

Pan-Canadian Vision and Strategy for Health Services and Policy Research 2014–2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Partners involved

Alberta Cancer Foundation
Alberta Innovates Health Solutions
Alzheimer Society of Canada
Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation
Canadian Breast Cancer Research Alliance
Canadian Cancer Society
Canadian Cancer Research Alliance
Canadian Diabetes Association
Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement
Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Cancer Care Ontario
Cystic Fibrosis Canada
Fonds de recherche du Québec - Santé
Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada
Manitoba Research
Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research
New Brunswick Health Research Foundation
Newfoundland & Labrador Centre for Applied Health Research
Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation
Ontario Institute for Cancer Research
Ontario Ministry of Health & Long-term Care
Parkinson Society Canada
Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario
Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation
The Arthritis Society

Acknowledgment

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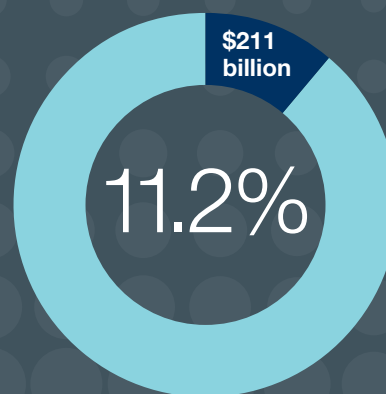
Executive Summary

HEALTH SERVICES AND POLICY RESEARCH (HSPR) IN CANADA IS AT AN IMPORTANT INFLECTION POINT.

Canada is a recognized leader internationally in generating and applying impactful health services and policy research, and committing to building capacity and the support that sustains this impact (Figure A).ⁱ

Building on the steady growth of the community and evolution of the field over the past 20 years, a number of critical partners are now well positioned to collaborate with the research community, health system leaders and other key stakeholders to chart the future for HSPR in Canada. New knowledge, continuous evaluation, and methods of scaling up successful innovation in order to address current and future health and health system challenges are required. The challenges are considerable. They include curbing expanding service costs, improving population health, providing better care for and improving the experience of patients, and optimizing health system performance, to name a few.

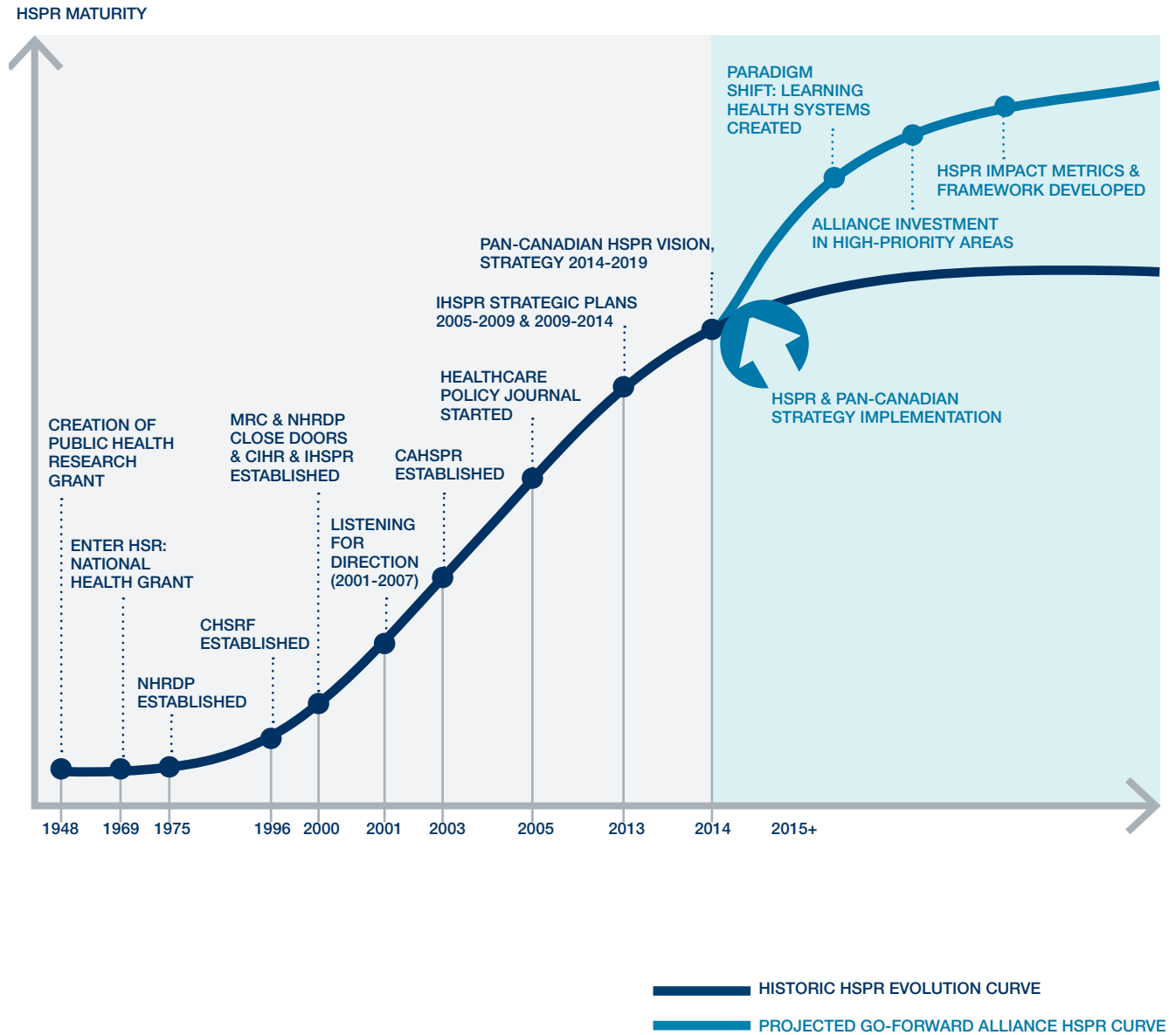
These challenges exist within a broader context of economic uncertainty, fiscal constraint, competing demands from other resource sectors (e.g., education, social services) and growing cost pressures (e.g., new technologies). Health spending in Canada now exceeds \$211 billion and represents 11.2% of gross domestic productⁱⁱ, which is high when compared to other OECD countries.ⁱⁱⁱ These high costs do not translate into better system performance when compared to Commonwealth Fund countries.^{iv}



