



Communiqué  
For Immediate Release

## **Actress and Comedian Valérie Blais Gets Involved in the Parkinson's Cause in Quebec**

### ***Blais to be the spokesperson at the very first Parkinson's Journey event***

Montreal, Wednesday, August 31, 2016 — Parkinson Québec is proud to announce its new partnership with artist Valérie Blais, who has agreed to be the spokesperson for the very first edition of the Parkinson's Journey. This event is the most important Parkinson's fundraiser in Quebec, and will run from September 10 to 11 in 12 different cities across the province.

"I am pleased to get involved in such an important cause! In Quebec alone, 25,000 people live with Parkinson's disease. It is important to remind them all that the disease does not define them. We must do all that we can to help these individuals," said Blais.

"It's a pleasure to work with a talented artist like Valérie Blais to raise awareness for Parkinson's disease," added Nicole Charpentier, General Director of Parkinson Québec. "Over the last several years, many studies have shown that, when used as a complementary therapy, physical activity can help relieve many motor and non-motor skills associated with Parkinson's. Physical activity has also been shown to improve the quality of life of those living with the disease. This is precisely the message that the Parkinson's Journey wants to promote."

### **The First Installment of the Parkinson's Journey: 5,000 kms for the Cause**

The Parkinson's Journey will bring together thousands of people to challenge them to head outdoors and be active together. The goal is to reach a collective Journey of **5,000 kms**. All funds raised during the event will be sent directly to regional organizations that support the Parkinson's Journey, to fund their outreach services. Anyone interested in taking part in the event can sign up online at [www.parcoursparkinson.ca](http://www.parcoursparkinson.ca).

## **More Artists Getting Involved in the Cause**

For his part, actor Luc Bourgois, who plays Valérie Blais' partner in the television drama *Tactik*, has become involved in the Lower-Laurentians Parkinson's Journey event that will be held in his hometown of Blainville, QC. Luc is familiar with the disease, as a member of his family is living with Parkinson's. As a caregiver, Luc decided to contribute his time and to take an active role in the fundraiser.

Parkinson Québec ambassadors Patrick Zabé and Kim Rusk will also be taking part in the walks organized in Quebec City and Montreal. A professional singer, Zabé has been living with Parkinson's for 10 years and has begun speaking out about the disease to help explain that even individuals living with Parkinson's can maintain an active lifestyle. To help finance services to support individuals living with the disease, Zabé will contribute a portion of all sales of his new album "Pour Toi" to Parkinson Québec.

## **About Parkinson's Disease**

Parkinson's is the second most common neurological disease in the world. In Quebec alone, more than 25,000 people are living with the disease, and when caregivers and family members are accounted for, over 100,000 Quebecers are affected. A recent Health Canada study showed that Parkinson's disease will progress more rapidly than the population ages. As a result, we will need to do everything in our power to fight this disease, which should be considered a priority health issue in Canada.

## **About Parkinson Québec**

For 15 years, Parkinson Québec has been the leader in the Parkinson's community in Quebec and the provincial voice for regional organizations dedicated to the Parkinson's cause.

- We support the 25,000 Quebecers living with Parkinson's disease and their caregivers.
- Through the *Fonds québécois de recherche sur le Parkinson*, we contribute to biomedical research on the causes of Parkinson's, along with related treatments.
- We encourage individuals to take action via coordinated, effective services and educative programs that are supported by reliable sources and exemplary practices throughout Quebec.
- We help defend the rights and interests of the Parkinson's community on public decision-making bodies.
- We also raise public awareness about Parkinson's disease.

Parkinson Québec groups together regional organizations that offer activities to support individuals living with the disease. We also work in close collaboration with Quebec-based organizations dedicated to the Parkinson's cause. For more information about Parkinson's, please visit [www.parkinsonquebec.ca](http://www.parkinsonquebec.ca).

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Photo of Valérie Blais available upon request

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