



**YOUR CANDIDATES
YOUR HEALTH**

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**Election
Primer**
2019



YOUR CANDIDATES, YOUR HEALTH

2019 Federal Election Primer



Research Canada: An Alliance for Health Discovery

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**RESEARCH
CANADA** | **RECHERCHE
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An Alliance for Health Discovery | Une alliance pour les découvertes en santé



Learn more about the *Your Candidates, Your Health* campaign at yourcandidatesyourhealth.ca

“Fundamental research pushes the frontiers of knowledge and lays the foundation for innovations that lead to new products and services for a global market.”

- DR. ROBERT MCMASTER, CHAIR OF RESEARCH CANADA
VP RESEARCH AT VANCOUVER COASTAL HEALTH AND
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF VCH RESEARCH INSTITUTE

“Canada is a nation of innovators. On a per capita basis, Canada boasts the fourth-largest science and technology workforce in the world—and nowhere is our heritage richer and our potential greater than in health research.”

- DR. RYAN WILEY, POLICY ADVISOR TO RESEARCH CANADA
AND PRESIDENT OF SHIFT HEALTH

INTRODUCTION



The federal election campaign period represents one of the best times for capturing the ears of our potential future government representatives to inform and lobby them on policy matters impacting Canada's health research and innovation enterprise. Research Canada: An Alliance for Health Discovery has put together this 2019 Election Primer so that our Members have helpful tools they can use to approach their respective Candidates and advocate on behalf of our shared concerns – concerns that affect all Canadians. It contains **highlights** from the most recent government's announcements, initiatives and investments, lists our **current challenges**, presents our **positions** and **messages**, and provides suggestions for **answers to key questions** from Candidates.

BACKGROUND

The 2019 federal election will be held on October 21, 2019. The campaign period is a golden opportunity to get our message out to future Parliamentarians about the value of a robust health research and innovation ecosystem to the country and what is needed from them to sustain and promote it.

The last federal election on October 19, 2015 produced a majority Liberal government. The Conservatives became the Official Opposition after leading the government for more than nine years. The current party standings in the House of Commons are: Liberals 177 seats, Conservatives 96 seats, the NDP 41 seats, the Bloc Québécois 10 seats, Green Party 2 seats, Independent members 7 seats, the People's Party of Canada 1 seat, the Canadian Cooperative Commonwealth 1 seat. Three seats are vacant.

Generally speaking, political parties will likely focus on these key issues during the 2019 campaign:

 Liberal	 Conservative	 NDP
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reducing the burden on the middle class• pharmacare• job creation• climate change• infrastructure• seniors• gender equality• rural connectivity• affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reducing taxes• balanced budget• carbon tax• energy project approvals• ethics• immigration & secure borders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social inequality• electoral reform• pharmacare• corporate tax increases• climate change• affordable housing

Focusing on health policy specifically:

- **Pharmacare** is positioned to take up much of the oxygen for the healthcare debate.
- **Cost** will drive the debate on pharmacare. The Conservatives are expected to introduce an alternative pharma plan as a counter to the Liberal and NDP plans. The Conservatives recently signaled a five-year return to balanced budget timeline, which would allow for an investment in the program.
- **Seniors** are on the radar for all three major parties. The youth-focused Liberal government created a ministerial post for seniors late in its mandate, and other parties are expected to include this issue in their platforms. The Conservatives are considering initiatives to address seniors' homelessness. Support services are a focus for the Liberals.
- **Indigenous** health services are a focus for the Liberals and NDP. The Liberals have invested massive figures in social services and healthcare for rural and remote communities, as well as Indigenous communities in urban centres.
- **Access to healthcare** is a focus for all parties, including the Green Party. The Liberals appointed a rural minister partway through their mandate and are identifying potential commitments to rural health access.
- **Mental health** investment is poised to be a Liberal commitment. The Liberal-led health committee recently completed a study on farmers' mental health.
- **Cuts to health spending** in Ontario are being watched closely by the Liberals, who are eyeing an opportunity to make up the gap being created by the Ford government.¹

1. Michelle McLean, Hill+Knowlton Strategies. Presentation to Research Canada's Board of Directors, June 5, 2019. <https://rc-rc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/RC-Election-Briefing.pdf>

THE ACHIEVEMENTS

The past four years have seen significant strides towards restoring and advancing Canada's health research enterprise following a period of serious investment decline:

