



From the Editor / L. Ian MacDonald

# Healthcare and Innovation

Welcome to our special issue on Canadian healthcare and innovation, which we are publishing in partnership with Rx&D, “Canada’s Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies.” While several articles in the cover package were written by industry stakeholders, the authors worked independently, and *Policy* alone is responsible for the content.

Former University of Toronto President David Naylor, Chair of the Advisory Panel on Healthcare Innovation, shares some insights from the panel’s report *Unleashing Innovation: Excellent Healthcare for Canada*.

Andre Albinati, a prominent Ottawa consultant on healthcare and health policy, writes that the Naylor Report was essentially DOA—dead on arrival. Albinati notes that after appointing the Advisory Panel in 2014, the federal government had nothing to say about its recommendations in the summer of 2015. It released the report without comment late on a Friday afternoon in July, when hardly anyone one pays attention in Ottawa.

Pollster Nik Nanos of Nanos Research looks at the historic importance of healthcare in the rankings of issues and confirms healthcare is always “a top national issue of concern” for Canadians. Looking ahead, fully 39 per cent of Canadians are concerned that healthcare in Canada will be worse for their children, while 27 per cent of respondents think it will be better. Seven Canadians in 10 also think it’s important to put money into healthcare innovation.

Speaking of innovation, Infoway Canada Chair Graham Scott writes that “far from being a cost, digital health represents an investment in the productivity, efficiency and sustainability” of healthcare.

Belinda Vandersluis notes that Canada has the highest number of clinical trials per capita of any G7 country, and argues that it’s a competitive advantage worth protecting.

Chrisoula Nikidis of Rx&D looks at actions based on values and writes that the pharmaceutical industry’s goal is to “put in place the tools that can help us enable strong ethical relationships among all actors in the healthcare system.”

Turning to pharmacare, Arthritis Society President Janet Yale points out that Canada is the only developed country with universal health not to offer universal pharmacare. She weighs in with an endorsement.

Mike Sullivan begs to differ and suggests an innovative system of tax credits as a better way to sustain drug coverage in Canada. Gail Attara, Chair of the Best Medicines Coalition, writes that coverage for medications is a patchwork and that pharmacare programs need to be reconfigured with patients in mind.

Denise Carpenter, head of the Neighbourhood Pharmacies Association, writes that healthcare solutions are literally right around the corner. Treating patients in pharmacies, she writes, “helps keep them out of emergency rooms and hospitals.”

Finally, Helen Scott writes of Canada’s trailblazing work in vaccinations—from polio to experimental work on a vaccine against ebola—in over 1,000 locations around the world.

Leading off our *Canada and the World* section, Jeremy Kinsman looks at the Greek financial crisis and its impact on the European Union. Kinsman, a former Canadian ambassador to the EU, writes that the Greek crisis has divided public opinion “into polarized national caricatures.”

Kevin Lynch, in a letter from a Ditchley Park conference on China, offers insights into the remarkable growth of the Chinese economy, poised to surpass the United States within a decade as the largest in the world. Already the world’s largest energy consumer, “China has

become the mass manufacturing hub of the world.” On geopolitical affairs, he writes, “China intends to become a rule maker, not just a rule taker.”

Canadian Chamber of Commerce President Perrin Beatty looks at the 12-nation trade talks for a Trans-Pacific Partnership and writes that Canada, as a trading nation, absolutely needs to be part of any TPP agreement encompassing 40 per cent of the world’s GDP.

David Lindsay makes the case that Canada’s forestry industry has transformed itself from laggard to leader in reducing GHG emissions in climate change. As he notes, there has been a 65 per cent reduction in the Canadian forestry sector’s GHGs below 1990 levels, far surpassing the Kyoto target of 6 per cent by 2012. The industry is also “on its way” to meeting the Copenhagen target of 17 per cent below 2005 levels by 2020, as well as the Paris target of 30 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030.

Joseph Schulman, an Ottawa consultant on transportation infrastructure, looks at regulatory issues around Canadian railways, which “move more than 70 per cent of all intercity surface goods” and “roughly half of the country’s exports by volume.”

In a *Verbatim*, former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney suggests we already have a roadmap for Senate reform. He proposes the Meech Lake formula under which senators were to be appointed by Ottawa from ranked lists furnished by the provinces. This would meet the standard for appointments in the Supreme Court’s decision in the Senate reference case, while avoiding the need for a “7/50” constitutional amendment.

Finally, we offer reviews of two timely books for this election season. Geoff Norquay provides a positive take on Bob Rae’s *What’s Happened to Politics*, while James Baxter reviews Tom Mulcair’s personal journey in *Strength of Conviction*.

Enjoy. **P**