



Canadian Academy of Health Sciences
Académie canadienne des sciences de la santé

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Canada has Potential for Even Greater Contributions to Global Health, according to New Report by the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences

Report outlines 5 key roles: Aboriginal Health Research, Population and Public Health, Primary Care, Smart Partnerships, Innovation

Montreal. A year-long evidence-based assessment conducted by a Canadian Academy of Health Sciences-appointed expert panel, released today at the 2011 Global Health Conference, outlines how Canada can make an even greater contribution to global health.

“Canadians can be proud of the contribution that we have made in the past and are currently making to global health,” said Dr. Peter A. Singer, Foreign Secretary of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences and Chair of the Expert Panel that authored the assessment, “but there is an opportunity for us to do even more, to accomplish more, if we take a national approach with all sectors working more closely together -- we are stronger together.”

Canadians Making a Difference: The Expert Panel on Canada’s Strategic Role in Global Health looked at opportunities in the current Canadian commitment to global health and suggested that an “all-of-Canada” approach amongst all sectors involved in global health could create greater impact in the developing world and a strong leadership position for Canada. The report identifies five roles in which there is an opportunity for Canada to have significant global impact. They are:

- indigenous and circumpolar health research
- public health programs and research on social determinants of health
- community-based primary healthcare
- partnerships with developing countries in education and research
- global health innovation.

“A unique feature of this report is a holistic view that says ‘our vision of global health should include aboriginal health,’” said Jeff Reading, Professor and Director, Centre for Aboriginal Health Research, University of Victoria and Expert Panel member. “Canada is a leader in aboriginal and circumpolar global health research. We can leverage this knowledge and expertise to make a meaningful difference in vulnerable communities both in Canada and globally.”

Another aspect of the report is its focus on young people. “The interest in global health across the roles identified is rising swiftly among students in Canadian universities,” said Aleks Leligdowicz, a trainee in internal medicine at University of British Columbia and Expert Panel member. “I am thrilled that the report highlights the need to pay attention to the career tracks of young people to channel their enthusiasm.”

”I would like to thank the diverse and distinguished members of the Expert Panel for their incisive guidance on Canada’s strategic role in global health,” said Dr. John Cairns, President-Elect of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences. “The process of this assessment was rigorous and exhaustive.”

The report lays out a clear path forward to move from this evidence-based assessment to enhance Canada’s role in global health, engaging all sectors and with the end goal of monitoring and evaluating results.

“More visibility for Canada and more impact in global health will come from pursuing the opportunities outlined in this report,” said Nelson Sewankambo, Principal of the College of Health Sciences, Makerere University, Uganda, and Expert Panel member. “Developing countries welcome working with Canada to bring about much-needed improvements in global health conditions.”

“We concluded there is a strong rationale for Canada to play a more strategic role in global health,” said Dr. Peter A. Singer, Chair of the Panel and Foreign Secretary of the CAHS. “Investments in global health can improve health outcomes, as well as support and enhance national security and provide economic opportunity for Canada and developing countries.”

For a copy of *Canadians Making a Difference* please see www.cahs-acss.ca.

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About the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences

The Canadian Academy of Health Science, established by the federal government in late 2004, is an independent, not for profit organization, that provides timely, informed and unbiased assessments of urgent issues affecting the health of Canadians. These assessments are based on evidence reviews and leading expert opinion. CAHS Fellows have a history of outstanding performance in the academic health sciences in Canada. For information please visit the Academy’s website at <http://www.cahs-acss.ca/>

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