

Swine Flu Situation Highlights Crucial Need for Sustained Dialogue on Vaccines in Canada

BIOTECanada VIC launches white paper series to promote immunization dialogue

Ottawa (April 30, 2009) – Every year, immunization against infectious diseases saves over 420,000 lives in Canada, and cost only 0.17 % of our annual health care budget. Research into vaccines for cancer, AIDS and other diseases offer significant public health benefits.

New vaccines necessitate new approaches to help introduce innovative vaccines into the market. “All Canadians can continue to benefit from vaccines developed right here by our innovative firms,” said Peter Brenders, President and CEO of BIOTECanada. “To ensure Canadians benefit from new vaccines, we need to recognise Canada’s global leadership in immunization by building a sustainable environment for the introduction of these products.”

The series, the first four papers of which were released today by the BIOTECanada Vaccine Industry Committee, offers a comprehensive look at the value, challenges and opportunities for the vaccine industry in Canada, including securing funding and regulatory approval for these lifesaving products.

“Vaccine research is one of the fastest growing areas of health innovation in Canada and globally. Within the next several years, diverse new technologies will require Canada to adopt innovative approaches to funding and delivering immunization programs for all Canadians,” said Christian Blouin, from Merck- Frosst Canada, Chair of BIOTECanada’s Vaccine Industry Committee, which commissioned the report. “We know there are challenges, but this is a time of opportunity and we look forward to building a strong Canadian immunization system together with provincial, territorial and federal government partners.”

“This collaboration offers an invaluable resource to drive awareness of the strength of Canada’s leading-edge vaccine research,” said Randall Chase, President and CEO of ImmunoVaccine Technologies. “New advances in immunization from therapeutic vaccines to adult immunization are revolutionizing this space and Canadian firms are leaders. But, to reap the rewards of these advances we need to ensure we are prepared to accept new public health, and new regulatory, models.”

The first four papers in the series examine the value of vaccines and immunization programs, and provide a series of recommendations to all participants in the vaccine field, to address all aspects of immunization including funding and regulatory challenges and opportunities facing the sector. The series is the first comprehensive work of its kind in Canada, providing a unique perspective on all aspects of vaccines from their value as a health technology, to vaccine manufacturing and the approvals process. The series is available at:

www.biotech.ca/vaccines

The series was created by the BIOTECanada Vaccine Industry Committee. This innovative industry group is a unique partnership of key parts of the vaccine supply chain, from global manufacturers, to emerging companies. The VIC aims to increase awareness of the value of vaccines, while advocating for a more efficient, enabling vaccine environment – supported by consistent and sustained funding of immunization programs in Canada. The committee also promotes high-quality vaccine research and excellence in the development, manufacturing and distribution of vaccines.



Contact: Kasia Majewski, Director of Communications
BIOTECCanada
Tel: 613-230 5585 x 257
Cell: 613 219 2770
kasia.majewski@biotech.ca

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BIOTECCanada is dedicated to the sustainable commercial development of biotechnology innovation in Canada. It is the national industry-funded association with over 250 member companies representing the broad spectrum of biotech constituents including emerging and established firms in the health, industrial, and agricultural sectors, as well as academic and research institutions and other related organizations.

