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Pharmaceutical Industry invests in the development of early clinical research in Quebec

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Since 2017, this innovative public-private partnership has rallied some fifteen organizations working jointly to develop and establish clinical research global best practices for the benefit of patients and the public in Quebec.



During the 2019 BIO (Biotechnology Innovation Organization) International Convention (BIO 2019), CATALIS Québec has announced that its eight pharmaceutical partners have renewed their financial commitments. Since its launch, GlaxoSmithKline, Pfizer, AbbVie, Takeda, Novartis, Merck, Servier and Roche have invested nearly CAD 1.6 million in the CATALIS initiative to support Quebec's role as a global leader in the field of early clinical research.

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"To ensure our life sciences industry enjoys a solid reputation and a competitive edge, it is critical to attract more private investment. By mobilizing all actors of this sector of the economy, the CATALIS initiative strengthens Québec's position as a leader in early-stage clinical research. The government is proud to support this project, which clearly shows the industry's innovative character," stated Pierre Fitzgibbon, Minister of Economy and Innovation.

"From the outset, our association has supported the CATALIS initiative, and several members of Innovative Medicines Canada are now involved in this network, which is a major asset for Quebec. We endorse several actions of the 2017-2027 Québec Life Sciences Strategy, including this partnership model, based on converging interests, to accelerate the discovery of innovative treatment solutions for patients," declared Pamela Fralick, president of Innovative Medicines Canada.

In addition to developing resources for the entire clinical research ecosystem in Quebec, the CATALIS initiative supports five institutions in the Quebec health care system: the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal (CHUM), the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC), the Centre hospitalier universitaire Sainte-Justine, the CHU de Québec – Université Lavaland the Centre de Recherche du Centre hospitalier universitaire de Sherbrooke (CRCHUS). These partner institutions have received funding to support them as they implement their expertise in early clinical research, notably allowing them to hire highly qualified research staff.

"CATALIS has created a unique partnership network that brings together the key players in the field of clinical research in Quebec. By working together, we'll stimulate the launch of new clinical trials and generate positive impacts for Quebec's economy and for the health of its people," stated Danika Laberge, general manager of CATALIS Québec.

Early-stage clinical trials (phases 1 and 2) are the first studies conducted on humans to provide scientific proof of the safety and efficacy of a medication or some other therapeutic approach. These trials, which involve a small group of patients, often represent an opportunity to find a potential treatment for patients with serious diseases when standard therapies have failed.