

*“Those who continue as before face extinction.  
Those who change fast face opportunity.”  
- Peter Drucker*

## ***Introduction***

Canadians enjoy a long and proud tradition in health care. From the introduction of Medicare, to numerous ground-breaking medical discoveries, our country has been the envy of many. We are currently faced with a number of exciting opportunities within our health care system which must be acknowledged and pursued – and quickly. Changes must be made now in order to ensure all citizens continue to benefit from a world class level of quality, accessible health care. There is a vision for the future, one in which Canada is once again recognized around the globe for its leadership, and its world class health care system.

This submission highlights the major issues as determined by the Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce, including an overview of our efforts to date in our pursuit of world class health care for our community, our province, and our country. Consensus must be reached on the need to develop a dynamic model that encourages a change friendly culture that allows strategies to be developed to address the challenges, and equally important, take advantage of the many opportunities in a rapidly changing world of health care technology and the explosion of health knowledge now upon us.

As noted by Peter Drucker in his publication, *The Next Society: A survey of the near future*, the next society will indeed be a knowledge society. According to Drucker, “*Knowledge will be its key resource, and knowledge workers will be the dominant group in its workforce. Its three main characteristics will be:*

- “ *Borderlessness, because knowledge travels even more effortlessly than money.*
- “ *Upward mobility, available to everyone through easily acquired formal education.*
- “ *The potential for failure as well as success.*”

*(Source: The Economist, November 3, 2001)*

Drucker suggests that the prime knowledge products of this next society will be health care and education. We must be prepared for this future.

## ***PART I: The History of Health Care in Canada***

Canada has long been a leader in health care, and has been recognized world wide. The introduction of Medicare to the country has ensured the provision of quality, accessible, affordable health care to its citizens. It is a system of publicly funded compassion. However, this system cannot be sustained as a static model. Now, when health care is no longer a privilege but a right, the effective and efficient provision of health care is expected by Canadian citizens. Change must be an acknowledged part of a healthy health care system. Many opportunities exist to promote and strengthen the position of Canadian health care as a world leader, while at the same time strengthening the Canadian economy as a whole through the development of health industries.

Health care is an issue close to the hearts of all Canadians. Canada has built a tradition of providing comprehensive, universally accessible, publicly administered health care, principles outlined in the *Canada Health Act*. During the 35 years since Medicare was introduced, health care services have changed significantly. New technology – drugs, equipment, techniques, changing demographics, increased life expectancy, and various other factors, have necessitated a review of the future of our health care system. Past efforts at reform have merely resulted in new labels on old bottles. Although some initiatives of significance do exist, such as Saskatchewan’s introduction of health districts – much more is needed. We must look at alternative partnering models for our system to survive.

Canada is faced with a tremendous opportunity. The Global Health Care Industry is changing faster than the computer industry, the chip business or biotechnology. The Health Care Industry is experiencing more convergence than any other sector, including the media, technology or transportation. The Health Care Industry is growing faster than the markets of transportation, retail or manufacturing. And the Health Care Industry is the marketplace with the greatest range of options facing it; more than communications, more than government, more than technology. Health care is our country’s *number one* governmental expenditure, and has the potential to be our *number one* industry. Failing to stake out our position as “world leaders” in this key area will, in time, position us not as “world class”, but as “dead last”.

We have a very important choice, as a community – to be a consumer or a producer of medical research, medical services, and medical opportunities. We can develop these and provide this knowledge to the world, or sit idly by and, at some point in our lives, buy this knowledge from outside. When we do the latter, we will be buying those technologies and services at full price – after this knowledge has been put to beneficial use by citizens outside of Canada. Our failure to capture the opportunity will position Canada as a consumer of health knowledge developed by others with the accompanying bills to pay. As a producer of health knowledge, we have a wonderful opportunity to create wealth for future generations of Canadians.

## ***PART II: Health Care Opportunities Committee***

### ***Background:***

The Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce recognized the need to more closely examine the opportunities within the Health Care sector. As a result, in 1999 the Health Care Opportunities Committee was created. The membership of this committee includes representatives from our Chamber, Saskatoon District Health, the University of Saskatchewan, the Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority, and business people from the private sector – from both inside and outside the health sector, each bringing a unique perspective.

