

February 3, 2023

**The Honourable Travis Toews**

President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance  
208. Legislature Building  
10800 - 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Via email: [tbf.communications@gov.ab.ca](mailto:tbf.communications@gov.ab.ca)

Dear Minister Toews,

On behalf of Innovative Medicines Canada's (IMC), please accept our submission to the Government of Alberta 2023 Budget Consultation.

As one of Canada's most innovative sectors, we make substantial contributions to the Canadian and Alberta economies. Alberta's life sciences sector is a major source of highly skilled employment, innovation, and economic diversification.

There are more than 200 life science companies in the province that support more than of 15,000 high-paying jobs.

In this submission, IMC outlines recommendations to unleash Alberta's health innovation potential by:

- advancing the Alberta life sciences strategy;
- accelerating access to innovative medicines; and
- working towards offering NACI recommended vaccines to Albertans.

There is a tremendous opportunity to improve our healthcare system, create jobs and grow our economy through industry and government collaborations.

I look forward to the opportunity to meet in the near future to discuss strengthening and sustaining Alberta's health system.

Sincerely,



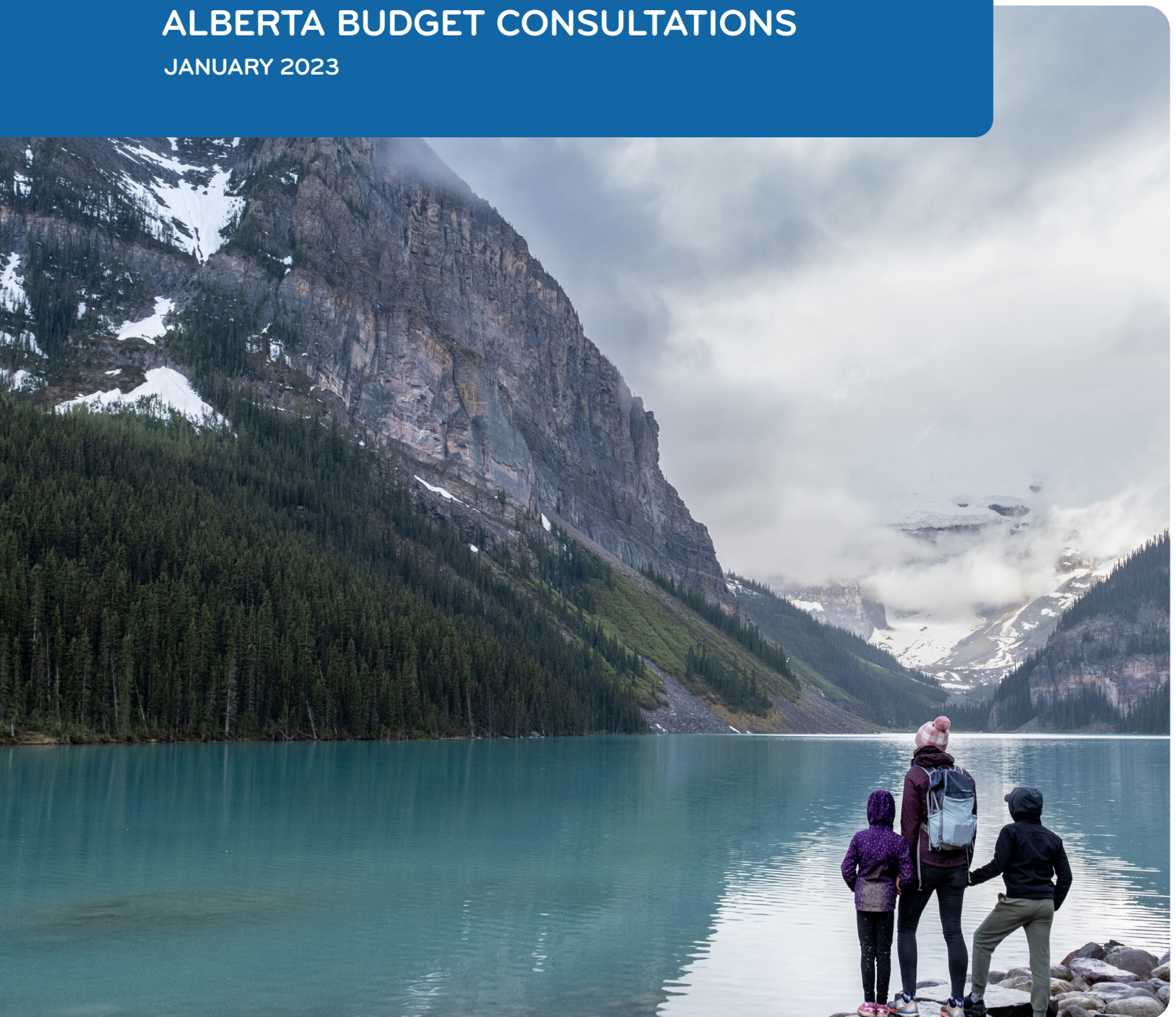
Pamela C. Fralick  
**President**



# BUDGET SUBMISSION 2023

ALBERTA BUDGET CONSULTATIONS

JANUARY 2023



## INTRODUCTION

Innovative Medicines Canada (IMC) is the national association representing Canada's innovative pharmaceutical industry. The association advocates for policies that promote the discovery, development and delivery of innovative medicines and vaccines to improve the lives of all Canadians. In addition, it supports the commitment of its members as valued partners in the Canadian healthcare system.

