



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

# 2023-2027 Strategic Plan

EVIDENCE TO IMPACT

# Introduction

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The Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (CAHS) was founded to move beyond the academic focus of the Canadian Institute of Academic Medicine into a widely recognized multi-disciplinary academy of health sciences that is able to provide sound evidence-based advice on health-related matters.

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In the 17 years since the CAHS was incorporated, it has evolved into an established organization whose honourific purpose is recognized and sought after. Today there are over 850 CAHS Fellows, from across Canada nominated from the full breadth of academic health science professions and disciplines. The expertise of Fellows spans basic biomedical sciences, clinical care, population and public health, the social sciences and humanities. This diversity gives the Academy a unique and comprehensive perspective for issues that matter to Canadians. The annual nomination of Fellows allows for ongoing opportunities for continuous inclusion of new perspectives in the Academy's events and activities. Tremendous value is reaped when interdisciplinary research and knowledge mobilization occurs among these distinct areas.

The CAHS not only recognizes the achievements of outstanding individuals but is deeply committed to serve the Canadian public by providing scientific advice for a healthy Canada. Indeed, the CAHS was founded “to provide independent, objective, evidence-based analysis of health challenges that inform both public and private sectors in decision-making about policy, practice, and investment”. It has the capacity to deliver expert advice evidenced by its track record of quality assessments and innovative approaches partnering with community and patient groups such as that used in the 2022 released report “Autism in Canada - Considerations for future public policy development.”

# The Current Context

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Since the CAHS' inception, the world has changed dramatically and we are now facing a variety of converging crises that bring considerable challenges related to the health of Canadians:

- The global pandemic (COVID 19) and its impact on the care and health of people across the lifespan.
- The capacity of our health systems is under more strain than ever.
- Inequity in access to care and health outcomes has become more evident, particularly for Indigenous peoples, BIPOC communities, new immigrants, language minorities, rural communities, and people with chronic health issues that impair accessibility.
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission established priority calls to action, many yet to be acted upon.
- Global climate change contributes to new health concerns in Canada that will have disproportionate impact on populations already facing inequity and exclusion.

These challenges require a shift in how the CAHS defines its direction, governs its activities, and operates.

It is recognized that more can and should be done to increase CAHS' impact. Supporting policy makers and healthcare providers to best meet the needs of the most structurally marginalized and under-served communities, from the North to rural communities to the cities, is at the core of Academy's efforts. To accomplish this the composition of the CAHS Fellows should be reflective of the population living in Canada. Increasing the diversity of

the Fellowship is a start; the Academy is also committed to employ strategies to remove barriers to equity and inclusion in the operations of the CAHS.

Accordingly, the CAHS has committed to a renewed focus on its unique interdisciplinarity to ensure comprehensive views are reflected in all it undertakes. This focus includes the desire to emulate Canadian society by embedding principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion in its actions.

CAHS should also be creating value for its Fellows and its stakeholders by bolstering its awareness of Francophone affairs both internally and in its external presence.

CAHS also recognizes the need to engage with Indigenous perspectives in its view of the future, build partnerships with Indigenous communities and scholars, and work to support justice for the Indigenous peoples of Canada.

Equity, diversity and inclusion, interdisciplinarity, Francophone affairs, and a focus on Indigenous Affairs thereby form the “drivers” of this strategic plan. A renewed emphasis on these *Drivers* is the pathway to achieving its **vision and mission** and to strengthening its value proposition and ability to have a meaningful impact.

In the current fast-paced and complex environment, it has become urgent for governments, policy makers and non-governmental organizations to obtain independent, expert, evidence-based advice to understand health issues and inform policy decisions. This context sets the stage for the CAHS and its Fellows to provide the expertise and resources to enhance the health of all Canadians through informed actionable solutions when its most needed.

# Our Promise

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## VISION

The Canadian Academy of Health Sciences improves the health of Canadians through informed actionable solutions.

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## MISSION

The Canadian Academy of Health Sciences convenes leaders in scholarship and dialogue to provide assessments of, and advice on, key issues relevant to the health of Canadians.

**The mission of the CAHS is achieved through several key activities:**

- a. To elect fellows to the Academy, Canadian citizens, or Canadian residents for the preceding three years, who are recognized by their peers nationally and internationally for their contributions to the promotion of health sciences and who have demonstrated leadership, creativity, distinctive competencies, and a commitment to advance academic health sciences.
  - b. To serve as a credible, expert, and independent assessor of science and technology (S&T) issues relevant to the health of Canadians.
  - c. To support the development of timely, informed, and strategic advice on urgent health issues.
  - d. To support the development of sound and informed public policy related to these issues.
  - e. To enhance understanding of science and technology issues affecting the public good by transmitting the results of assessments and providing opportunities for public discussion of these matters.
  - f. To provide a collective authoritative multi-disciplinary voice of health sciences communities; and
  - g. To represent Canadian health sciences internationally and liaise with like international academies to enhance understanding and potential collaborations on matters of mutual interests.
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# The Strategic Plan – Evidence To Impact

The *Canadian Academy of Health Sciences' 2023-2027 Strategic Plan: Evidence to Impact* aims to optimally position CAHS to mobilize its expertise and resources to produce outcomes that influence public policy and enhance health in Canada.

