

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Symposium on the optimum use of medication: patient welfare must come first according to Rx&D**

**Ottawa – May 20, 2004** - *Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D)* are hoping that the symposium on the optimum use of medication, which is taking place in Québec, will guide the government in its future policy on medication and patient welfare.

The Quebec pharmaceutical research community praises such an exercise, and feels that discussion is necessary. "The objective of the symposium must be well defined. This is why we support optimum use of medication on the same grounds as we support optimum patient access to medication," said Russell Williams, president of Rx&D.

Medication remains one of the most effective and least expensive ways of treating patients. Studies show that every dollar invested in research for new medications makes it possible to avoid seven times greater health care expenditures. And for every dollar invested in health in the country, only 6.5 cents go for prescriptions for patented medications. Various factors such as an aging population and the treatment of new diseases explain the increase in medication expenditures in Quebec.

The symposium is also provides the pharmaceutical research community with an opportunity to reaffirm its partnership with the government.

"Quebec is a key player in the field of pharmaceuticals since more than half of the companies in Canada are located here, representing more than 30 000 direct and indirect jobs. Quebec cannot, therefore, afford to miss the technological rendez vous of the 21st century, for it is closely linked to the welfare of the population. Status quo in pharmaceutical innovation is not an option," concluded Russell Williams.

Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D) is an association whose members are committed to improving the health of all Canadians. As a partner in the health care system, our discoveries make it possible to eliminate medical interventions (such as surgery) that have a significant impact on the quality of patients' lives and on health care budgets. Our community represents over 24 000 men and women working in some 54 member companies in Canada.

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