



August 25, 2020

Standing Committee on Finance
House of Commons
Ottawa K1A 0A6

Re: Edmonton Global Federal Pre-Budget Submission: The Road to Recovery - Turning Disruption into Opportunity

To the Chair and Members of the Committee:

The Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists is the national organization representing thousands of pharmacy professionals in hospitals and other collaborative health care settings in Canada. In the last six months, Canada's drug supply challenges have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Although not new, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for Canada to examine a made in Canada solution that is not subject to the disruptions inherent in the global supply chain.

Every day hospital pharmacists see shortages of critical medications, including essential drugs used in ORs, ERs, ICUs and palliative care wards. Although at this time we are seeing fewer COVID-19 patients, the pandemic has been placing a heavy burden on the drug supply, where patients often require weeks' worth of treatment on ventilators. The shortages of these drugs imperil the lives of patients seeking care all over the country. Currently, the vast majority (24/32) of the drugs on Health Canada's own [Tier 3 list](#), which represents drugs for which there are no suitable alternatives, are essential for treating COVID-19. With the likely upcoming second wave in Canada, the potential for further exacerbation of these shortages is inevitable unless we implement rigorous preparedness measures.

As a participant on many Tier Assignment Committees, CSHP fully supports Health Canada's active efforts to resolve current or projected shortages of critical drugs. Short-term deficits will likely be resolved through this mechanism and importing from all available suppliers. Yet, over the longer term, Canada's access to these essential but imported drugs could again be at risk due to the global spread of COVID-19.

An important antidote to perpetual drug shortages is the development of capacity by Canadian-based and controlled drug manufacturers. To that end, the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists supports the efforts of Applied Pharmaceutical Innovation (API), an Alberta-based not-for-profit organization, to build Canadian capacity to produce a significantly higher volume of drugs to meet Canadian shortages as well as to take on innovator projects in the longer run. Since the core focus of API is to address the translational capacity gap in drug development that exists for companies as they move along their commercial development and to attract life sciences investment to Canada through innovative partnerships with public and industry participation, API presents an opportunity that can address Canada's long term need for safe, available and critical medicines if it can be adequately resourced.

CSHP encourages this and other innovations that lead to better health outcomes for Canadians when they most need it.

Yours sincerely,

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President