The Committee has identified its purpose *to educate and promote the opportunities for business services, education, research and development in health services and their role in creating the best business climate in Canada for Saskatoon.* The 2020 Health Vision of the Committee is:

- “ *to define a world class health center within the context of the current Canada Health Act;*
- “ *to identify and promote opportunities that a world class health center would create; and,*
- “ *to identify our current health care strengths and the roadblocks we face in becoming a world class health care center.*

In an effort to achieve these goals, the Committee has sought to stimulate discussion and debate on the issues. This has been achieved in a variety of ways, but mainly through the hosting of the *2020 Health Vision Conference.* Since the first Conference was offered in the fall of 2000, with a second annual event held in November 2001. This event provides a forum for stakeholders to debate, discuss, and learn about the issues. Speakers have included international experts in a variety of areas. In 2000, keynotes included Dr. Alan Bernstein from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research speaking on Innovative Partnership Opportunities, Dr. Cal Stiller identifying Innovative Health Service Opportunities, and Dr. Michael Bancroft highlighting the opportunities that will emerge from the Canadian Light Source synchrotron that is currently being built in Saskatoon. In addition, speakers from Saskatoon District Health and the Saskatoon Tribal Council discussed Aboriginal Health Partnerships. Keynotes for 2001 included Dr. Bob Church, a physician, researcher and entrepreneur from the University of Calgary. Dr. Church presented on the topic “World Class or Dead Last”, Don Gerhardt of Medical Alley in Minnesota, spoke on “Wealth Creation Through Health Care in Minnesota”, and Dr. Patricia Simmons for the Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota, discussed “Reaching Excellence”. Plans are currently underway for a third annual conference in November 2002.

The first conference resulted in a number of opportunities being presented and pursued. The 2001 event stressed the necessity to be world class, and highlighted the strategic alliances under development. We aspire to make Saskatoon and Western Canada a recognized world leader in what we believe will be the most important knowledge-based industry of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The 2002 conference will focus on strategies for our future, success stories, and an examination of best practices of private / public partnership models.

### ***Outcomes:***

Through these strategic partnerships, the Committee has been successful in raising awareness of the opportunities that exist in this sector. In addition, the Committee is pursuing opportunities to develop new partnership models that are adaptable and dynamic for the benefit of Canadians now and in the future.

The efforts of the Committee have met with various indicators of success. These include:

- “ A Memorandum of Understanding signing which occurred during the 2000 Health Vision conference. The agreement was between the Canadian Light Source (University of Saskatchewan) and the Spring 8 Synchrotron in Japan.
- “ A Memorandum of Understanding signing which occurred during the 2001 Health Vision conference. The partners – the Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce, Saskatoon District Health, Veterinary Infectious Disease Organization, Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority Inc., and the Institute for Agricultural Rural and Environmental Health (formerly the Centre for Agricultural Medicine). The M.O.U. outlines the agreement of the five partners to form an investigative group, mandated to develop an economic impact model for health research in the Saskatoon region, in order to determine how to effectively invest scarce resources in order to accelerate wealth creation through health research.
- “ The Conferences attracted many attendees. These individuals, from a variety of sectors and backgrounds, gathered together to become educated and informed on the issues and opportunities. The resulting synergies produced great excitement and enthusiasm for the future.
- “ Committee activities, including the Conferences, resulted in a full four months of media focus on health issues, with one particularly intensive month of coverage, producing numerous positive health-based stories.
- “ Agreement in principle to create a Centre of Excellence for Nephrology Services within Saskatoon District Health, located at St. Paul’s Hospital.

### ***PART III: Partnering with the Aboriginal Community***

Saskatchewan has a major opportunity: a growing Aboriginal population. Currently over 11% of Saskatchewan's population is Aboriginal. Moreover, the birthrate among Aboriginals is more than double that of non-Aboriginal people. Over the next two decades Saskatchewan will see a significant change in its cultural makeup. Our Aboriginal community will be an important contributor to the Saskatchewan economy. We are committed to working with Aboriginal people and organizations to ensure that they enjoy a healthy, bright future in our province. Aboriginal leaders aspire to be included in developing health provision systems for their people. We must prepare ourselves to engage Aboriginal people in new partnership relationships to respect these aspirations.

