

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### 1. What was the impetus for this study?

- Research Canada is a national alliance of diverse stakeholders drawn from the academic, private and voluntary sectors dedicated to advancing Canadian health research and innovation. We have adopted a health research and innovation ecosystem lens for our policy efforts, advocating for this integrated network of diverse stakeholders and partners who are ultimately the engine which drives innovations in health and health care. Over the past year, we have observed that there is an incomplete understanding of how these stakeholders and partnerships work together or are impacted by policy and investment. This gap in understanding is particularly evident regarding the role of the biopharmaceutical industry in Canada's health research and innovation ecosystem. As such, Research Canada convened an Expert Advisory Panel to appraise the evidence, apply their experience and align on a consensus-based description of the role and value—both actual and aspirational—of Canada's biopharmaceutical sector.

### 2. What is the health research and innovation ecosystem?

- We define the health research and innovation ecosystem as the network of postsecondary institutions, research hospitals, incubators, start-ups, innovative companies, investors, health charities and patient groups dedicated to advancing science and developing innovative solutions to improve the health and wellbeing of Canadians.

### 3. How was the Expert Advisory Panel selected to participate in this study?

- Research Canada convened an Expert Advisory Panel with the goal of gathering diverse, trans-sectoral and pan-Canadian perspectives on the role and impact of the biopharmaceutical sector on Canada's health research and innovation ecosystem.
- Research Canada reached out directly to prospective Expert Advisory Panel members to secure their participation. The Panel was comprised of nine leaders across Canada's health research and innovation ecosystem—with representation from academic and research institutions, healthcare providers, not-for-profit organizations and the investment community, as well as across provinces (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Québec and Nova Scotia).

### 4. Why was industry not included in the Expert Advisory Panel?

- As this study sought to gather independent, unbiased perspectives on the role and impact of the biopharmaceutical industry on Canada's health research and innovation ecosystem, we wanted to minimize the potential for actual or perceived industry bias. Indeed, there was concern that sector-specific policy discourse—particularly pertaining to the biopharmaceutical industry—has polarized debate, eroded trust and distracted us from this bigger picture.

### 5. What was the role of Research Canada? Shift Health?

- Research Canada (and the Expert Advisory Panel) led this study and exercised independent control over study design, data analysis and report development. Research Canada's Board Chair served as the Chair of the Expert Advisory Panel. Neither Research Canada nor any member of the Expert Advisory Panel was remunerated for participation in this study.

- Shift Health provided research, advisory and project management support throughout the study under Research Canada's direction. Shift Health's time was partially funded by Boehringer Ingelheim Canada.

**6. If there has been a gradual erosion of the relationship with the biopharmaceutical industry in Canada, why is this type of study only coming to light now?**

- There is an urgent need for objective data and perspective to advance dialogue. While the weakening of biopharmaceutical partnership and investment in Canada has been happening for some time now, the reasons and impact have been poorly characterized. Where evidence has been generated, it has frequently been discredited as serving specific interests.
- The pandemic has also reinforced the criticality of strong intersectoral partnerships, including with the biopharmaceutical industry, in driving research and innovation that benefit the people of Canada and around the world—and made it impossible to ignore the impact of weakened partnerships on our health security and economic resilience (e.g. gaps in biomanufacturing that have impacted Canada's ability to manufacture made-in-Canada vaccines for testing as well as approved global vaccines).

**7. Is this study all about Patented Medicine Prices Review Board (PMPRB) reforms?**

- No. While proposed amendments to Canada's Patented Medicines Regulations may be top-of-mind for some stakeholders, this study is not about these regulations and does not take a position on the relative merits or risks of these proposed reforms.
- This study does make the point that while Canada's pharmaceutical pricing regime is critically important, it is only one consideration in a complex network of policies that impact the vitality of our ecosystem—and that sector-specific policies that target a specific component of our health research and innovation ecosystem can have unintended repercussions that impact the ecosystem as a whole.

**8. I see that Boehringer Ingelheim, a biopharmaceutical company, sponsored part of this study. What was Boehringer Ingelheim's role in this study?**

- Boehringer Ingelheim (Canada) was not involved in planning, designing and conducting the study, nor did Boehringer Ingelheim contribute to the synthesis of the evidence or development of the report. Boehringer Ingelheim provided unrestricted funding for a portion of Shift Health's research and advisory and project management support, which were overseen by Research Canada.
- Shift Health provided periodic status updates to Boehringer Ingelheim as the project progressed.

**9. What is the call to action coming out of this report?**

- We are calling for change, not a return to the status quo. As the pandemic has laid bare, we need a renewed approach to cultivating an ambitious, futureproofed policy and investment environment that supports our ecosystem as a whole and positions Canada for sustainability, growth and leadership which will ultimately improve and protect the health of Canadians.
- In the end, we need an integrated, pan-sector strategy that connects the dots, strengthens partnerships, and maximizes the contribution of health research and innovation to Canada's health security and economic prosperity.