- ★ Commissioning of the Fundamental Science Review under Dr. David Naylor. This produced a comprehensive agenda for reinvigorating fundamental science in Canada. The government responded with an historic, nearly \$4 billion reinvestment into Canadian research in Budget 2018
- ★ As part of this reinvestment, an additional \$925 million to Canada's granting councils, spread over five years, starting in 2018
- ★ Establishment of the Canada Research Coordinating Committee (CRCC) to improve collaboration among the granting councils
- ★ The New Frontiers in Research Fund, providing \$275 million over five years and \$65 million ongoing toward international, interdisciplinary, high-risk and fast-breaking research
- ★ Creation of the Chief Science Advisor (CSA) and appointment of Dr. Mona Nemer
- ★ Creation of the Council on Science and Innovation (CSI), an independent government advisory body that is still being assembled
- ★ The Strategic Science Fund (SSF), a tool to support third-party science and research, to launch in 2022
- ★ Additional support for graduate students through the Canada Graduate Scholarship Program (CGSP): \$114 million over five years from 2019-20 and \$26.5 million ongoing to the federal granting councils to create 500 additional master's level scholarship awards annually and 167 more three-year doctoral scholarship awards annually
- ★ Expanded paid parental leave coverage for students and postdoctoral fellows who receive granting council funding from six to 12 months: \$37.4 million over five years from 2019-20 and \$8.6 million ongoing
- ★ Additional support for Indigenous post-secondary students, researchers and trainees: \$824 million over 10 years from 2019-20 and \$61.8 million ongoing for Indigenous post-secondary students; intention to ensure diverse groups, including Indigenous researchers, are included in the awarding of Canada Research Chairs (CRC), with new investments of \$210 million from 2019-24 and \$60 million ongoing
- ★ Initial steps toward modernizing and harmonizing Canada's regulatory framework for the health and biosciences sector in support of growth and innovation
- ★ Elimination of the income threshold for accessing enhanced credit through the Scientific Research and Experimental Development (SR&ED) Tax Incentive Program
- ★ Recommendations to double Canada's health and biosciences sector by 2025 from the federal Health and Biosciences Economic Strategy Table (HBEST)

"It will be critically important to engage the health and biosciences sector and solicit their advice and expertise as the government develops regulatory roadmaps and takes next steps toward updating the regulatory regime so that these changes are aligned with industry realities."

- MS. DEBORAH GORDON-EL-BIHBETY
PRESIDENT & CEO, RESEARCH CANADA

These steps and investments signal that research is valued by the Liberal government and viewed as essential to the health, wellbeing and economic future of all Canadians; that public policy must be grounded in evidence; and that the government has confidence in the research community to deliver that evidence. They also signal that government recognizes the critical linkages among basic science, innovation, the economy and Canadians' wellbeing, and that federal research and innovation need a coordinated approach.

The Honourable Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Science and Sport, deserves substantial credit for her leadership and advocacy in rebuilding a robust Canadian research ecosystem. These actions also speak to the power of coordinated advocacy on the part of the research community. Through direct lobbying, letter-writing, parliamentary events and the #SupportTheReport social media campaign in the fall of 2017, our community spoke with a single, resounding voice about the critical importance of research to Canadians and the need to back the recommendations of the Fundamental Science Review. The 2019 federal election provides yet another opportunity to use that voice and advance our message among Canada's future political representatives.

THE CHALLENGES

Recent investments notwithstanding, our health research and innovation ecosystem is continuing to play catch-up with the rest of the world after losing considerable ground between 2006 and 2015. Many items are left on the "to do" list to restore Canada to a solidly competitive international footing in terms of our overall research investment and to realize the health research enterprise's potential to secure Canada's status as a top-tier innovation economy. Meeting these goals depends on overcoming four broad challenges:

1

CANADA'S HEALTH RESEARCH ECOSYSTEM HAS NOT YET RECOVERED FROM A DECADE OF LOW INVESTMENT AND SUPPORT.

