



Press release

For immediate release

## **Montréal InVivo gives an overview of the year 2013 in the life sciences and health technologies sector**

**MONTRÉAL, QC, December 19, 2013.** Montréal InVivo, the life sciences and health technologies (LSHT) sector of the Montréal metropolitan area, is pleased to give a brief overview of the year 2013 in the LSHT sector.

Of the major investments made in public research institutions in 2013, LSHT research featured prominently. The situation was very bright, particularly with respect to funding by granting agencies. We can give the example of the excellent work done in the area of personalized health care by Québec and Montréal researchers, who went out and raised close to \$100 million in the competition held by Genome Canada in April 2013. A remarkable achievement!

Personalized health care enjoyed other great achievements this year since the Personalized Medicine Project in Cancer (PMPC) obtained close to \$21 million of funding from both the Québec government and the private sector, in equal proportions. The promoter of this project, Martin Leblanc, CEO of Caprion, was furthermore selected to be the personality of the week by the newspaper La Presse in October.

The year 2013 also saw the creation of the Québec Network of Personalized Health Care (QNPHC), aimed at stimulating, enriching and promoting the advent of personalized health care in Québec as well as the introduction at the CHU Ste Justine of the first clinical genomics platform in Canada.

The metropolitan LSHT research sector gained the new CHUM Research Centre (CRCHUM) that brings together all the CRCHUM researchers into a single cutting-edge environment, enhancing the quality and productivity of the institution's research as a result. The Canadian Foundation for Innovation provided \$10 million in funding to the Institute for Research in Immunology and Cancer (IRIC) of the Université de Montréal in 2013.

In 2013, we also saw further collaborative efforts made between public research and the private sector. Some compelling examples include the establishment of the MEDTEQ consortium in the

medical technologies field and \$20 million in funding from Merck Canada to the Fonds de recherche Québec – Santé, the CHUM, the CUSM and CHU Sherbrooke. These collaborations are desirable and pave the way for better alignment between basic research and the needs of patients and health professionals.

The pharmaceutical industry stepped up its presence in the Montréal metropolitan area in 2013, particularly in relation to investments of \$16 million made by the company Servier in its Laval facilities and by the opening of a new centre of expertise in clinical research.

Valeant Pharmaceuticals also chose Laval as the city where it would relocate its global head office and its Canadian operations, previously based in Toronto. In the weeks that followed, it acquired Bausch+Lomb for an amount of over \$8.7 billion.

SMEs in the sector will be able to capitalize on increased access to funding through venture capital because the U.S. fund Sanderling decided to set up operations in Montréal following a \$30-million investment in this fund by the Business Development Bank of Canada and by the Fonds de solidarité FTQ. This fund is in addition to those put in place last year and that started to invest in Québec in companies active in this sector (e.g. TVM, Lumira, etc.). We also note the creation and funding by MSBlv, a new biotech company in Montréal specializing in the area of rare diseases, Laurent Pharmaceuticals, and a biotech firm moving from Vancouver (EnGene) to Montréal to become a part of the NEOMED Institute. These are two trends we would like to see grow in the years to come.

From a public policy perspective, and in keeping with the 15-year rule being abolished, the beginning of 2013 was difficult for the pharmaceutical sector with the implementation of the therapeutic substitution for proton pump inhibitors.

Nevertheless, the government announced, when it was introducing its industrial and research policies and innovation (PNRI), a series of measures intended to benefit our sector. We were pleased to note that three of the seven priority sectors share an association with LSHT: biotechnologies, personalized health care and bio-food. We also note the implementation of the *Fonds de partenariat pour un Québec innovant en santé* of \$125 million that would directly support projects in our sector in 2014.

On the federal level, the agreement in principle CETA opens the door to enhanced protection of intellectual property in the pharmaceutical sector and to very attractive customs benefits for Québec-based and Canadian medical technology companies.

In conclusion, the LSHT sector has had its share of noteworthy events, enabling the members of the cluster to network and stay informed of the latest trends. Some of these events include the awarding of the Brio prize at the Genesis gala, the International Health Forum, the Symposium international de Sherbrooke (SILS), BioContact Québec and its "Knock Out" event, in which Amorchem awarded a research project with a prize of \$500,000, and Québec innovation and health week, during which evaluation and integration of technologies in the health system were addressed. This last point was the subject of a recent publication by CIRANO, which focuses on integrating innovations in the network based on the current legislative framework.

The year 2014 is looking very promising for the LSHT sector. Montréal InVivo will continue to strengthen the innovation ecosystem to continue to generate more spinoffs for the Metropolitan Montréal area and Québec. To do so, the cluster will continue to support its

strategic priorities: Capitalize on research and innovation; Promote the integration of innovation; Develop a world-class industry; Develop expertise and the next generation; Promote Québec's strengths, assets and opportunities.

We have great challenges ahead of us this year!

#### About Montréal InVivo

Montréal InVivo is the brand name for the life sciences and health technologies (LSHT) cluster of the Montréal metropolitan area. The cluster comprises almost 620 organizations, including more than 150 research centres, 80 subsidiaries of world-class companies, and 41,000 people employed in the sector. A wellspring of great ideas, the cluster includes four universities and ranks first in Canada for the number of research centres.

The secretariat of Montréal InVivo is a non-profit economic development organization dedicated to the creation of wealth. By mobilizing the relevant actors in order to meet crucial challenges such as innovation, and through the actions it undertakes and the implementation of its strategic plan, Montréal InVivo aims to ensure the sustainable development, long-term survival and international renown of the LSHT sector in Greater Montréal.

Its activities are supported by funding from the MFE, MAMROT, CMM, DEC and private and institutional sector.

-30-

**Source:**

**Frank Béraud**

**Montréal InVivo**

**(514) 987 9389**

[fberaud@montreal-invivo.com](mailto:fberaud@montreal-invivo.com)

[www.montreal-invivo.com](http://www.montreal-invivo.com)