



# **Funding Health Research to Restart the Economy and Supporting Culturally Safe Disease Prevention and Health Care Delivery**

**Submission for the 2021 Pre-Budget Consultations**

**August 7, 2020**

## Recommendations

1. AFMC recommends that the Government of Canada address the industry's highly qualified personnel deficit through \$20 million per year funding for an expansion of the depth and breadth of entrepreneur, management, and business training streams for Canada's health research graduate students.
2. AFMC is asking the Government of Canada to make new investments of \$80 million per year for translational research and operating grants to take fundamental discoveries to pre-clinical "proof of concept" studies then to early stage "first in human" clinical trials.
3. AFMC is asking the government of Canada for \$4 million over three years to fund an Indigenous-led AFMC project that will create bilingual educational and research contexts, tools and resources that lead to anti-racist and culturally safe health care delivery and prevention.

## **Executive Summary**

The Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC) is the academic partnership of Canada's 17 Faculties of Medicine. An overarching goal of the AFMC is to ensure better health for Canadians through both disease prevention and healthcare delivery.

### **Supporting Health Research to Restart the Economy**

Research dollars spent by Canada's faculties of medicine grow the economy and seek to improve health care outcomes for their citizens and the world. AFMC recommends that the Government of Canada address the health-related industry's highly qualified personnel deficit through \$20 million per year funding for an expansion of the depth and breadth of entrepreneur, management, and business training streams for Canada's health research graduate students. AFMC is also asking the Government of Canada to make new investments of \$80 million per year for translational research and operating grants to take fundamental discoveries from pre-clinical "proof of concept" studies to early stage "first in human" clinical trials. One of the lessons of the pandemic is that we must be able to rapidly mobilize our capabilities to translate discoveries quickly and effectively from the laboratory to the clinic. A very public example of this is the partnerships between Oxford University and AstraZeneca. They are proof that collaboration between academic medicine and industry leads to ground breaking discoveries. The goal should be to create this type of partnership in Canada.

### **Supporting Culturally Safe Disease Prevention and Health Care Delivery**

AFMC seeks to improve the health and well-being of Indigenous people by creating educational and research contexts, tools and resources that lead to culturally safe disease prevention and health care delivery. AFMC is asking the Government of Canada to fund the development and implementation of bilingual Undergraduate and Postgraduate Medical Education curriculum and associated tools in Indigenous health with a core focus on cultural safety, anti-colonialism and anti-racism. This curriculum will prepare physicians for anti-racist, culturally safe independent practice.

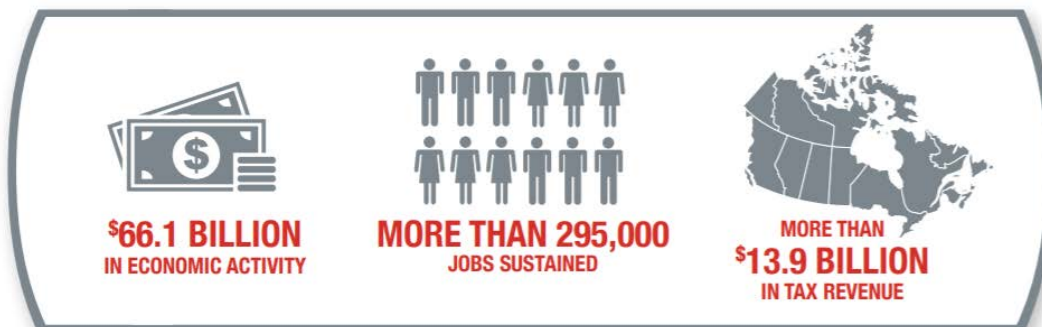
## Supporting Health Research to Restart the Economy

Of the over \$250 billion invested in health care per year, less than 2% is spent on research and innovation. Sixty percent of that research and innovation is conducted within Academic Health Science Networks, in which Faculties of Medicine play pivotal roles as centralized catalyst elements. In fiscal year 2017/18, the 17 Faculties of Medicine received a total of \$3 billion in research revenues. Collectively, doctors and scientists not only provide patient-partnered care and teach the next generation of doctors and scientists but also do research that leads to ground breaking discoveries, new drugs, vaccines, treatments, devices, tests, and systems. Research dollars spent by Canada's faculties of medicine grow the economy by creating employment at different levels and stimulating entrepreneurship while seeking to improve disease prevention and health care outcomes for their citizens and the world. Health systems research improves our ability to manage the system and set-up structures that lead to improved health care delivery while reducing the cost of health care.