Despite recent funding infusions, Canada remains outside the top 30 OECD countries for gross domestic expenditure on research and development (GERD).² Granting competitions continue to show low success rates – only 14.9% of proposals were successful in the Canadian Institutes of Health Research's (CIHR) fall 2018 competition,³ compared to 42% in 2000.⁴ This threatens to frustrate the motivation and ambition of our early-career scientists and discourage them from making their careers in Canada, which in many cases has invested substantially in their education and training and runs the risk of forfeiting the potential of this investment. Internationally, Canada trails many peer countries in terms of citation rankings and research prizes. We are still not where we can and should be in the world.

2

FEDERAL POLICY ON HEALTH RESEARCH AND INNOVATION LACKS A CONSISTENT, "WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT" APPROACH.

When government takes an inconsistent approach to policymaking, strides and investments made in one area can be quickly set back or cancelled out by counteracting policies in another. We see examples of this discordant action, most notably in policies affecting the health and biosciences sector. We were delighted last fall when the federal government's Health and Biosciences Economic Strategy Table (HBEST) proposed a series of thoughtful recommendations to double the country's life sciences sector by 2025. Yet those recommendations were undermined months later when the government's Patented Medicine Prices Review Board (PMPRB) proposed a series of pricing reforms under the Patented Medicines Regulation.⁵ If approved, these reforms will disincentivize health and biosciences companies engaged in cutting edge research and development and potentially force them to retrench and disinvest, rather than grow, in Canada.

2. Notes from keynote address by Dr. David Naylor to the Canadian Consortium for Research, May 6, 2019

3. Canadian Institutes for Health Research website. Project Grant: Fall 2018 Results. www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/51312.html

4. Canadian Institutes of Health Research. *Success Rates in CIHR's OOGP and Project Competitions* (unpublished), July 2018

5. See Research Canada letter to Prime Minister Trudeau, Apr. 29, 2019, available at https://rc-rc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Letter_RightHonourablePrimeMinisterTrudeau_Apr2019.pdf

3

THERE IS NOT YET CLEAR RECOGNITION THAT COMMERCIALIZATION OF INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS, PROCESSES AND TECHNOLOGIES DEPENDS ON TREATING RESEARCH, INNOVATION, MARKET DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH SYSTEM ADOPTION AS PART OF AN INTEGRATED ECOSYSTEM, SUPPORTED AT EVERY STAGE.

There is no such thing as an overnight success. Successful commercialization of innovation by Canadian-grown companies is the result of a fully supported ecosystem of people, ideas, policies and efforts leading to the creation and translation of research concepts into health impact. When only some stages are supported while others are neglected or impeded, the effects reverberate throughout. Canada's pharmaceutical industry directly contributes \$1 billion into homegrown research and development⁶ and is an important source of jobs for the highly skilled university graduates in whom our government is investing. Policy changes like the one proposed by PMPRB mentioned above, however, do not recognize the interconnected nature of our research ecosystem and its need for a consistent policy approach. Despite the excellence demonstrated by Canadian life sciences companies, we have yet to see their innovations achieve scale within Canada. That will not happen without a willing and attractive local market to validate our made-in-Canada innovations and provide incentive to invest here. Canadian life sciences companies have genuine potential to become global players in the industry, but adoption of their research and development (R&D) results by the Canadian health system is critical.

4

POLICYMAKERS AND PARLIAMENTARIANS NEED A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF HOW RESEARCH WORKS, AND THE IMPORTANT ROLES PLAYED BY EACH GROUP OF STAKEHOLDERS WITHIN THE HEALTH INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM.

A functional health innovation ecosystem must balance the **push** forces of knowledge creation with the market forces that **pull** ideas and technologies toward health application and impact. Government, academia, industry, not-for-profit organizations, patients and research users have pivotal roles to play at every stage. Public policy, meanwhile, establishes the contexts in which the ecosystem flourishes or falters. It is therefore crucial that those proposing and enacting policy thoroughly understand the elements of an ecosystem in balance so that they can create policies that support our overall innovation objectives.

The planned Council on Science and Innovation (CSI)* for example is a promising concept to bring voices together across the spectrum. We look forward with interest to its development and hope to see strong representation from the health research and health and biosciences sector. In another example, we currently face the challenge of creating a health data system that enables the collection, aggregation and sharing of diverse sources of data while protecting patient privacy. Such an ecosystem is critical to the future of health research, innovation, personalized healthcare and health system optimization, but it can only be achieved using an integrative lens and with the engagement of all stakeholders.

