



National Infectious Diseases Day: A briefing note

October 18, 2007

Goals

1. Call for National Infectious Diseases Strategy that focuses on four main areas: healthcare-associated infections, community-associated infections, research on infectious diseases, and building national capacity.
2. Promote public awareness of Infectious Diseases during National Infection Control Week

Why a national infectious disease strategy is needed

An effective National Infectious Diseases Strategy will strengthen the quality of life of Canadians and improve Canada's economy. Facts:

- One in nine Canadian hospital patients acquires an infection during their stay
- In Canada, it is estimated that 250,000 people—one out of nine patients who are admitted to hospital every year pick up infections while being treated for something else.
- Healthcare-associated infections kill 8,000 to 12,000 Canadians a year.
- Half of visits to family doctors are caused by a common viral or bacterial infection.
- Patients who die *with* cancer or heart disease commonly die *from* infection.
- Although cancer is recognized as a major cause of death among the Canadian population, one of the most dreadful consequences associated with treatments (chemotherapy and radiotherapy) is infection: about 40 % of all children and adults receiving cancer chemotherapy will end up having a documented infection in direct relation to their treatment and about 3.5 % of all patients will die of infection following their chemotherapy or stem-cell transplantation.
- Addressing infectious diseases will dramatically reduce wait times.
- The World Health Organization advises it is only a matter of time before an avian flu virus acquires the ability to be transmitted from human to human, sparking the onset of a human influenza pandemic.
- Infections acquired in the workplace cost Canadians an estimated \$15B annually.
- As Canada is recognized as one of the world leading exporters of agricultural products, the safety of our food chain is crucial for our economy, its survival and its growth.

Collaborating Organizations

1. Canadian Foundation for Infectious Diseases (CFID)
2. Association of Medical Microbiologists and Infectious Disease (AMMI) Canada
3. Community and Hospital Infection Control Association – Canada (CHICA-Canada)
4. Canadian Association for Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (CACMID)
5. International Centre for Infectious Diseases (ICID)
6. Private sector and industry partners working in the area of infectious diseases

For more information, please visit www.nidd.ca. The site will be launched by October 10, 2007.