



Press release

For Immediate Release

More than \$3 million to fund bariatric surgery research at IUCPQ-Université Laval

Quebec City, June 11, 2015 – The Quebec Heart and Lung Institute (IUCPQ) Research Centre and Université Laval are starting the first global research on long-term remission of metabolic diseases, such as diabetes, after bariatric surgery.

More than 350,000 bariatric operations are performed worldwide every year, including more than 600 at IUCPQ. Surgery is now recognized as the only treatment with long-lasting benefits for severe obesity. Yet, no clinical study has addressed the long-term effects of current surgical approaches on metabolic diseases such as type 2 diabetes. This is critical to understand given the significant health and economic burden of this growing disease. In Canada, there are more than 10 million individuals living with diabetes or prediabetes.

Thanks to an exceptional contribution of \$3.2 million from Johnson & Johnson Medical Companies, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and Le Fonds de la recherche du Québec - Santé, a multidisciplinary team is launching the REMISSION study, a large-scale six-year clinical trial involving 400 obese patients with diabetes. This study ranked first in the Bariatric Care funding contest from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

“Through this study, we will examine the impact of bariatric surgery on diabetes remission,” said André Tchernof, Chairholder of Université Laval’s Bariatric and Metabolic Surgery Research Chair and member of the IUCPQ Research Centre. “This could ultimately transform bariatric practice here and abroad in terms of choosing the best surgical approach for each patient.”

IUCPQ is already internationally renowned for surgical obesity treatment. In 2009, the institute became one of the two excellence centres in this medical field in Quebec. “IUCPQ has been treating morbid obesity for more than 30 years. With the great skills and determination of our medical team and researchers, we became leaders in severe obesity treatment. Today’s funding confirms our lead regarding this expertise”, remarked Denis Bouchard, IUCPQ CEO.

Obesity research reduces healthcare costs since surgical treatment is profitable after just five years. “Our obesity researchers’ clinical and fundamental scientific knowledge benefits patients and society as a whole,” said Sophie D’Amours, Université Laval’s vice rector of research and innovation. The university previously positioned itself as a leader in the field by establishing a bariatric and metabolic surgery research chair in 2011.

Obesity rates in Canada have been increasing steadily over the past two decades. This puts constant strain on healthcare systems, as obesity is associated with metabolic diseases like diabetes and significantly erodes individuals' quality of life. "The Canadian Institutes of Health Research are proud to invest in this important research in partnership with Le Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé and the Canadian Obesity Network. Findings arising from this research project will improve treatment options available for Canadians with severe obesity", said Philip Sherman, Scientific Director of the CIHR Institute of Nutrition, Metabolism and Diabetes.

The REMISSION study (Reaching Enduring Metabolic Improvements by Selecting Surgical Interventions in Obese INdividuals) exists thanks to funding from government and industry partners, including Johnson & Johnson Medical Companies (\$1.7 million) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (\$1.5 million, including 250 000\$ from Le Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé).

"Johnson & Johnson recognizes the importance of research in the field of obesity and diabetes in our efforts to improve the lives of patients," said Rollie Cameron, General Manager, Johnson & Johnson Medical Companies. "Today's investment is another step toward addressing these complex health issues and will help ensure the right patients receive the right treatments at the right time."

About Université Laval

Université Laval, located in the world heritage city of Québec, is the oldest French-language university in North America. One of Canada's top research universities, it is ranked 8th among the country's institutions of higher learning, with a research budget of over \$300 million last year. Université Laval boasts over 3,200 professors, lecturers, and teaching staff who share their knowledge with some 48,000 students, including 13,000 at the graduate level.

About Institute

Annually, 15,128 people are hospitalized and 105,399 visits are made in outpatients. The catchment population is over 2 million people, or approximately 30% of the population of Quebec. Affiliated with Laval University, the Institute relies on the cooperation and dedication of nearly 3,000 employees, doctors, professionals, researchers, managers and volunteers to provide care and quality services to clients in hospital and outpatient services. The Institute programs include care and highly specialized services for the treatment of cardiopulmonary diseases and diseases related to obesity. Doctors and health professionals of the Institute have extensive expertise and contribute to advancing the science of medicine. The Institute also has a mission to evaluate technologies and methods of health intervention.

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Source:

Samuel Auger
Media Relations
Communications Department
Université Laval
418-656-3952
samuel.auger@dc.ulaval.ca

Catherine Nazair
Communications and Public Relations
Quebec Heart and Lung Institute
418 656-4932
catherine.nazair@ssss.gouv.qc.ca