



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **WHY SHOULD WE JUMP IN THE DNA POOL?**

#### **PERSONALIZED MEDICINE EXPERTS DISCUSSED IMMEDIATE SOCIOECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS FOR CANADA**

**MONTREAL (CANADA), JUNE 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010** – Génome Québec and Montreal InVivo, in collaboration with CePMed, held two conferences on personalized medicine at the International Economic Forum of the Americas earlier today. The perspective of patients' organizations, professionals in the healthcare field and private-public payers were touched on by the keynote speakers and other prominent international experts. They provided an update on what is being achieved in the United States and Europe and highlighted the benefits that are within reach for Canada.

The opinion leaders tackled the issues of "Health and Innovation" and outlined the challenges in terms of economics, human health discoveries and integration lying ahead to move forward on personalized medicine. "The pace to which personalized medicine is moving is quite amazing. Today's discussions, focused on a call for action on the part of us all", concluded Catalina Lopez Correa, Chief Scientific Officer at Génome Québec. The issues of the quality of life, integration challenges for private healthcare payers and governments as well as novel approaches for doctors and life science companies were centrepiece at the conference.

The first speaker of today's conference, Dr Leroy Hood, President and Co-founder of the Institute for Systems Biology who participated in the genome sequencing technology that led to the decoding of the human genome in 2001 mentioned: "The integration of P4 medicine (predictive, personalized, preventive and participatory) will have a dramatic impact on many industries like pharmaceuticals and insurance, as well as healthcare. The key question is whether pre-existing businesses and entrenched bureaucracies will be able to respond to these winds of change".

In 2001, the cost of sequencing the first human genome itself, was about \$500 million and took one whole year, according to an independent private sector analysis. "The idea to map the complete human genome for just \$1,000, something inconceivable not long ago, is becoming a reality that is within our grasp. With the massive reduction in the cost of DNA sequencing and the development of increasingly efficient tools, this is a game changer for personalized medicine", added Dr Hood.

For example, there is a test that examines a breast cancer patient's tumor tissue at a molecular level, and gives information about her individual disease. This information can help individualize breast cancer treatment planning to predict the likelihood of chemotherapy benefit as well as recurrence, for patients with node-negative breast cancer.

"With our expertise in the sector, we have many opportunities to develop unique approaches to personalized medicine in Quebec. This scientific field represents incredible levers of economic development and business opportunities", commented Mr. Paul Lévesque, Montreal In Vivo's President of the Board and President of Pfizer Canada inc. "Montreal InVivo has identified personalized medicine as a priority and is currently supporting the development of an integrated strategy to move forward. By creating niches of excellence, we will enable Montreal and Quebec to distinguish themselves in the global arena" added Mr. Lévesque.

#### About Génome Québec

Through the partnerships with key players in life sciences on national and international levels, Génome Québec contributes to strengthening the competitiveness of the system for innovation in genomics. The objective is to maximize the socioeconomic impact in Québec, by funding major genomics research initiatives and putting in place the tools necessary for scientific and strategic development in the field. [www.genomequebec.com](http://www.genomequebec.com)

#### About Montreal InVivo

Montréal InVivo is a non-profit organization and is the brand name for the life sciences and health technologies cluster of the Montréal metropolitan area. The cluster is comprised of more than 620 organizations, including 150 research organizations, and 80 subsidiaries of foreign companies. It is a fertile breeding ground for innovation and creativity. The Montréal InVivo cluster is one of the larger metropolitan areas in North America as far as employment is concerned, with over 41,000 qualified people employed. [www.montreal-invivo.com](http://www.montreal-invivo.com)