The association represents 50 companies, which invest nearly \$1.4 billion annually in research and development. In this way, it nurtures a high value-added knowledge economy while contributing \$8 billion to the national economy. All members follow the IMC Code of Ethics, and work in a highly ethical manner with governments, private payers, healthcare professionals and stakeholders.





## BACKGROUND

The innovative pharmaceutical sector invests nearly **\$2.4 billion in R&D annually**, fuelling Canada's knowledge-based economy while **contributing close to \$16 billion to Canada's economy**. The sector supports more than **107,000 high-value jobs across the country**.<sup>1</sup>

IMC is pleased to provide ideas for consideration for the 2023 Alberta Budget consultation and for consideration in the development and implementation of provincial government priorities.



## RECOMMENDATION 1

### ADVANCING THE ALBERTA LIFE SCIENCES STRATEGY

When Dr. Michael Houghton from the University of Alberta was awarded the 2020 Nobel Prize in Physiology in recognition of his discovery of the hepatitis C virus, Alberta's world-class research was highlighted on the world stage. There was significant advancement of the Alberta government's life sciences strategy with the funding granted to the Li Ka Shing Applied Virology Institute.

In addition, and as noted by the Alberta Real-World Evidence Consortium, Alberta has one of the largest, most mature, detailed, and comprehensive health system data depositories in Canada.

We commend the Alberta government for the creation of the first stand-alone Ministry for Innovation and Technology. This goes a long way towards advancing the goal of better utilizing health data. IMC welcomes Minister Glubish's mandate of leading the government's implementation of the Alberta Technology and Innovation Strategy. With such a strategy, the Government of Alberta could improve healthcare efficiency, access to innovation, while aiming at developing a life science sector that plays a critical role for the development of academic, scientific, and economic potential of Alberta.

Innovative medicines manufacturers can be drivers of research, clinical trials, healthcare system efficiency and economic development. This could be particularly true when the integration of innovation is facilitated through innovative agreements. Innovative agreements go beyond the traditional price rebate, it can contain performance based outcomes, evidence generation objectives, real-world evidence targets, etc. As a leader in health data, Alberta should take advantage of innovative agreements where evidence could be generated to confirm the efficacy of a product, improve access while continuing to build evidence, particularly for oncology and rare diseases.

Such a framework could ensure that Alberta is the destination of choice for innovators, entrepreneurs, and investors, and to encourage the research, development and commercialization of new technologies.

**IMC is eager to collaborate with the government for the definition, design and implementation of an innovative listing agreement framework within a life science strategy.**

For further information, please consult IMC's analysis of innovative agreements at <https://innovativemedicines.ca/resources/all-resources/innovative-agreements-framework/>

<sup>1</sup>The Canadian Research and Development Pharmaceutical Sector', Statistics Canada, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/catalogue/11-621-M2023001> (accessed January 31, 2023)

## RECOMMENDATION 2

### REDUCING THE ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN TO ACCESS INNOVATIVE MEDICINES

COVID-19 demonstrated the value of a strong innovative pharmaceutical industry in the country and brought us, collectively, to a better understanding of the value and benefits of early access to new medicines.

Earlier this year, IMC prepared a series of Red Tape Reduction Recommendations for the Minister of Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction. There are numerous opportunities to eliminate red tape within the drug approval processes administered by the Pharmaceutical and Supplemental Health Benefits Branch. Our recommendations would help to ensure more timely access to medications for patients, reduce paperwork for health professionals, reduce the administrative burden for the Department of Health, while ultimately easing wait times and improving health outcomes for Albertans.

**We encourage your department to realize these savings in time and money.**

## RECOMMENDATION 3

### DEVELOPING PROGRAMS TO OFFER NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON IMMUNIZATION (NACI) APPROVED VACCINES

NACI makes recommendations for the use of vaccines currently or newly approved for use in humans in Canada, including the identification of groups at risk for vaccine-preventable diseases for whom vaccination should be targeted.

Not all recommended adult vaccines have universal programs in place, leaving vulnerable Albertans unable to access preventative medicines. Having a clear process for consideration will streamline administrative time and in turn will help reduce visits to health care professionals and ease pressure on emergency rooms.

**IMC suggests creating a stream within Alberta Health to access newly developed treatments (e.g. RSV, shingles, etc.).**



**For more information,  
please contact**

[innovativemedicines.ca](http://innovativemedicines.ca)



**Jean-Frédéric Lafontaine**  
Executive Director, Provincial Government Relations  
[Jflafontaine@imc-mnc.ca](mailto:Jflafontaine@imc-mnc.ca)