

## Advocacy Day – March 2022

### WHO WE ARE:

Infection Prevention and Control Canada (IPAC Canada) is a national association representing over 1800 healthcare providers involved with IPAC activities throughout the health care spectrum. Our goal is to prevent infections and improve outcomes for patients, residents, clients and staff in hospitals, healthcare facilities and communities. Our members liaise with all healthcare professionals working to provide care within and across all settings. We develop effective and rational infection prevention and control (IPAC) practices, including for novel viruses like SARS-CoV-2, based on the current science and standardized IPAC practices. We promote research in these areas and aim to educate both the public and personnel in hospitals, long-term care facilities, and other institutions on infection prevention and control practices.

### WHAT WE ASK:

#### **Invest in a national, integrated surveillance system to respond quickly to all healthcare associated infections.**

- IPAC Canada recommends that Health Canada collaborate with provincial and territorial health ministries to develop a national surveillance system with consistent case definitions from coast to coast to coast. This system should be accessible to all health professionals and should include data input by Infection Prevention and Control Professionals to ensure the people keeping Canadians healthy have the most up-to-date and accurate information at their fingertips.
- Healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) are infections acquired in a healthcare setting and are the most frequently reported adverse events in healthcare delivery worldwide. To address significant rates of HAIs, it is vital that the government make a commitment to the health of Canadians by working with provincial and territorial partners in implementing a national, integrated surveillance system, in order to identify local or regional outbreaks and respond quickly and appropriately to all HAIs.

#### **Invest in resources for IPAC programs to better support Canada's systems of care, minimize future healthcare costs, and improve pandemic preparedness.**

- IPAC Canada is calling on the federal government to provide more resources to the provinces and territories to fund robust infection prevention and control activities, improve patient safety in Canada, and support our efforts to curb the rise of antibiotic resistant organisms and antimicrobial resistance—including providing additional support for long-term care, education, training, wage top-ups, and staffing.
- Budget 2021 included an investment of \$3 billion over the next five years to help provinces implement new adequate standards for long-term care (LTC). IPAC Canada commends this investment and recognizes that it will have a significant impact on improving the ability of LTC settings to mitigate infectious disease outbreaks and prepare for the next pandemic. In addition to establishing these standards, the federal government should also work with IPAC Canada to invest in specific programming, staffing, and resources for ICs in LTC settings. Improving IPAC practices in long-term care and addressing long-standing issues regarding capacity constraints and low wages is critical to protecting our most vulnerable from COVID-19 and other infections.