

## NEWS RELEASE

### **Speech from the Throne: health innovation includes pharmaceutical innovation**

**Ottawa, April 5, 2006** – *Canada's Research Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D)* welcomes the health innovation initiative outlined in yesterday's Speech from the Throne that will see the federal government work with the provinces and territories on a patient wait times guarantee for medically necessary services.

Rx&D President Russell Williams is pleased that the Throne Speech declared that "a health system that is timely and sustainable will require innovation."

Mr. Williams stated that "health care innovation includes pharmaceutical innovation. New medicines and vaccines developed by the research-based pharmaceutical community can help the federal government meet its commitment with the provinces and territories."

Also, "new medicines and vaccines play a key role in helping to reduce wait times," continued Mr. Williams. "Innovative medicines and vaccines are part and parcel of Canada's health-care solution. They provide better, more cost-effective health care that result in improved patient health outcomes."

Pharmaceutical therapy has been an important factor in reducing the hospitalization rate by 35 % since 1985, despite an aging population. In addition, mortality rates have plunged by as much as 70% over the past two decades, whether it is heart, lung, liver disease, or HIV/AIDS.

The value and cost-effectiveness new medicines and vaccines bring to Canada's health care system has resulted in patients living longer lives, having a better quality of life, and returning to work sooner.

Patented prescription medicines are also a sound investment accounting for less than seven cents out of every dollar invested in health care in Canada. In addition, the Canadian Institute of Health Information has found that provinces that provide the greatest access to pharmaceuticals for patients also spend the least in terms of total health care spending.

A study by Columbia University found that each dollar invested in new medicines prevents expenditures seven times greater in other medical areas. About 2/3 of this reduction is in hospital costs and the other 1/3 is in physician and home care costs

"Our community stands ready to work with governments, health-care professionals and stakeholders to ensure patients have access to innovative life-saving therapies that will result in reduced wait times for medically necessary services," concluded Mr. Williams.

*Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D)* is an association of members dedicated to improving the health of Canadians. As a 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 more than 22,000 men and women working for 50 member companies in Canada.

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### Key Facts

#### INNOVATIVE PHARMACEUTICALS IMPROVE CARE IN WAIT TIMES TARGETS

##### Cardiac Care

- One-third of patients who take thrombolytics, or clot-busters, within three hours of a stroke, now recover to normal or near normal status.
- Since the 1960s, a range of medicines, including diuretics, beta-blockers, calcium channel blockers, ACE inhibitors, have lowered high blood pressure conditions.
- Cholesterol reducing drugs called statins have reduced the incidence of heart attacks due to high cholesterol by one-quarter to one-third.

##### Cancer Care

- 80% of children diagnosed with leukemia each year are living five years after diagnosis as opposed to almost none 40 years ago.
- Innovative medicine has reduced early stage breast cancer recurrence by 50%.
- Pharmaceuticals treat other affects of cancer and cancer treatment, through anti-nausea medications, long-acting analgesics and bisphosphonate to reduce bone fractures and bone pain from chemotherapy.

##### Knee and Hip Surgery Care

- Next to injury, arthritis is the leading cause of hip and knee surgeries.
- According to the Arthritis Society of Canada, "some forms of arthritis, such as gout, can be completely controlled with medications," and "...most forms of arthritis can be controlled in large part by medication."
- Non-surgical interventions, including pharmaceuticals, are preventing disfigurement and the need for surgical intervention while making arthritis more bearable for patients.

For further information:

François Lessard  
Communications  
(613) 236-0455, Ext. 327