SPENDING ON HEALTH CARE ACCOUNTS FOR 11.2% OF CANADA'S GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

The objective is nothing more than the continuous evolution of a learning health care system that generates research intelligence that promotes a better patient experience, improved health outcomes, and cost-effective care delivery.

Figure A. Historical and Future Predicted Evolution of Health Services and Policy Research in Canada



Timely generation of relevant HSPR will be required to meet current and emerging health system challenges. Improved partnerships among funders, researchers, policy and decision makers, health professionals, patients and the public will be key to charting Canada's new course.

This inaugural pan-Canadian Vision and Strategy for Health Services and Policy Research is the culmination of a year of collaborative work across 24 organizations. Their leaders gathered together to undertake a comprehensive and foundational analysis of public and voluntary sector HSPR investments and assets across Canada, as well as broad and deep engagement with a range of community stakeholders to identify HSPR priorities for collaborative action.

This process involved the combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis to shed light on historical HSPR investments, priorities and associated trends, assets, gaps and opportunities for moving forward. Results provided a foundation to base the pan-Canadian Vision and Strategy. The vision, strategic directions and research priorities outlined in this document reflect not only consideration of these results,

but the strategic input received at an April 2014 HSPR Priorities Forum. The Priorities Forum brought together federal and provincial research funders, policy and decision makers, health charities, health care professionals, patient representatives, and researchers to identify the critical elements of a high-performing HSPR enterprise in Canada and priorities for future investment.

This Pan-Canadian Vision and Strategy sets out a vision, a suite of strategic directions and research priorities for Canada's HSPR community, developed by Canada's HSPR and stakeholder community. It establishes a context against which the HSPR community can plan, collaborate and act to optimize HSPR investments, strengthen the HSPR enterprise and position Canada as a leader in the evidence-informed improvement of health and health system outcomes.

PAN-CANADIAN VISION AND MISSION

The vision and mission statements for Canadian HSPR reflect the themes that are essential to ensuring the adequate balance of production, dissemination and uptake of research in a way that meets the needs of Canadians.

PAN-CANADIAN STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR HEALTH SERVICE AND POLICY RESEARCH

Under the leadership of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research-Institute of Health Services and Policy Research (CIHR-IHSPR), the National Alliance of Provincial Health Research Organizations (NAPHRO) and health charities, a strategic framework was developed to capture the core functions of a HSPR enterprise. It includes fund research, conduct research, foster the use of research to inform health policy and practice decision-making, train researchers and build capacity (educate) and support the production and use of research.

The strategic framework was used to identify foundational strategic directions to guide pan-Canadian HSPR investment, activity and collaboration over the next five years. These strategic directions (Table A) were developed through extensive engagement and consultation with the HSPR community and stakeholders, including funding agencies, health charities, policy and decision makers, health professionals, HSPR centres, researchers and citizens. They represent the directions required to build and sustain the foundation of a high-performing HSPR enterprise, and apply to any and all targeted research priority areas.