A strong and impactful CAHS must be anchored to four underlying drivers:

- interdisciplinarity,
- principles of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA)
- attention to Francophone affairs, and
- focus on Indigenous Affairs.

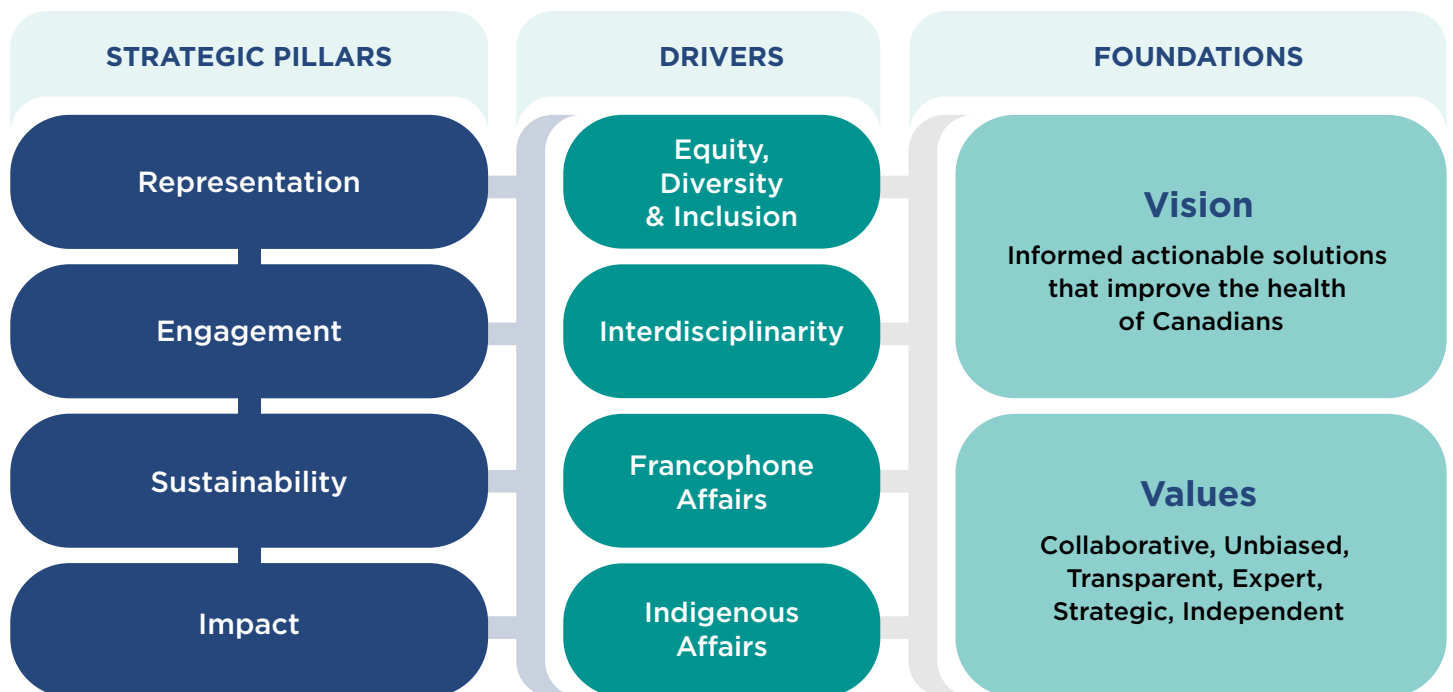
These drivers are fundamental to the organization, its actions, and decisions as it executes the plan.

Impact is at the center of the plan. The CAHS will take significant steps towards fulfilling its mission and delivering on its objectives by focusing its activities on awareness and access to its services, evolving its suite of knowledge products, and ensuring its work reaches the broadest audience.

Three critical priority areas will affect its ability to be impactful:

- (1) a commitment to being a representative Academy in all its actions and interactions
- (2) the engagement of communities of interest - Fellows, stakeholders (including policy makers), and
- (3) the organizational structures that support its work and keep it sustainable.

## 2023-2027 CAHS Strategic Framework



# Strategic Pillars

This plan is the CAHS' roadmap to guide the Academy's progress towards achieving its goals and objectives. The Plan is outlined under four strategic pillars: **Representation, Engagement, Sustainability, and Impact**, each with a goal and a set of objectives. These are not listed in order of importance but are all key components of the plan and collectively build towards greater impact.

## Representation

To fulfill its mission of improving the health of Canadians, the Academy must acknowledge and work to address inequities in access to care, disease burden, poverty and health-related outcomes. This demands that the Fellowship be representative of equity-deserving groups, a goal achievable only by removing systemic barriers and collaborating with individuals and organizations that possess the requisite expertise.