## ***PART IV: Strengths***

Saskatchewan, and in particular Saskatoon, has a great deal to be proud of. The region boasts world class ranking in a variety of areas, and with a variety of organizations. These include, but are not limited to:

- .. The area of telehealth
- .. Innovation Place
- .. Home Care, including the consulting aspect
- .. Canadian Light Source Synchrotron, with particular focus on medical imaging
- .. Clinical services
- .. Pharmaceuticals
- .. Veterinary Infectious Disease Organization

## ***Part V: Challenges***

Our country and communities are faced with a number of challenges surrounding the topic of our health care. Firstly, the culture does not exist for the consideration or discussion of economic development in the health sector. This, linked with a lack of a shared vision for the future of health care, greatly impedes efforts to develop a sustainable system, providing the services Canadians have come to expect, and providing great opportunities for stimulating investment and activity in our economy.

In addition, support for models based on private / public partnerships has been limited. Our Chamber believes that it is integral to the future of our health care system to consider and pursue such partnerships. No one can succeed alone. We must work together towards and approach to challenges which affect us all.

## ***Part VI: Opportunities for the Future***

By thinking and acting as a team inside our communities and among our region, our Chamber believes that we can successfully engage institutions, community-based organizations, Aboriginal organizations, and the private sector in creative partnerships within the context of the *Canada Health Act*. We must respect the support by Canadians for publicly funded health care, but, we must be proactive, not reactive, in our approach. We must have the courage to move ahead to create more adaptable models that have the capacity to change in pace with the geometric growth in health knowledge that is coming upon us. The two certainties that will guide us will be: the support of Canadians for publicly funded health, and a rapidly accelerating pace of change.

It is our Chamber's view that our best approach to reconciling these two certainties will be to create a policy framework that encourages and supports strong partnerships inside and outside the current systems, even with unconventional partners such as ourselves. This must be achieved in order that these partnering agreements can provide the systemic ability necessary to keep pace with the geometric, if not exponential, rates of change that will be upon us in health care provision, health learning systems and health research.

Our partnership is an experiment based on the hypothesis that: Saskatoon is stronger together. We recommend that you consider how your findings might stimulate other such partnerships in and among Canadian jurisdictions. We can and are creating an environment for change.



## ***Part VI: Recommendations***

In summary, the Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce urges the Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada to consider the following recommendations:

1. We must work together to develop a culture which supports and encourages economic development within the health sector.
2. We must seek to create a shared vision for economic opportunities in health.
3. We must address the challenges and barriers that exist and impede economic development within the health sector.
4. We must support and encourage private / public partnerships in our quest to create a world class health care system.

## ***Health Opportunities Committee Members***

Dave Dutchak, *Chair*, President and CEO, M.D. Ambulance Ltd., President, Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce

Dan Anderson, MacPherson Leslie & Tyerman

Tom Archibald, Vice President, Saskatoon District Health

Dr. Charles Baker, A/ Dean of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan

Darrell Balkwill, SDC Development Corporation

Donna L. Birkmaier, Soaring With Eagles Consulting

Dale Botting, C.E.O., Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority Inc.

Ed Hobday, Executive Director, Saskatchewan Medical Association

Richard Bourassa, Bourassa & Associates Rehabilitation Centre

Dr. Barry McLennan, Assistant Dean of Research, College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan

Ray Penner, President, Tap Communications Inc.

Patrick W. Pitka, Vice President Finance and Administration, Hitachi Canadian Industries Ltd.

Al Scholz, Excel Telecommunications (Canada) Inc.

Irene Seiferling, H.J. Linnen Associates Management Consultants

Rob Slinger, Director of Business Development, Canadian Light Source Inc.

Vlatka Tustonic, Manager, Industry Associates Program, *TRLabs*

Dr. E. Bruce Waygood, University Coordinator of Health Research, University of Saskatchewan

***Note: These recommendations are based on the views of the Committee, and do not necessarily represent the views of the parent organizations.***