



***Submission for Pre-Budget Consultations for  
the 2023 Alberta Budget***

**February 2023**

Medtech Canada is the national association representing Canada's innovative medical technology (medtech) industry. Representing over 120 medtech companies (ranging from Canadian-owned to multinationals), Medtech Canada works closely with government and healthcare stakeholders to deliver a patient-centred, safe, accessible, innovative and sustainable universal healthcare system supported by the use of medical technology.

February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Hon. Travis Toews, Minister of Finance & President of the Treasury Board  
Executive Branch, 208 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6  
[Tbf.minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Tbf.minister@gov.ab.ca)

*\*Sent by e-mail*

**Re: Medtech Canada & BioAlberta 2023 Budget Submission**

Dear Minister Toews:

Medical technologies and innovative therapeutic interventions diagnose and treat patients with varying health needs. These devices and therapeutics can range from simple technologies, such as basic thermometers, to very complex ones, such as a laser surgical devices or implantable pacemakers.

These same medical and therapeutic interventions contribute to improved patient outcomes every day. They save lives, improve productivity to keep Albertans at work and add to quality of life for patients and their families. Medical technologies play a vital role in supporting healthcare professionals to deliver the care that our loved ones and everyone in Alberta needs as they access our healthcare system..

We know that Premier Smith has asked you to keep inflation and affordability top of mind as you develop budget 2023, in addition to placing significant focus on job creation and strengthening Alberta's economy, while also addressing the challenges facing Alberta's healthcare system. Canada's medical and life sciences sectors can be a partner in addressing these areas of your mandate.

Additionally, your mandate letter notes that Albertans are not getting the necessary care they need, when and where they need it. While this challenge is not unique to Alberta, we applaud your government for focusing on the task at hand, with the aim of improving patient care.

Canada's medical technology and life sciences sectors are prepared to partner with Alberta to ensure the adoption of innovative medical products and technologies that can help to address the health-sector challenges the government is facing. Medtech Canada and BioAlberta, through our collective membership(s), have focused our pre-budget submission on the three critical areas our healthcare system is facing and how our members can support Alberta in the pursuit of better care for patients.

Key recommendations are enclosed for your consideration,

Rob Pankhurst  
Vice President, West  
Medtech Canada

Robb Stoddard  
President & CEO  
BioAlberta

c: Honourable Jason Copping, Minister of Health  
Marcos Hume, Pre-budget submission working group co-chair (Medtech Canada)

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Recommendation 1: Health System Transformation: Meaningful Partnerships with Industry**

That the Government of Alberta support pathways to meaningful partnership and integration between healthcare service delivery organizations and industry partners, focusing on a model that allows for “proof of concept scenarios” validation of novel technologies and performance incentives.

### **Recommendation 2: Rapid Adoption of Innovative Therapies/Technologies to Address Immediate Health System Priorities**

Canada’s medical technology sector has concrete interventions that can address key health system priorities. Budget 2023 should provide appropriate resources to support the rapid adoption of proven innovative therapies and technologies to address the priorities identified by government requiring immediate action (i.e., *Improved Emergency Medical Services Response Times, Decreased Surgical Backlogs, Reduced Emergency Room Wait Times*).

### **Recommendation 3: Prioritize and Target Direct Investments in Public Health**

The government of Alberta should prioritize the implementation of patient-centred funding that is focused on cutting waitlists, especially for specialty medical services. Medtech Canada is pleased to see the work of the AHS administrator and the focus on specific goals, indicators and timeframes. Medtech Canada and BioAlberta encourages the Government of Alberta to adopt a value-based healthcare lens in its work to adopt medical technologies that serve the needs of Albertans.

## DETAILED RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Recommendation 1: Health System Transformation: Meaningful Partnership with Industry**

Medtech Canada and BioAlberta members provide technology solutions and support to health care providers in Canada and around the world. Based on these experiences and the available solutions that industry can provide, our collective associations asks the Government of Alberta to consider engaging in meaningful partnership opportunities that are based on mutually agreeable goals and objectives.

Industry is open to partnership opportunities that include contractual agreements such as shared risk approaches, guarantee scenarios and working to implement dedicated funding for technologies that support provincial priorities such as the easement of Alberta’s surgical backlog.

Medtech Canada and BioAlberta urges Alberta to address the backlog in deferred health services as quickly as possible, by adding incremental funding to expand capacity and investments in high-value medical interventions to preserve hospital resources.

### **Recommendation 2: Rapid Adoption of Innovative Therapies/Technologies to Address Immediate Health System Priorities**

The government of Alberta should look to industry to be a partner in solving key health system challenges. This will require government to increase current investments and to adopt technologies such as remote patient monitoring tools that will enable care providers to follow the patient journey along the continuum of care. Effective use of technology ensures care decisions follow the “right care at the right place at the right time” model.

We know that medical technology and biosciences companies will invest in jurisdictions where they can bring innovations to market quickly and where those products will be adopted by the health system. Collectively, Canada is not one of those jurisdictions.

Canada’s health system transformation has been held back by a reluctance to adopt the kind of demand-side policies that commit resources to pulling innovations into the healthcare system that is already applied in priority areas like renewable energy. If we are going to tap into that potential, then we need to collectively shift our mindset and begin to view healthcare as an economic driver rather than a cost center. We ask the government of Alberta to engage with industry to identify solutions from both a Canadian and global best practice perspective to address health system priorities.

### **Recommendation 3: Prioritize and Target Direct Investments in Public Health**

Canada’s medtech and biomedical sectors have been proud to answer the call to provide the necessary medical supplies, therapies and equipment to health systems in Alberta and across the country. We have a vast network of Canadian and global resources that can be mobilized to implement and support new solutions to address wait times and health system efficiency challenges – many of which can be implemented at-scale and quickly.

One example is value-based healthcare (VBHC), an international movement that seeks to achieve the best outcomes for patients at the most reasonable cost, and places self-reported health outcomes and quality of life at the centre of healthcare decision making. It informs a framework for restructuring healthcare systems, with the goal of optimizing value to patients and systems. We ask that the government of Alberta consider direct investments that utilize a VBHC approach to sourcing the technologies and therapies Albertans rely on for optimal quality of life.

Another area we suggest prioritizing is that of diagnostics and laboratory medicine. Laboratory medicine informs 50-70% of all clinical decisions, while accounting for between 3-5% of health-spending in Alberta. Present laboratory infrastructure is not sufficient to support current and future demand on laboratory medicine. We are seeking appropriate and targeted increases to laboratory medicine and diagnostics and are confident any increase in laboratory/diagnostics budgets will be offset by improved ability to target necessary treatments for Albertans.