* The CSI was developed to replace the Science, Technology and Innovation Council (STIC) with a new, more transparent science and innovation advisory body. Reporting jointly to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development and the Minister of Science, the CSI will provide independent, expert policy advice to inform federal efforts to strengthen Canada's science and research ecosystem and stimulate innovation across the economy.

"Our patient communities are engaged, coordinated and ready to be part of the solution to Huntington's Disease. With the help of patients, the Canadian HD research community is at the forefront of global research into this disorder and has all the necessary ingredients to successfully conduct clinical research in HD. This includes well organized, regional multidisciplinary clinics providing care to HD patients and families and our international leadership in clinical trial experience, trial design and recruitment."

- MS. ROBIN MARKOWITZ, CEO
HUNTINGTON SOCIETY OF CANADA

6. Innovative Medicines Canada. Retrieved from website: <http://innovativemedicines.ca/innovation/industry-impact/>

OUR POSITIONS

Each of our policy positions is predicated on advancing a systemic approach to policy development and program delivery. In order to fully support the advancement of Canada's health research and innovation ecosystem, government must develop policy in an integrative manner, reflecting the interdependent, increasingly interdisciplinary nature of basic/biomedical, clinical, health services and population health research, the continuum of science, innovation, commercialization and health system adoption, and the relationships and interests of our diverse stakeholders.

This requires the elimination of siloed decision-making so that government bodies working on issues of shared interest are brought together to discuss and arrive at policies and programs that are coherent and consistently supportive of the complete health research and innovation ecosystem. Initiatives such as the CRCC and the CSI are beginning steps in this direction, but government must build on these so that such approaches become the norm. Similarly, a whole-of-government approach towards policy development is needed so that policies are not operating at cross-purposes, where some parts of a functional health innovation ecosystem are supported while others are restricted, akin to applying the brakes and pressing the gas pedal at the same time.

Against this backdrop, Research Canada has developed the following positions:

1

REINVESTMENT IN THE GRANTING COUNCILS MUST CONTINUE.



86%

of Canadians are more likely to vote for a Candidate who supports health and medical research.

Addressing many of Canada's current challenges such as climate change, reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, developing our economy and enhancing global competitiveness will require a sound and functioning research enterprise that can provide the evidence and the building blocks for the way forward. Canadians stand behind that enterprise; an overwhelming majority — 86%— favour Candidates who support increased funding for health and medical

research.⁷ Awards via the granting councils are a fundamental pathway to this work, supporting basic science exploration and creating made-in-Canada opportunities for early-career investigators.

Yet, as Canada works to reverse its previous course due to low research investment, the rest of the world is only gaining further momentum. Canada earned a "C" grade for innovation from the Conference Board of Canada, which ranked it 12th among 16 peer countries, in part because of strengthening performance by other nations.⁸ There is considerable evidence that investments towards much-needed renewal and growth in health research infrastructure, as well as in programs dedicated to the recruitment and retention of the best and brightest scientists, have resulted in an imbalance in the research system. Investments in CIHR and the other granting councils have not kept pace; while the granting councils have documented an increase in the absolute number of applications, an ever-increasing proportion of those which score excellent or outstanding in rigorous peer review fail to meet the cut-off for funding. This funding gap has reached crisis proportions and jeopardizes the government's ability to capitalize on its investment and realize the returns for all its citizens.⁹ Significant reinvestments via Budgets 2018 and 2019 are certainly helping but the increased funding is set up to unfold over time. The reinvestment must continue and be accelerated to secure Canada's long-term future as an innovation nation.

7. Research Canada. *CanadaSpeaks! 2019 Survey*. <https://rc-rc.ca/canadaspeaks-2019-final-report/>

8. Conference Board of Canada. May 2018. <https://www.conferenceboard.ca/hcp/provincial/innovation.aspx>

9. Research Canada Submission to House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance, August 12, 2010.

2

WE NEED FURTHER SUPPORT FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF SCIENTISTS – DOCTORAL TRAINEES, POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWS (PDFS) AND EARLY-CAREER RESEARCHERS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE ACADEMIA.

A robust economy relies on a vibrant innovation ecosystem, which in turn is dependent on a critical mass of health and other researchers. Highly qualified and innovative people – whose training is delivered in Canada’s universities, hospitals and research institutes – are vital to each stage within the innovation cycle.

