$1.7 million donation establishes the Karen Anthony Consortium for Lung Cancer Research at the Jewish General Hospital

A generous donation from Maxime Rémillard will fund innovative research that uses artificial intelligence to guide lung cancer treatment and improve survival prospects for patients

Montreal, September 24, 2020 - With the creation of the Karen Anthony Consortium for Lung Cancer Research at the Jewish General Hospital (JGH), massive amounts of data on lung cancer will be integrated in a single, accessible repository. Scientists will use artificial intelligence (AI) to generate sophisticated algorithms that will churn the data and guide clinicians in selecting the best therapies to treat each patient's lung cancer. The result will be better outcomes and increased survival.

"In consolidating data, we will be able to move faster in developing treatment plans and delivering therapies to patients," said Dr. Alan Spatz, a world-class researcher recognized for his work in molecular pathology and cancer, who serves as Scientific Director of the Consortium. He is a Senior Investigator at the Lady Davis Institute and Director of Pathology at the JGH, and Professor in the Departments of Pathology and Oncology at McGill University. "As we bring more data to bear on identifying the active mutations in cancer, the more tools we have at our disposal to identify the therapy that will disrupt the specific pathway that generates a person's cancer, and the more effective we will be in eradicating the malignancy."

In 2020, approximately 30,000 Canadians will be diagnosed with lung cancer, a disease responsible for 25% of all cancer deaths. Non-small-cell lung cancer (NSCLC) is the most frequent type of lung cancer and the most common cause of cancer mortality.

The Karen Anthony Consortium for Lung Cancer Research is the first initiative of the **M**cGill **I**nitiative for Shared **D**atabase **A**cross **S**ites (MIDAS), and includes collaborators from the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC). The Consortium brings together experts in pathology, medical imaging, clinical oncology, surgery, proteomics/metabolomics, as well as applied clinical and fundamental AI/machine learning.

MIDAS-Lung has two major complementary research components:

(i) An enriched multidimensional database of NSCLC, which will use tens of thousands of pieces of information from clinical, radiological, and laboratory studies. The vast majority of the data is available, but have never been effectively centralized and consolidated. Consolidation will allow for the identification of new targets against which novel therapies can be developed, thereby improving lung cancer treatment.

(ii) Using this approach, researchers will identify those among the 35% of people with early stage disease who undergo potentially curative surgery, who are the most at risk to have a recurrence after surgery and could actually be cured by the addition of more aggressive and/or novel treatments.

"Each of these objectives represents innovative ways to identify new domains of medical action and opportunities to interact with industrial partners for drug and test development," said Dr. Spatz.

"Clinical trials are increasingly designed to select patients based on a molecular profile that matches with the test drug, but we are reaching the limits of the approach solely based on gene analysis. We need to incorporate other data as well, including the patient's metabolic and immune status, the level of specific proteins made from genes, and also the results of AI-based analysis of medical images," added Dr. Gerald Batist, Director of the JGH's Segal Cancer Centre and of the McGill Centre for Translational Research in Cancer.

It is thanks to Maxime Rémillard's visionary gift of $1.7 million that the JGH and the MUHC are able to launch this trailblazing initiative to transform lung cancer research and treatment.

"Our partnership with the JGH to create the Karen Anthony Consortium for Lung Cancer Research will harness the power of clinical knowledge of those affected by lung cancer to catalyze innovative research leading to better treatments and outcomes, changing the lives of the millions of people worldwide who continue to fight against lung cancers," said Mr. Rémillard.

"Thanks to Mr. Rémillard, this investment will make it possible for our scientists to advance knowledge and make the breakthrough discoveries that are needed to understand lung cancer on multiple dimensions. The use of new artificial intelligence technologies will provide new hope for the many families impacted by this disease in Quebec and Canada," said Bram Freedman, President and CEO of the JGH Foundation.

"Collectively, this team features highly complementary and world-leading expertise that will enable the successful execution of the proposed project. Because of this gift, it is wonderful to see the McGill cancer research community unite under an umbrella that is based on data," said Dr. Jonathan Spicer, thoracic surgeon at the MUHC and Director of the McGill Thoracic Oncology Network.

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About the JGH www.jgh.ca

About the JGH Foundation www.jghfoundation.org

About Maxime Rémillard

Maxime Rémillard is a Montreal-based serial entrepreneur and president of the private investment firm Remcorp.

With his entrepreneurial passion, he led Remcorp to invest in a broad range of sectors such as technology, media, transportation services, health and wellness and real estate.

An active businessman, Maxime Rémillard has also served on the board of directors of numerous charitable organizations such as the Fondation du Musée Pointe-à-Callière. In recent years, he has partnered with the Mira Foundation, raising nearly 2 million dollars in donations for the organization. In addition, he and his family helped create the Yosh Taguchi Chair in Urological Cancer Research at McGill University. Mr. Remillard also supports and sponsors numerous initiatives with Centraide and the Jewish General Hospital Foundation.