**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Infection Control Professional Calls for Action Before Next Pandemic**

***Urgent Action Also Needed to Combat Antimicrobial Resistance***

OTTAWA - April 29, 2024. The leadership of Infection Prevention and Control Canada (IPAC Canada) was on Parliament Hill today, calling for the federal government to take urgent action to be ready for the next pandemic. Specifically, IPAC Canada called on the federal government to make meaningful strategic direct investment in supplies, personnel, and resources dedicated to Infection Prevention and Control to improve Canada’s pandemic preparedness.

“Without significant action and consistent investment in infection prevention and control, Canada will not be fully ready for the next crisis and pandemic’, stated Colette Ouellet, President of IPAC Canada. “The consensus view of all the experts in infection prevention and control is that the federal government must act now to save future lives and future disruptions to society. These are investments not expenses.”

The leadership of IPAC Canada also urged federal officials to rely on the expertise of Infection Control Professionals (ICP) as the government builds capacity to respond to future outbreaks. “It is critical that ICP’s be consulted, so these investments are sustainable and effective,” added Ouellet.

In Canada, ICP’s are highly educated professionals from a variety of scientific and medical backgrounds who work in healthcare settings and academic institutions. ICP’s play a critical role in minimizing the spread of infectious disease in all kinds of congregate settings including hospitals, schools, and long-term care homes as well as dental settings and prisons, among others.

**COMBATTING ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE - AMR**

IPAC Canada also urged the federal government to continue investing in antimicrobial resistance (AMR) measures and research to improve surveillance of infectious diseases and support a proactive approach to prevention and control.

In June 2023, the federal government released a Pan-Canadian Action Plan on AMR, yet AMR remains a major global public health threat that is growing in Canada. Increasingly, drug-resistant microbes pose a threat to humans and animals, and are making infectious diseases harder or impossible to treat.

More work is needed to stay ahead of the evolving threats posed by AMR. The compounding effects of AMR increases the risk of Canadians developing infections that are difficult to treat. “We are seeing more severe illness, and deaths that previously could have been prevented with effective antibiotics. This creates additional burden on Canada’s healthcare system,” added Ouellet. AMR also poses a risk to Canada’s domestic food supplies, as virulent microorganisms have the potential to infect livestock and crops.

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*ABOUT IPAC CANADA*

*IPAC Canada is a not-for-profit multidisciplinary professional organization for those engaged in the prevention and control of infection across the healthcare continuum. IPAC Canada’s membership includes over 2100 ICPs with expertise in a variety of fields; from front-line care workers and administrators to educators and researchers. IPAC Canada provides members access to a wealth of evidence-based resources, education, and networking opportunities. IPAC Canada members are partners in local, provincial, and national IPAC forums. The organization’s goal is to advance infection prevention and control and create a world without preventable infections.*

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