

STATEMENT

Rx&D reacts to Quebec's new drug policy

Québec, February 1, 2007 – Philip Blake, Chairman of the Board of Directors of *Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D)* and President and CEO of Bayer Inc., and Jérôme Silvestre, Chairman of Rx&D's Quebec Committee and President of sanofi-aventis Canada, issued the following statement following the unveiling of the Quebec Government's new drug policy.

“*Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D)* has noted with interest today's announcement by the Quebec Government of its new drug policy. The policy not only recognizes the role new medicines play in the province's health-care system but acknowledges the important contribution a dynamic pharmaceutical industry makes to the people of Quebec,” stated Mr. Blake.

“As a key partner in Quebec health care, we believe better access to new medicines is essential for patients. New medicines and vaccines not made available to patients are lost opportunities to improve patients' health outcomes. In addition, innovative drugs represent one of the most cost-effective interventions in our health-care system by avoiding unnecessary surgery or hospitalization. Innovative medicines represent less than 10 cents of each health-care dollar invested in Quebec,” added Mr. Blake.

Over a 20-year period, new drugs have contributed to a significant reduction in hospitalization and mortality rates in Canada. Hospitalizations related to ulcers, respiratory diseases and diabetes have fallen by 66, 44 and 39 per cent respectively. The number of deaths attributable to heart attacks has decreased by 64 per cent.

Addressing the issue of optimal therapy, Mr. Silvestre declared, “Our community has also noted the importance the new policy gives to the optimal use of medicines. If the drug is available, but underused or overused, patients will not obtain the expected benefits of the therapy prescribed by their health professional.

“Two pillars of the policy – access and optimal use – also support a third: the capacity to generate fair and equitable returns on investment for our community.

“Over the past 12 years, the research-based pharmaceutical community has been restricted by a measure that prevented it from increasing prices to cover inflation notwithstanding the fact that, since 1994, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has increased 22 per cent. By addressing this issue under its new policy, the province sends a positive signal to our community that will encourage further the research and development of new therapies for patients.

STATEMENT

“The research-based pharmaceutical community in Quebec makes a significant commitment to the province by generating direct jobs and significant spinoff employment for Quebecers. At present, our community generates over 50,000 direct and indirect jobs in Quebec and contributes more than \$2 billion dollars to the provincial economy,” added Mr. Silvestre.

“Quebec must aspire to be nothing less than a world leader in biopharmaceutical R&D,” observed Mr. Blake. The province’s new drug policy is a step in this direction. By taking this step, our community will do its part to help support this endeavour. Quebec has the expertise and infrastructure to help achieve this aspiration.”

- 30 -

Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D) is an association of members dedicated to improving the health of all Canadians. As partner of the health-care system, our discoveries help eliminate the need for medical procedures such as surgery, which have a significant impact on patient quality of life and health-care budgets. Our community represents over 22,000 men and women working for 50 member companies in Canada, including over 10,500 in Quebec.

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