Advancing Canada’s international competitiveness depends on developing researchers who have full confidence in Canada as the best place to build their careers. This starts with internationally competitive, direct financial support for budding researchers. We welcome the \$114 million in Budget 2019 to create more master’s level and three-year doctoral scholarship awards through the Canada Graduate Scholarship program. Yet this investment falls short of the one proposed by the Fundamental Science Review (\$140 million per year over four years) and misses an opportunity to better support post-doctoral candidates both during their training and as they transition to academic or other scientific careers. Canadians agree: 9 out of 10 believe federal and provincial governments should be investing in the education and training of our health and medical researchers.¹⁰

This support for young researchers must continue as they launch into their own research programs or begin their professional work in private industry. At the same time, these additional investments, coupled with the support for established scientists through the Canada Research Chairs and the Canada Excellence in Research Chairs programs, are not a replacement for a continuum of career-development programs that protect our human capital at every stage of professional growth. Sustainable funding models for salary

support for health researchers are urgently required if we are to support and advance our pool of talent for business innovation and productivity growth.

Programs that boost the capacity for training highly qualified Canadians overall must be increased – recognizing at the same time, however, the importance of balancing investment in salary support, infrastructure and operating grants.¹¹



9 out of 10 Canadians consider it important that
**federal and provincial governments
invest in the education and training of
health and medical researchers**

3

THE “INDIRECT” COSTS OF RESEARCH ARE **REAL** COSTS AND MUST BE FULLY FUNDED.

It is imperative that government fund the **full costs of research** in Canada. Research funding provided through Canada’s granting councils is generally limited to direct project costs. But maintaining research spaces and equipment, meeting regulatory and technical standards and providing central technical and administrative supports are all indirect costs typically borne by the hosting institution. These costs continue to outstrip academic institutions’ available resources and are placing the sustainability of research operations—and our ability to deliver on the potential of research grants, talent and capacity—in jeopardy.

The full costs of research have been funded in the low 20% range (as part of the total cost of research) by the federal Research Support Fund (RSF),¹² which received some additional support in Budget 2018. However, this still falls short of the Fundamental Science Review’s call to increase funding for indirect costs 40%.¹³ Research Canada has joined the research community in recommending the government increase the minimum threshold for reimbursement of indirect research costs to 25% for all institutions via the RSF.

10. Ibid.

11. Research Canada’s Response to Questions from the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance, 2012.

12. Advisory Panel for the Review of Federal Support for Fundamental Science. *Investing in Canada’s Future*, P. 147

13. Ibid. P. 149

4

INDIGENOUS HEALTH RESEARCH REQUIRES CONTINUED INVESTMENT.

Research into Indigenous health is key to alleviating the disproportionate burden of disease and disability carried by Indigenous Peoples, supporting strong Indigenous communities, and advancing the hard work of decolonization and reconciliation. Findings from this research hold lessons many others in Canada can learn from too. For example, many Indigenous communities face particularly grave threats from the damage wrought by climate change because of their close ties to the land. These communities, which have lived sustainably and responsibly from the land for millennia, are applying traditional knowledge to preserve and protect their habitats and build resilience, setting an example in the fight against climate change.

Continued investment into Indigenous health research speaks to the importance of stepping up efforts to build the research evidence that is crucial to improving the health status of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. Budget 2018 committed \$1.5 billion towards Indigenous health initiatives and a further \$3.8 million via the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) to develop a strategic plan identifying new ways of undertaking research with Indigenous communities. Budget 2019 indicated that increases to the Canada Research Chairs program should ensure that Indigenous researchers are represented among recipients. We encourage continued and further investments into Indigenous health research and Indigenous health researchers, as well as into the research bodies and programs that underpin them, contributing to valuable discoveries for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples alike. Colleges and institutes, for example, are the main provider of post-secondary education among Indigenous communities, and therefore should be supported in the important role they play in Indigenous post-secondary education.

Since 2013, the Iniikokaan (Buffalo Lodge) Centre at Bow Valley College has supported Indigenous students in their learning by providing the opportunity to reconnect with traditional teachings and celebrate with a broader community. Colleges across Canada, like Bow Valley, are major providers of post-secondary education to Indigenous students, offering multiple pathways to careers in research. The Iniikokaan Centre helps Indigenous students throughout their academic journey, through elder counselling, academic support services and access to a gathering space to study and connect with their own culture.¹⁴

5

GOVERNMENT MUST SHOW CONSISTENT SUPPORT WITHIN AND ACROSS DEPARTMENTS FOR A THRIVING, LEADING-EDGE HEALTH AND BIOSCIENCES SECTOR.