In June 2013, the AFMC retained Tripp Umbach to measure the [economic impact of the 17 Canadian faculties of medicine](#) on individual provinces in which they are located and operate, as well as on the nation as a whole. The report revealed:

- \$66.1 billion in total economic impact generated by Canada's Faculties of Medicine and their affiliated teaching hospitals. This represents 3.5% of GDP in Canada.
- There are more than 295,000 Faculty of Medicine and affiliated teaching hospital supported jobs throughout Canada.
- One in 60 jobs in the country is attributable to academic medicine. This represents 1.7% of all employment in the country.

### AFMC TOTAL IMPACT OF CANADA'S FACULTIES OF MEDICINE AND AFFILIATED TEACHING HOSPITALS, FY 12/13



More than \$13.9 billion in government revenue is generated as a result of academic medicine. Canada's faculties of medicine have substantial economic and social impacts on their regions and within the cities where they operate. According to a national public opinion poll conducted by Maru/Blue in 2019, nine out of 10 of Canadians consider that health and medical research makes an important contribution to the healthcare system while a strong majority (81%) think it makes an important contribution to the economy. Communities in all regions of the country typically rely on these

organizations for job creation, high-quality medical care, advanced research, new business development, and education of medical professionals and scientists.

AFMC is recommending that the Government of Canada promotes growth of new knowledge, Canadian intellectual property and expand our health and biosciences industry to restart the Canadian economy. AFMC specifically recommends:

- **Developing tomorrow's Canadian health and bioscience industry leaders** by addressing industry's highly qualified personnel deficit through \$20 million per year funding for an expansion of the depth and breadth of entrepreneur, management, and business training streams for Canada's health research graduate students. This will ensure that highly qualified young Canadians have the skills to succeed outside academia and foster collaboration and innovation with the industry sector.
- Strengthening the technology transfer pipeline for development of Canadian innovations through **new investments of \$80 million per year for translational research and operating grants** to take fundamental discoveries to pre-clinical "proof of concept" studies then to early stage "first in human" clinical trials.

AFMC would like to thank the Government of Canada for the recent investments for COVID-19 Research and Testing as well as its investments to extend expiring federal graduate research scholarships and post-doctoral fellowships.

### **Supporting Culturally Safe Disease Prevention and Health Care Delivery**

AFMC released the [Joint Commitment to Action on Indigenous Health](#) in May 2019. This report provides a roadmap for concrete institutional change that will best enable Canadian medical schools to respond to the TRC Calls to Action and fulfill their social accountability mandates with respect to Indigenous health.

There are ten actions in the report which focus on building meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities, increasing the number of Indigenous physicians, fostering a better learning environment for Indigenous people as well as developing Indigenous health curriculum.

Cultural safety and humility in the health care system is an important priority for the health portfolio. The need for the health care system to be safe and respond to the needs of all who access it is clear, but it is especially important for Indigenous Peoples. Ensuring that Indigenous Peoples access care that is culturally safe begins with a systemic change led by Indigenous voices on how medical professionals are instructed and evaluated. The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Indigenous communities and health crises that have risen in tandem, such as the increase in Sexually Transmitted and Blood-borne Infections (STBBIs) and overdose events, have increased interactions of Indigenous Peoples with the health care system. This system must respond to the needs of Indigenous Peoples in an anti-racist, culturally safe way.

AFMC is asking the government of Canada for \$4 million over three years to fund an AFMC project led by Indigenous health leaders that will enhance the education of physicians and create bilingual educational and research contexts, tools and resources that lead to culturally safe health care delivery.

With appropriate resourcing and national level collaboration with professional colleges, this new project will enable curricular renewal with incorporation of an anti-racist/ anti-colonial framework for medical education. Additional tools such as guidelines for course evaluation and student assessment, and building appropriate supports for faculty and students given the known challenges of implementing anti-racist education would also be addressed within this project.

Funding Indigenous-led solutions in health care education, disease prevention and service delivery supports many federal priorities including responses to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights on Indigenous, the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions Calls to Action, and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice.

## **Conclusion**

AFMC would like to thank the Finance Committee for the privilege of providing a submission. Members of our faculties of medicine provide health care to patients every day, they educate and train the physicians and scientists who will serve tomorrow's population, and they drive health research and innovation to improve the health Canadians. Canada's faculties of medicine and their health science partners play a crucial role in communities' and provinces' health and economic wellbeing. We would welcome the opportunity to provide further information and rationale for each recommendation and to present to the Committee in person.