PAN-CANADIAN VISION:
Research intelligence driving health system transformation in Canada.

PAN-CANADIAN MISSION:
Build and sustain an integrated and high-performing pan-Canadian health services and policy research community that adds value to the health of Canadians and health services for Canadians.

Table A. Foundational Strategic Directions for Health Services and Policy Research

Fund	1. Fund targeted research in priority areas that will lead to transformational change and improved health, health services and health system outcomes
Conduct and Use	2. Catalyze the creation of learning health systems: founded on best in class models of collaboration between researchers and policy and clinical leaders; promote partnerships amongst research funders, universities and health policy and delivery organizations to support applied and embedded research; engage the public; foster the conduct of relevant research, innovative experimentation and evaluation of complex interventions (including rapid response evaluations) 3. Foster health research and system innovation through research investments that catalyze methodological, social, policy, and technological innovation
Educate	4. Support development of a skilled cadre of health services and policy researchers and decision makers (policy and clinical leaders) with multi-disciplinary capacity across the career continuum, including building new capacity in priority target areas (e.g., mid-career and health professional scientists, embedded researchers, evidence-demanding health system leaders)
Support	5. Develop new metrics that capture the true value and impact of HSPR and HSPR investments 6. Support smart analytics and timely access to data , including novel methods, tools and analytics for health system performance measurement and evaluation that drives continuous improvement 7. Encourage alignment of academic incentives with the goal of research impacting health and health system outcomes

TOP TEN RESEARCH PRIORITIES FOR HEALTH SERVICES AND POLICY RESEARCH

The top 10 research priorities for HSPR investment and activity over the next five years include:

1. Change management and scaling up innovation
2. Engaging patients/self-management/patient experience
3. Integrated models of primary and community-based care
4. Health services and policies that meet older adults' needs
5. Person-centred models of chronic disease prevention and management
6. Health system financing and sustainability
7. Linking upstream prevention with care delivery models
8. Supporting caregivers
9. Funding/remunerating organizations and providers
10. Improving access in rural and remote regions

These priorities were informed through a number of inputs. They included a jurisdictional scan of research priorities within Canada and internationally, the foundational analysis of historical pan-Canadian investments in HSPR, and the discussions and voting results from the Priorities Forum and Café Scientifique, which were held with the explicit goal of garnering input on the pan-Canadian vision, strategy and priorities for HSPR.

Remarkably, change management and scaling up innovation, overwhelmingly emerged as the leading priority in all voting and discussion sessions as well as in the jurisdictional priority scan. Research on engaging citizens and patients, self-management and improving the patient experience was the second most frequently identified priority. These priorities also reflect the demographic reality of our aging population. Overall, they speak to the need to push beyond an unfortunate legacy of stand alone “pilot projects” and local innovations. Instead, Canadian health care systems and providers can apply successful endeavors within and across provincial and territorial borders in a systematic and intentional manner that engages patients and improves their experience through delivery of integrated care.

Importantly, Priorities Forum participants recommended streamlining and reframing the research priorities to be outcome-oriented and focused not only on today's health system challenges, but the anticipated challenges of tomorrow, too. These reframed priorities are illustrated in Figure B, with the foundational strategic directions featured in the centre of the diagram to illustrate their relevance and importance to each research priority.

A CANADIAN HEALTH SERVICES AND POLICY RESEARCH ALLIANCE

A key outcome of the pan-Canadian Vision and Strategy initiative has been the establishment of a Canadian Health Services and Policy Research Alliance (CHSPRA) of partners committed to advancing the vision, strategic directions and

research priorities outlined in this document.

The HSPR community is committed to engaging strategically through partnerships in high-priority areas of joint interest. This will be achieved through an Alliance model that fosters greater coordination, collaboration and strategic investment to optimize outcomes and strengthen Canada's HSPR enterprise. Alliance members can jointly select and pursue initiatives that will have a higher potential for success or impact if done together.

The Priorities Forum identified two initial action items for the Alliance to address. The first action is to support the development of new measures of HSPR that capture its true impact on policy, decision-making and health outcomes. The Priorities Forum recommended building on the work of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences “Making an Impact” framework^v and other research impact work that is underway, including NAPHRO's research impact initiative. The second action is to jointly fund a large-scale initiative in high-priority area (e.g., building embedded research capacity). The reframed research priorities outlined in Figure B or the foundational strategic directions outlined in Table A are presented as a starting point for Alliance considerations regarding initial action items.

A Canadian Health Services and Policy Research Alliance will foster greater coordination, collaboration and strategic investment to optimize outcomes and strengthen Canada's health services and policy research enterprise.

Figure B. Reframed Health Services and Policy Research Priorities and Foundational Strategic Directions