The commercialization of scientific discovery is often seen as the terminal step of the research-to-innovation process, but this view is inaccurate. As part of the research and innovation ecosystem, the health and biosciences sector feeds back to the other parts of the system, providing opportunities for experiential learning for graduate students* and jobs for the deep talent pool emerging from Canada's academic institutions, ready to contribute their knowledge and skills to Canada's innovation economy. All told, Canada's pharmaceutical industry employs 34,000 highly skilled workers.¹⁵ It gives back into the health research and innovation ecosystem through its more than \$1 billion investment in Canadian research and development.

At the same time, the health and biosciences sector depends on the ecosystem to set the necessary conditions for a robust and receptive local market that values and rewards its innovations, further fuelling private sector investment in continued R&D. There is great potential, and the Health and Biosciences Economic Strategy Table has said as much with its proposal to double the size of the sector by 2025. But it will wither unless policymakers and Parliamentarians adopt and stick to a whole-of-government approach that achieves policy coherence within and across departments. There is a distance to go, given that Canada only attracts about one per cent of foreign investment into the global life sciences industry.¹⁶

** For example, Mitacs works with companies and universities to build partnerships that support industrial and social innovation in Canada. Through its various research and policy programs, students and postdoctoral fellows are able to gain first-hand experience in the workplace, learning how to apply the skills they have developed throughout their academic careers in a professional setting.*

14. Iniikokaan Centre, Bow Valley College. <https://bowvalleycollege.ca/student-resources/student-life/iniikokaan-centre>

15. Innovative Medicines Canada. Retrieved from website: <http://innovativemedicines.ca/innovation/industry-impact/>

16. Ibid.

“Roche continues to grow its footprint in Canada with the establishment of four global hubs at our Mississauga site.

This expansion is a testament to our skilled and talented workforce and offers tremendous opportunity to solidify Canada’s reputation as a life sciences hub.”

- MR. RONNIE MILLER, PRESIDENT & CEO
HOFFMANN-LA ROCHE LTD.

A whole-of-government approach was missing with the PMPRB pricing restriction proposals last spring, which could discourage foreign investment, driving it elsewhere, taking valuable highly skilled jobs with it and depriving Canadian patients of access to cutting-edge treatments. Moreover, it is an example of what can happen when the perspectives of all stakeholders within the health innovation ecosystem are not fully considered. Patient advocacy organizations spoke loudly about their dissatisfaction with the PMPRB consultation process and their concerns that the vulnerable populations they represent risk losing access to cutting-edge treatments that might improve and extend their lives under the proposed changes.¹⁷ Costs to the healthcare system need to be defined not only as dollars and cents, but in terms of the long-term value patients, caregivers and providers will derive from better health and improved social and economic wellbeing.

ADVOCACY MESSAGES

The unprecedented investments Canada has made and the initiatives it has taken in support of health research and innovation are poised to unleash the full potential of the Canadian research enterprise. We have all the ingredients to become a top-tier nation. But we will dilute and negate the value of these positive steps if the prevailing, highly fragmented approaches government uses to create and implement policy do not change.

The following advocacy messages are intended to summarize our positions succinctly to aspiring government representatives when it comes to research and innovation policy:



Federal policy must recognize the interdependent and interconnected nature of the complete research and innovation enterprise. Its policymaking processes must evolve to reflect and support that ecosystem. A whole-of-government approach is essential to ensuring taxpayer-funded investments hit their targets.



Budget 2018 was a landmark reinvestment into Canadian research and innovation. But Canada remains significantly outpaced internationally and there is much more to do to catch up and lead. Canada must stay focused and continue to reinvest in the Tri-Council, support our next generation of scientists and fund the full costs of research.



We encourage government leaders and representatives to continue to promote research and innovation initiatives that address the needs and ambitions of those who have been historically underrepresented within and by it – Indigenous Peoples, women, veterans and those of diverse abilities and gender, ethnic and cultural identities.



