



Antimicrobial resistance poses significant risk to people, the economy

CCA expert panel study provides new data on potential impact of antimicrobial resistance in Canada

News Release

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In Canada, 26% of infections are resistant to the medicines that are generally first prescribed to treat an infection, a rate that could rise to 40% or beyond in the coming decades, according to an expert panel convened by the Council of Canadian Academies (CCA). By 2050, a total of 396,000 lives could be lost and the Canadian economy could lose \$388 billion.

When Antibiotics Fail examines the current and future impact of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) on the health and wealth of Canada and explores promising strategies to mitigate the issue. The report presents new health and economic data for Canada and is the most comprehensive assessment of this global threat in the Canadian context.

In 2018, approximately 5,400 people in Canada died as a direct result of AMR and the Canadian economy lost \$2 billion due to the deaths and illnesses associated with resistant infections.

“Antimicrobial resistance is a serious threat to millions, and may result in countless deaths globally over the next few decades” said B. Brett Finlay, PhD, O.C., O.B.C., FRSC, FCAHS, Chair of the Expert Panel. “This report directly addresses the potential impact of AMR in Canada, highlighting not only the tragic human costs, but also the real tangible economic costs.”

As antimicrobials become less effective at treating infections, more people in Canada will see a reduction in their quality of life, and the effect will be unequally distributed across socio-demographic groups. Canadian society may become less open and trusting, with people less likely to travel and more likely to limit their activities.

“The economic projections in this report are the first of their kind in Canada, and provide policy-makers and other stakeholders with credible estimates of the potential magnitude of AMR impacts over the next three decades,” said Eric M. Meslin, PhD, FCAHS, President and CEO of the CCA. “It’s our hope that this report provides the evidence to support decision-making in this area.”

When Antibiotics Fail is an independent expert assessment of the best available evidence of the potential impact of antimicrobial resistance, produced by the CCA at the request of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Visit www.cca-reports.ca to download the report.

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About the Council of Canadian Academies

The CCA is a not-for-profit organization that undertakes independent, evidence-based expert panel assessments to inform public policy development in Canada. The CCA was founded by three independent organizations that represent some of the finest minds in Canada — the Royal Society of Canada, the Canadian Academy of Engineering, and the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences. Their Fellows and senior decision-makers sit on CCA's Board of Directors and Scientific Advisory Committee, and they are a key source of membership for expert panels. The CCA's founding Academies also provide key guidance and input throughout the assessment process, including expert panel nominations and dissemination processes. For more information about the CCA or its assessments, please visit www.cca-reports.ca.

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