

Clinical trial infrastructure spurs economic growth and improves patient outcomes

Life sciences and biosciences research is a quickly evolving industry and as the federal government looks to grow and develop opportunities in research excellence, it needs to build the enabling hospital-based infrastructure to further enhance Canada's research capacity in this field. This means much-needed in-hospital laboratories and dedicated bed space to run clinical trials.

Hospital-based research infrastructure allows hospitals and patients to participate in, and benefit from, research being conducted within its walls. [Studies have shown that hospitals participating](#) in research have improved patient outcomes, better retention of clinicians, and improve health system efficiency.

Hospitals and healthcare organizations provide much of the infrastructure for clinical trials. Canada is [losing ground to its peer countries where we once led](#) in clinical trials and improving Canada's trials capabilities will require upgraded research infrastructure.

Most clinical trials occur at academic health sciences centres located in cities. Many patients live too far from academic hospitals to participate, however. Community hospitals have the potential to be more involved in research trials, like multi-site trials, but are without the basic research infrastructure and space to enable their participation. Including community hospitals in research would also mean more diverse and inclusive trial participants.

Why this matters now

There is a shortage of physical lab space in Canada. Entrepreneurs, incubators, and start-ups continually reach out to Canada's research hospitals in the hopes that they can access their labs. Sadly, most hospitals cannot accommodate these requests. Fully leveraging the innovative and economic power of the life sciences sector requires investments to build or renovate existing hospital space to create purpose-built lab and incubator space, as well as installing the digital infrastructure to support modern clinical trial needs.

The co-location of researchers, engineers, entrepreneurs, and businesses will lead to the organic development of relationships between the health system, academia, and the private sector while immersing the people developing innovations to be immersed in the

health system where their innovations will eventually be deployed to improve patient outcomes.

The close connections between these groups, and their proximity to the health system and patients, will also lead to better knowledge translation, so that research and the resulting innovations are implemented more successfully, which in turn allows Canada to get even greater returns on investment for its health research dollars.

What the federal government can do

- 1. Build or renovate buildings to create much needed lab and incubator space at hospitals, including rural, remote, and Northern health facilities.** This will attract and bring together researchers, universities and colleges, industry, innovators, and non-profit organizations. This should include dedicated funding for digital infrastructure, equipment and shared tools that allow sites to participate in clinical trials consistently and at-scale.
- 2. Make strategic capital investments to help hospitals and health authorities anchor broad health and bioscience districts.** An infrastructure funding program of this nature should have two dedicated streams for physical and digital infrastructure. This will drive jobs and growth in surrounding communities. Modern health sciences research hubs also help attract private investment, start-ups and industry partnerships, turning federal and provincial capital dollars into larger economic clusters that support high quality jobs and long-term regional development.

Clinical trial infrastructure investments cultivate breakthroughs and cutting-edge research, helping scientists, clinicians, patients and families. It also better positions Canada's global competitiveness. Funding for health research infrastructure can stabilize the clinical trial workforce, strengthen site readiness, expand patient enrollment, and encourage industry to invest over the long-term; and ultimately, provide better quality care to Canadians.