Canada must exhibit strong leadership and consistency with respect to its health and biosciences sector. It must create a regulatory regime that promotes rather than inhibits investment, understanding that such investment ultimately feeds back into the entire research and innovation ecosystem and creates a net benefit to patients, the health system, the knowledge workforce, and the social and economic wellbeing of all Canadians.

17. See Canadian Organization for Rare Disorders and Myeloma Canada open letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau regarding PMPRB Regulations, April 8, 2019. <https://www.raredisorders.ca/open-letter-to-prime-minister-justin-trudeau-regarding-pmprb-regulations/>

QUESTIONS TO FEDERAL CANDIDATES AND ANSWERS FOR ADVOCATES

Q

POLICY QUESTIONS FOR FEDERAL CANDIDATES

- Does your party support increased investments in the Canadian Institutes of Health Research's (CIHR) budget to advance health research?
- Does it also support increasing the budgets of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council?
- Does your party support increased investments in doctoral trainees and post-doctoral fellows?
- Does your party support increased support for Indigenous health researchers and for women health researchers?
- Does your party support the development of public policies that catalyze health and biosciences sector investments in Canadian health R&D?
- If your party is elected, will you form a government that signals Canada is a science and innovation nation?

A

RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKED

Why should I be concerned about health research when my constituents are more worried about the economy and healthcare?

Health research is already tackling some of this country's greatest health and health system challenges. Health research provides us with the evidence we require to decrease wait times and provide better access to health services and treatment. We cannot improve our health system without the knowledge we acquire from research that allows us to make informed decisions about new interventions and innovative system strategies. This evidence can only come from research that is rigorous, integrated and based on fact. Research helps to ensure a health system that is adaptable, responsive, innovative, cost-effective and accountable. It also contributes to economic efficiency by identifying practices and interventions which are not adding value and should be discontinued.

Secondly, health research provides the means to test the effectiveness of new treatments, first in controlled environments, through clinical trials, then in actual use, through ongoing surveillance. It also helps to prevent disease by teaching us more about the factors that increase the probability of illness and our susceptibility to disease.

How can your organization ask for an increase in public investment in health research when there has been a substantial increase in your sector over the past several years? What about other priorities for government?

Canada has made a significant commitment to health research over a decade and a half. The health research community sincerely appreciates Budget 2018's announcement of an unprecedented investment in Canada's research system. This nearly \$4 billion commitment recognized the central role of the Canadian research enterprise in driving economic growth, enabling innovation and producing a highly skilled, competitive workforce. Budget 2019 further strengthened the federal government's commitment to the research environment and a highly skilled workforce—the cornerstones of a globally competitive knowledge economy. However, as encouraged as we are, Research Canada remains concerned about the impact of previous underinvestment on our next generation of fundamental science research. Canada has not only

trailed the OECD average for research and development intensity and growth but fallen further behind. As Canada works to reverse its previous course, the rest of the world is only gaining further momentum.

The health research community wants to make sure that the promised reinvestment has the best chance of propelling Canada forward through an extraordinarily competitive environment, rather than merely stabilizing the status quo. This includes funding the full costs of research. It includes building a research system that recognizes the criticality and vitality of Indigenous health research informed directly by Indigenous communities. And it means supporting and encouraging the skilled employment opportunities provided by Canada's health and biosciences industry.

Where do Canadians stand on the money being spent on health research?

Canadians have not wavered in their commitment to the importance of supporting health and medical research because they recognize the benefits it can bring to our health and to our economy. Canadians are increasingly convinced that Canada should be a global leader in health and medical research, according to a survey on health research and health innovation released in the spring of 2019 by six leading national health organizations.¹⁸ A majority of Canadians say they are still willing to pay out of pocket to support health and medical research and to pay more taxes for Canadian-made health science innovations and technologies.

The survey, **CanadaSpeaks! 2019** updates the results from landmark surveys in 2006, 2009 and 2015.

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS



An overwhelming majority of Canadians (86%) are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports increased funding for health and medical research, a rate of support consistent with four years ago (84%).



Canadians are increasingly convinced that Canada and their province should be global leaders in health and medical research (91% of Canadians say Canada should be a global leader in health research while 86% say that their province should be a national leader).



91% of Canadians say that health and medical research makes an important contribution to the healthcare system while 81% of Canadians say that health and medical research makes an important contribution to the economy.



9 out of 10 Canadians agree that basic research is necessary and should be supported by the federal government.



