

PRESS RELEASE

QUEBEC'S DRAFT DRUG POLICY: A PRELIMINARY REACTION FROM RX&D

Ottawa, December 16, 2004 - *Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D)* are encouraged by the draft drug policy presented today by Quebec's Minister of Health and Social Services.

"The pharmaceutical research industry is a partner of the first rank not only in health but in the Quebec economy as well. The four lines of approach identified by the Minister of Health may lead to a renewed partnership between our industry and the Government of Quebec," declared Rx&D president Russell Williams.

The draft policy outlined today demonstrates the readiness of the government to address the problem of better access to drugs and their optimal use in the best interests of patients. Rx&D has supported and will continue to support this access to discoveries in the field of health for all Quebecers, and within the optimal framework for patients.

"We are cautiously encouraged by the initiatives indicated by the government and when we have given them a fuller analysis our community will be in a position to share additional comments to spell out its position. We welcome the opportunity given us to draw up recommendations for the parliamentary committee that begins hearings in March," Russell Williams added.

The drug policy testifies to the importance of the industry's Code of Conduct. "The members of Rx&D aim for the highest standards and our code will continue to evolve to reflect that commitment in partnership with Quebec's Minister of Health," Russell Williams said. As a world leader, the research-based industry is proud of what it has accomplished in adopting a code of ethics.

Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D) is an association whose members are committed to the improvement of Canadians' health. As a partner in the health system, our discoveries make it possible to eliminate medical procedures such as surgery, which have a significant impact on patients' quality of life and health services budgets. Our community represents more than 24,000 men and women working for some 54 member companies in Canada, 12,000 of them in Quebec.

- 30 -

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