



Press release

For immediate release

**The Quebec Consortium for Drug Discovery (CQDM)
announces an investment of close to \$8 million dollars in
biopharmaceutical research in Québec**

**The projects will have a major impact on the research and development of new
drugs in the field of Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and
vaccines**

MONTREAL, QC, June 8th, 2009. Four outstanding projects have been selected from the first competition on drug discovery launched by the CQDM in the fall of 2008. All research proposals have been evaluated through an exhaustive due diligence process involving, among others, an independent scientific and industrial expert panel led by the Fonds de recherche en santé du Québec (FRSQ). These projects aimed at developing new enabling technologies that can significantly facilitate the drug discovery process.

Quebec is recognized for the quality of its research. The selected CQDM's research projects will be conducted by multidisciplinary top level Quebec researchers, recognized as international leaders in their respective field.

Because of its innovative and unique approach, CQDM promotes the creation of synergy between academic and industrial research. «The four awarded projects are perfectly well-aligned with CQDM's mission which is to fund innovative enabling tools and technologies that could have a significant impact on the drug discovery process for the biopharmaceutical industry», said Max Fehlmann, President and CEO, CQDM.

Based on genuine private-public partnerships, the selected projects involve four companies (Medicago, Caprion, SNC-Lavalin and Perkin Elmer) and four universities (McGill, Montreal, Laval and Sherbrooke). This investment will generate the

employment of more than 30 full-time equivalent researchers, postdoctoral fellows and students.

Thanks to the contributions and commitments of CQDM's private and public partners such as Pfizer Canada, AstraZeneca Canada, Merck Frosst Canada Ltd., the Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec (FRSQ), the Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation (MDEIE) and the Business-Led Networks of Centres of Excellence (BL-NCE), it is possible to invest in cutting-edge technologies that could accelerate the development of more effective and safer drugs and consequently affect patient's health care.

Further to fostering greater investments in R-D in the public sector and the biopharmaceutical industry, CQDM offers an original collaborative model from which new partnerships can emerge. "The number and the quality of the drug discovery proposals received for the first competition – 78 - further underlines the dynamism of research groups in the province of Quebec and demonstrate their willingness to collaborate with the industry to address the increasing medical challenges generated by the rising needs of an aging population", explains Bernard Prigent, Chairman of the Scientific Orientation Committee of CQDM and Medical Director of Pfizer Canada.

This year CQDM's selected projects will focus on:

- 1) Developing a method to rapidly identify and test new vaccines against the influenza virus (for instance the A(H1N1) virus) and other families of viruses (Louis-Philippe Vézina, Medicago Inc.);
- 2) Developing tools to allow the early identification of patients with Alzheimer's disease (Louis Collins, Montreal Neurological Institute, McGill University);
- 3) Discovering and validating new biomarkers to better monitor the progression of diabetes and the response to treatments (Eustache Paramithiotis, Caprion Proteomics Inc.);
- 4) Developing molecular and cellular tools to predict efficacy of new drugs (Michel Bouvier, IRIC, Université de Montréal).

The presentation and announcement of the projects will be made on June 8th, 2009 during the CQDM/Montreal InVivo **Creative Partnerships in Biopharmaceutical Research Forum**. «This event will allow the partners from the public and private biopharmaceutical sector and other stakeholders of the industry to share their views on critical issues for Quebec, such as the productivity and value-added creation of the research conducted», indicated Michelle Savoie, Montréal InVivo's CEO.

The event will be held at the Club Saint-James in Montréal.

About CQDM

CQDM is a not-for-profit organization that responds to the needs of the pharmaceutical industry by contributing to accelerating drug discovery and developing safer, more effective drugs. CQDM's funding is provided by the FRSQ, the MDEIE, the BL-NCE, Pfizer Canada, AstraZeneca Canada and Merck Frosst Canada Ltd.

For more information, visit: www.cqdm.org

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Fact sheets and researchers bios are available at the following address:

<http://creativepartnerships2009.montreal-invivo.com/>