**The Canadian Academy of Health Sciences has a membership of Fellows that represents the diversity of the Canadian population.**

### Objective: Increase the diversity and commitment to equity of the Fellowship

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- Fellow nominations and elections process
- Collection of information; demographics, commitments, and expertise
- Role models, allies, mentors, and champions

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Increased diversity of nominees and elected Fellows

### Objective: Collaborate with organizations to foster inclusion

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- Collaborative working relationships with targeted organizations
- Community partnerships
- Alignment with organizations that support the unique needs of under-represented and equity-deserving groups

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Annual report on meaningful partnerships and collaboration with appropriate organizations.

### Objective: Align Equity, Diversity and Inclusion work and policies with key stakeholders

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- Stakeholder organizations' Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility activities and policies
- Formal alignment with policies and procedures of government, agencies, and external organizations

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Define stakeholder organizations
- Annual review of key policies and practices alignment.

## Engagement

Prioritizing the engagement of Fellows, partners and policy makers is critical to the core mission of the CAHS. The contribution of Fellows is essential to the organization's impact. With over 850 Fellows, there is enormous untapped expertise. Increasing the involvement of Fellows necessitates concerted actions by the Academy.



**The Canadian Academy of Health Sciences has an engaged Fellowship that is invested in the Academy and is seen by its stakeholders as a trusted partner.**

### Objective: Recognize and improve engagement of Fellows

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- More opportunities for participation of Fellows in the work of the Academy
- Recognition of Fellows
- Targeted internal communications

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Growing number of opportunities for Fellow participation in a meaningful manner
- Participation rate, percentage of participating Fellows in the various Academy activities.
- Event attendance and satisfaction rates

### Objective: Build and nurture external stakeholder networks

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- Nurturing stakeholder relations
- Strategic collaborations with influencers with diverse perspectives
- Targeted external communications

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Partnership and collaborator feedback
- External event participation

### Objective: Strengthen pathways to policy making bodies

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- On-going government relations
- Expanding connections and networks
- Promotion of access to diverse voices

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Requests from and consultations with policy makers
- Government functions and event participation

### Objective: Greater diversity, equity and inclusion in the Board and committees

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- Board election process
- Review TOR of committees for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility inclusion
- Committee call for nominations process ensuring a commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility, Francophone affairs, Interdisciplinarity and Indigenous Affairs
- Communications and outreach

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Representation across all governance bodies
- Annual report initiatives to support Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility in the governance of the Academy

## Sustainability

For the CAHS to deliver on its strategic objectives, it needs to innovate in its policies and practices to improve efficiencies and lessen any burden of risk. Focusing on revenues will allow for more creative opportunities and continuous improvement. Adopting best practices in both operations and governance serve to not only strengthen administrative capacity but also to elevate the CAHS brand.



**The Canadian Academy of Health Sciences is a recognized organization known for excellence that embodies best practices for continuous improvement and growth.**

### Objective: Evolve systems and operations

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- Operational planning
- Governance best practices
- Commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility principles
- Commitment to bilingualism
- Community partnerships and engagement

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Adoption of internal policy and process changes
- Process standardizations
- Annual leadership evaluations
- Board approved operational plan

### Objective: Increase revenues

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- Seeking alternate funding sources
- Flexible service and product offerings
- Monitoring investments

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Annual revenues
- Sources of revenue
- Financial performance and operational reserves

### Objective: Optimize the brand

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- Leverage honourific to deliver key messages
- Strengthening the national profile
- Strategic international involvement
- Planned communications

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Scope of national and international touchpoints
- Integrated communication indicators (ex: website visits, report downloads, social followers)

### Objective: Implement strategies to ensure its operations and products are aligned with its equity, diversity and inclusion focus

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility models and information
- Establish a standing Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility committee
- Committee structures and recommendations
- Selection of Fellows
- Selection of knowledge products

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Established a process to review operations and reflect Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility



## Impact

Central to the CAHS are the actions that will lead to improving public policy and advancing the reach of its knowledge products. Awareness of its work, the breadth of the contributions, and enlisting its multi-stakeholder network in knowledge mobilization will have a positive effect on the Academy's degree of impact. These will be significantly advanced by improvements in Representation, Engagement and Sustainability.



**The Canadian Academy of Health Sciences influences public policy and creates trust by expanding the understanding of, and knowledge in science through evidence-based activities aimed at enhancing the health of all Canadians.**

### Objective: Enhance awareness and access to services and products

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- Monitoring public policy to identify target audiences and messages
- Relevant access mechanisms
- Information dissemination

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Social media measurement
- Regular media measurement

### Objective: Evolve the suite of knowledge products

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- Current affairs and government priorities
- Stakeholder needs
- Impact focused approach to knowledge product selection
- Knowledge product models
- Integration of diverse perspectives

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Scope of knowledge products
- Stakeholder feedback

### Objective: Expand the reach of evidence-based analyses and recommendations

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- Knowledge product mobilization strategies
- Use of collateral materials
- Alignment between events and reports
- Expert involvement
- Targeted communications and media approaches

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Evidence of impact on policy
- Integrated communication indicators (ex: media hits, report downloads, mobilization channels)

### Objective: Work against exclusion, discrimination, and inequity in health care

#### Achieved by focusing on:

- Being a voice for truth, integrity and change

#### Progress will be measured by these key performance indicators:

- Advocating for the use of evidence in policy making
- Monitoring attention to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility in the work of the Academy