6 out of 10 of Canadians are willing to pay out of pocket for new health and medical research projects and would be willing to pay \$1 more a week in taxes if they knew the revenues would pay for government investment in Canadian-made health science innovations and technologies.

18. The Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada, the Health Charities Coalition of Canada, HealthCareCAN, Innovative Medicines Canada, Medtech Canada and Research Canada

Why should I make health research and health innovation my priorities?

The benefits of health research are the priorities of Canadians: improved health, an efficient and sustainable health system and a prosperous economy that creates jobs.

Canadians hold their healthcare system near and dear to their hearts. Health research will be critical to facing the most pressing challenges we are currently facing in our healthcare system.

HEALTH RESEARCH

- Provides the evidence that facilitates sound decision-making and provides governments with the information required to develop sound public policy
- Provides the healthcare system with the tools it needs to effectively diagnose and treat Canadians when they become ill
- Provides the means to test the effectiveness of new treatments; first in controlled environments, through clinical trials, then in actual use, through ongoing surveillance
- Supports the development of the most efficacious and cost-effective means of delivering healthcare services to Canadians

The return on Canada's investment in health research is measured not only in terms of health, but also in terms of wealth.

THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA'S INVESTMENT IN HEALTH RESEARCH IS UNDERPINNING THE INNOVATION AGENDA BY:

- Providing the foundation for spin-off companies that supply important health services and products to Canadians while generating economic growth and creating jobs
- Fostering partnerships with the health and biosciences and voluntary sectors that are leveraging the federal investment, integrating all partners into the development and implementation of strategic agendas for health research and maximizing the impact of health research dollars
- Providing Canada with skilled graduates who are equipped with advanced levels of training, knowledge and expertise
- Repatriating Canadian researchers from abroad and attracting distinguished foreign researchers to Canada, where their discoveries will benefit Canadians
- Creating a brighter future for Canada's youth, Indigenous Peoples and women by providing opportunities to harness their energy and creativity in becoming the next generation of health researchers

CONCLUSION

The campaign to implement the recommendations of the Fundamental Science Review proved that concerted and unified advocacy on the part of the research community works. Budget 2018 achieved unprecedented investment into the research and innovation enterprise. But we know we have further to go. **Using this Primer and the accompanying resources for successful advocacy, our Members will be part of a second wave movement to ensure that Canada is set on a course to become a leading science and innovation nation.** Together, we can help our next Parliament understand the importance of seeing our health innovation ecosystem from research to commercialization as an integrated whole, rather than a collection of independent parts and processes, and what it needs to translate the discoveries of today into the life-changing applications of tomorrow.



About Research Canada:

Research Canada is a national alliance dedicated to advancing health research and health innovation through collaborative advocacy. Our mission is to improve the health and prosperity of all Canadians by championing Canada's global leadership in health research and innovation.

Thank you

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AstraZeneca is a global, innovation-driven biopharmaceutical business with a primary focus on the discovery, development and commercialization of primary and specialty care medicines that transform lives. Our primary focus is on three important areas of healthcare: Cardiovascular and Metabolic disease; Oncology; and Respiratory, Inflammation and Autoimmunity. For more information: www.astrazeneca.ca.



Consumer Health Products Canada is the industry association representing the companies that make evidence-based over-the-counter medicines and natural health products. These are the products you can find in medicine cabinets in every Canadian home. We work to shape a policy and regulatory environment that recognizes self-care as vital to the health of Canadians and the sustainability of our healthcare system. This ensures that Canadians have access to safe and effective products for their health.



Diabetes Canada is the registered national charitable organization that is making the invisible epidemic of diabetes visible and urgent. Diabetes Canada partners with Canadians to End Diabetes through:

- Resources for health-care professionals on best practices to care for people with diabetes;
- Advocacy to governments, schools and workplaces; and
- Funding world-leading Canadian research to improve treatments and find a cure.

Diabetes Canada is urging candidates in all parties to support the Diabetes 360° strategy to help urgently address the diabetes epidemic. For more information, visit diabetes.ca/strategy.



Innovative Medicines Canada is the national voice of Canada's innovative pharmaceutical industry. We advocate for policies that enable the discovery, development and commercialization of innovative medicines and vaccines that improve the lives of all Canadians. We support our members' commitment to being valued partners in the Canadian healthcare system.



BRIGHTER WORLD

