**INSTITUT DE
CARDIOLOGIE
DE MONTRÉAL**

AFFILIÉE
Université 
de Montréal



Genome Québec

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

CREATION OF THE *CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN PERSONALIZED MEDICINE*

THE MONTREAL HEART INSTITUTE AND GÉNOME QUÉBEC ANNOUNCE A \$22 MILLION INVESTMENT

Montréal, February 14, 2008 - The Montreal Heart Institute and Génome Québec reached an important milestone today in the creation of a *Centre of Excellence in Personalized Medicine*. This project represents an investment of more than \$22 million over five years. Of this amount, \$13.8 million will be provided by the Government of Canada's Centres of Excellence for Commercialization and Research program, as announced today by the Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Industry Canada. The remainder will come from investments by private and public partners, including the ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation of Québec.

The mission of the *Centre of Excellence in Personalized Medicine* is to develop approaches and methods that will optimize treatment and ensure their rapid and productive transition from the research stage to use in clinical practice. The Centre will position Québec and Canada as world leaders in the optimization of personalized treatment. The integration of pharmacogenomics and biomarkers into drug development will improve effectiveness and safety, enabling the proper drug to be prescribed to the proper patient, at the proper dosage, right from the start. The Centre, which was developed in collaboration with major corporations from the pharmaceutical and biotechnology sectors, will serve as a unique tool in positioning these strategic sectors on the international stage.

"The Centre will serve to develop new approaches to optimizing treatment, including drugs, so that Canadian patients can benefit from personalized medicine," said Dr. Jean-Claude Tardif, Director of the MHI Research Centre and professor of medicine at the Université de Montréal.

"We are very proud of this investment that recognizes the power of pharmacogenomics as a tool for improving the health of the population," said Mr. Paul L'Archevêque, President and Chief Executive Officer of Génome Québec. "This project is the result of efforts that Génome Québec undertook in 2006 with the recruitment of scientist Michael Phillips and the creation of the Génome Québec and Montreal Heart Institute Pharmacogenomics Centre. The first commercial success of this platform recently led to an important announcement regarding a partnering with Héma-Québec."

"This highly formative project attests to Québec's expertise in pharmacogenomics and dovetails with the priorities in Génome Québec's strategic plan," added Mr. L'Archevêque.

"The MHI welcomes today's announcement with tremendous pride and satisfaction," said Mr. Robert Busilacchi, Executive Director of the MHI. "As the institution hosting the Centre, we will take every means to ensure it is a resounding success. We want to underscore that this Centre is a key element in our strategy to build vital partnerships with corporations from the pharmaceutical and biotechnology sectors, so that it becomes a veritable tool for developing these sectors in Québec, Canada and around the world."

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 500 employees, students and researchers at the MHI Research Centre. 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. MHI researchers also contribute to the advancement of knowledge and medical applications in the fields of genomics (in particular in disease gene discovery and pharmacogenomics), biomarkers and preventive cardiology. To learn more about the Institute, please visit our website at www.icm-mhi.org.

About Génome Québec

The mission of Génome Québec is to mobilize academic and industrial sectors with regard to genomics and proteomics research. This private non-profit organization, financed by the Government of Canada through Génome Canada and the Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation of Québec, invests and manages funds totalling over \$380 million from both the private and public sectors. Génome Québec currently manages projects in six major sectors: human health, bioinformatics, ethics, the environment, and forestry and agricultural sciences. To find out more about Génome Québec and genomics, visit its Web site at www.genomequebec.com.

About the Université de Montréal

Deeply rooted in Montreal and dedicated to its international mission, the Université de Montréal is one of the top universities in the world, particularly in the French-speaking world. Founded in 1878, the Université de Montréal today has 13 faculties and together with its two affiliated schools, HEC Montréal and École Polytechnique, constitutes the largest centre of higher education and research in Québec, the second largest in Canada, and one of the major centres in North America. It brings together 2,500 professors and researchers, accommodates more than 55,000 students, offers some 650 programs at all academic levels, and awards about 3,000 masters and doctorate diplomas each year.

- 30 -

Information:

Doris Prince
Head, Communication and Public Relations
Montreal Heart Institute
514 376-3330, extension 3074
doris.prince@icm-mhi.org

Source:
Michel Leblanc
Vice-President, Public Affairs and Communications
Génome Québec
514 398-0668