



August 29, 2017

Infection Prevention and Control Canada

Recommendations for the 2018 Federal Budget

The health of Canadians is critically important to their productivity. Healthy people are the basis of a healthy economy and a healthy population ensures our businesses remain competitive.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Canada recommends the federal government establish and fund, including with adequate human resources support, a National Surveillance System for Antibiotic Resistant Organisms.
2. IPAC Canada also recommends the federal government provide funding actions outlined in the Federal Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance, and commit to funding recommendations stemming from the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health's study of Antimicrobial Resistance in Canada.

BACKGROUND

The World Health Organization has recently declared antimicrobial resistance to be one of the greatest threats to global health in this decade. Despite its wealth, Canada continues to have significant gaps in its ability to understand national trends in antimicrobial resistance. The lack of a national, accessible database with up-to-date information on microorganisms that have become resistant to antibiotics, the factors that led to resistance, and how to best combat them is leaving our healthcare professionals at a disadvantage to help Canadian patients. This is a problem that has to be solved proactively, because the development of antimicrobial agents is not keeping pace with the spread of antimicrobial resistance and we may not be able to mobilize a sufficient response in an emergency situation. Infection Control Professionals (ICPs) are seeing new resistance emerge and without resources for a coordinated response. As a result, patient outcomes suffer.

- The estimated annual hospital cost to combat methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is between \$42 million and \$59 million.

- Some organisms (carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae or CPE) have become resistant to almost all, and in some instances, all known antibiotics, and these bacteria are increasing in Canada
- Resistance is spreading to different types of organisms (e.g., *C. auris* is an emerging fungal pathogen that can cause invasive infections)

Canadians are fortunate to have a modern, accessible healthcare system yet geography continues to play a role in the resources available to them. It is imperative the federal government play a role in Canada-wide surveillance to ensure all Canadians are protected against the spread of infectious diseases. Antimicrobial resistance is not limited to one jurisdiction or care setting—We need a national solution. Since the United States created the National Healthcare Safety Network, which provides over 17,000 healthcare facilities with the data needed to treat and prevent healthcare-associated infections, there has been a drastic decrease in the number of infections. This decrease can best be identified in the 50 per cent decrease in central line-associated bloodstream infections between 2008 and 2014.

IPAC would appreciate having the opportunity to appear before the committee to provide testimony about the importance of funding efforts that will ensure Canadians seeking treatment across the health care spectrum are protected from the spread of disease. This of the utmost importance to supporting productivity and competitiveness in Canada.