



Academic Health Sciences Centres - National Task Force
Centres des sciences de la santé universitaires - groupe de travail national

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Groundbreaking Report Provides Canada with Roadmap for Future of Academic Health Sciences Centres and Performance of Health System

OTTAWA, May 31, 2010 – A groundbreaking report – containing 8 recommendations and a series of implementation strategies – provides Canada with a roadmap for the future of its Academic Health Sciences Centres (AHSCs) to further improve the health and health care of Canadians, generate life-saving research and innovations, and provide world-class training to future clinicians.

Co-Chaired by Mr. Jeffrey Lozon (President & CEO of Revera Living, and Past-President of St. Michael's Hospital), and Dr. Jean Rouleau (Dean of Medicine, Université de Montréal) the report, titled "*Three Missions, One Future...Optimizing the Performance of Canada's Academic Health Sciences Centres*" describes Canada's AHSCs as national resources that provide global leadership in the areas of patient care, research & innovation, and training.

"Knowing that the health system continues to experience a significant amount of change, we believe it is incumbent on the leadership of AHSCs across the country to take stock and reflect on their roles and responsibilities. More particularly, now is the time for AHSCs and their provincial, territorial and national partners in health care delivery to consider new organizational structures and processes that will assist them in optimizing their performance across the tripartite mission to benefit all Canadians", said Mr. Jeff Lozon.

"Through their strategic focus on innovation and the application of research into practice, AHSCs have the potential to ensure that the health system remains accessible and flexible, and can rapidly adapt to changing health needs while placing it on a firmer fiscal foundation for the future. Their impact is not only local, regional and provincial/territorial, but national, if not global", said Dr. Jean Rouleau.

The eight recommendations in the report include the evolution of Academic Health Sciences Centres into Academic Health Sciences Networks (AHSNs) – which reflects the emergence of new healthcare organizations with broad regional responsibilities for health and health care, combined with emerging trends in academic medicine such as distributed medical education, *e*-Learning, and collaborative inter-professional models of care across a broader range of organizations and institutions.

The AHSN would be expected to lead in the development, coordination, integration and dissemination of new knowledge and innovative and cost-effective leading practices across a broader continuum of care.

The recommendations also focus on the importance of establishing more effective governance mechanisms *across* universities and academic healthcare organizations (e.g., teaching & research hospitals, academic provincial and regional health authorities and others), in addition to building more consultative inter-ministerial mechanisms *between* academic health sciences networks and provincial and territorial governments, and the federal government.



“If AHSNs are to optimize their performance, we must find ways to work more closely with provincial and territorial governments, and where appropriate, with the federal government. At the same time, there is a significant responsibility on AHSNs to improve the ways in which they are organized, governed and deliver on their mission”, said Mr. Lozon.

In considering issues of funding; the National Task Force concluded that while AHSNs should be able to show the value they achieve with the funding they receive, funders must also recognize and begin to address the significant and legitimate resource problems facing AHSNs.

“We hope that this report provides a focal point for discussions about the future of Canada’s Academic Health Sciences Centres, which are “engines of health innovation”, and can play a crucial role in sustaining our health system, and advancing new innovations to the benefit of all Canadians”, said Dr. Rouleau.

The National Task Force was comprised of 19 members. The full report, in addition to background documents, can be found at the following web-site: www.ahsc-ntf.org. The National Task Force gratefully acknowledges Health Canada as the primary funding source for this project.

The establishment of a National Task Force has received support from over twenty national health organizations. To oversee the process, a Steering Committee has been created and is Co-Chaired by Mr. Glenn Brimacombe (President & CEO, Association of Canadian Academic Healthcare Organizations), and Dr. Nick Busing (President & CEO of the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada).

Additional information on the National Task Force is available at the following web-site www.ahsc-ntf.org

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For more information:

Media Contact: Mr. Beatrice Raffoul, Vice-President, Public Affairs

Telephone: (613) 233-4789

Fax: (613) 233-6158, E-mail: Raffoul@acaho.org

