Innovation, enhancing patient care, improving patient access to medical technology, and economic growth are priorities of MEDEC and its members. MEDEC is committed to being an integral partner in the delivery of high quality healthcare in Canada. Ultimately, the optimization of patient care and health system design through innovative, proven, safe technology is the driving force behind MEDEC efforts.

Through an approach of innovative leadership and learning, government, MEDEC, industry members and other stakeholders can work together to become agents of change to examine, innovate or effectively implement processes, systems and improvements. Increased interaction and collaboration between all stakeholders will enhance the effectiveness of health care programs and initiatives. Ultimately, patients along with their caregivers and/or family within the healthcare system are the real beneficiaries.

MEDEC is working to achieving this through:

- Enhancing patient care
- Improving patient access
- Enabling healthcare system sustainability
- Recognizing healthcare as an economic driver
MEDEC is committed to improving patient care through the rationale adoption of technology, and system innovation and, as such, providing solutions that enable better patient care. Through meaningful engagement between government and the medical device industry all will better understand the medical technologies that are available to improve patient care while optimizing health systems.

Areas of engagement should include:

**Technology Adoption and Reimbursement Policy**

Industry has an important role to play in ensuring Canadian patients receive high quality healthcare through medical technology in partnership with governments. MEDEC and its members clearly understand that any technology innovations introduced in the healthcare system must be aligned with the governments overall priorities of delivering best possible patient outcomes for the public funds spent.

By ensuring that medical innovations are adopted in a safe and timely manner, governments can foster improvements in patient care. A close, collaborative working relationship with MEDEC and its member companies will support governments to directly connect the policy and priority needs of provincial health care systems with health innovations, thereby ensuring appropriate and efficient access to benefit patients. These collaborative efforts between governments and MEDEC are essential to enabling a policy and legislative framework that is supportive of technology adoption that will improve patient care in Canada.

MEDEC recognizes the difficult choices governments face when making decisions regarding reimbursement. As an industry, all have a responsibility to ensure line of sight and better communication with respect to “where technology is going” so the system can prepare for adoption and reimbursement. This “heads up” approach will allow governments to see farther into the future and make informed decisions.
Effective Regionalization

MEDEC and its member companies recognize there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to regionalization of the healthcare system. Given Canada’s geographic and population challenges, MEDEC understands there are a number of successful ways to deliver healthcare in Canada. MEDEC encourages and will continue to support governments in exploring options with respect to regionalization of healthcare delivery and look to best practices where implementation has been successful. MEDEC and its members look forward to ongoing consultation with all stakeholders during regional transformation, since many of the technologies offered by member companies ensure connectivity between providers and patients, and improved patient outcomes.

Health Technology Assessments (HTAs)

HTAs are becoming an integral component of the Canadian healthcare environment. HTAs are invaluable on many levels and should be used to inform decisions on the adoption, uptake, clinical applications and reimbursement of healthcare technologies. As the implementation of HTA in Canada is in its early stages, opportunity exists to design processes that are aligned, promoting the sharing of information thus creating efficiencies by eliminating duplication of effort. As the Government of Canada, each province and some hospitals are establishing their own HTA organizations, it is critical that we partner to coordinate efforts and reduce duplication of efforts.

A second and most critical opportunity to capitalize on is to link HTA to other decision making processes that impact clinical adoption, change management and funding/reimbursement. MEDEC recognizes the challenges of decision making in very complex and somewhat silo-based health systems, however, the true value of HTA and innovative medical technologies will only be realized through a whole system approach to health care resource management. MEDEC has developed expertise in HTA with and through member companies and is actively participating in HTA processes in several provincial jurisdictions. MEDEC stands by to partner with others in creating valid, efficient and useful HTAs.
Governments face an enormous challenge with improving access to healthcare for Canadians in rural and remote communities. MEDEC supports government collaborations to develop comprehensive strategies to address the unique issues facing rural and remote patients and to ensure access to a high quality of care. There are a number of challenges that governments face as they attempt to move care away from the acute care setting and into the community. Challenges around role clarity for practitioners, technology, geography and socioeconomic factors will all need to be addressed to deliver high quality care to all Canadians regardless of where they live.

As governments continue to develop these strategies, MEDEC can be an important partner in providing insight and access into medical device innovations and strategies that could address some of the policy challenges. Many MEDEC companies are actively engaged in new approaches to remote and rural care, both in Canada and around the world. MEDEC’s member companies have the expertise, experience and skills that could provide beneficial insights in this area, which MEDEC encourages governments to take full advantage of.
Governments are continuing to struggle to contain the costs of delivering health care and will continue to do so as Canada’s population ages. MEDEC and its members support governments in this pursuit and can provide assistance from both a technology and system improvement perspective. The opportunity exists to partner with the medical device industry to better understand how to best leverage their investments and utilize technology in a way that supports system sustainability.

Areas where governments and MEDEC could partner together to enable health care system sustainability include:

**Healthy Procurement Processes**

MEDEC supports government’s goals of achieving best value for money in the procurement of goods and services. All public tendering should be conducted with fair, open and transparent sourcing processes that are consistent with supply chain guidelines and with governing agreements such as the Agreement on Internal Trade and applicable laws.

To support these practices, MEDEC follows its own industry-led Code of Conduct that is aligned with the spirit of fair and open tendering processes and interactions with government officials and healthcare professionals.

Governments have an obligation to ensure that any tendering processes are fair and open while at the same time recognizing the importance of innovation in delivering the best healthcare possible, as outlined in MEDEC’s Best Tendering Practices1. Procurement practices that are established ideally encourage innovation and foster the exchange of value between the parties in order to ensure the best outcomes for the system, the patient and the taxpayer.

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1 MEDEC’s Best Tendering Practices, January 2010, was jointly developed by MEDEC and our government healthcare partners - http://www.medec.org/webfm_send/1423
Effective Funding Models

MEDEC recognizes that the system is currently funded in a variety of ways and at different levels across Canada. Governments have a role to play to ensure that all Canadians have access to medically necessary procedures when they need them. As governments look to modernize their system funding models, for example, through primary care reform or incentives to keep patients in the home, governments would benefit by consulting with our sector to see how technology can play a role in ensuring system sustainability. Additionally, Canadian governments can and should look to other global jurisdictions that have modernized funding models to improve patient outcomes. Similarly, MEDEC members who have an international presence can and are willing to share their experiences and learning obtained in these jurisdictions.

Meeting the Demographic Challenge

MEDEC recognizes that medical device technology will be an instrumental tool in assisting governments as they address the imminent demographic challenges faced by Canada. As the Canadian population ages, governments will need to work collaboratively to facilitate transforming the system to be able to deliver more care in the home or outside of acute care settings. MEDEC and its member companies can provide technology and share expertise in how to effectively transform care to allow patients to remain in their home or in the care of their family longer. MEDEC member input will be invaluable, and most probably crucial, in ensuring that patients and the system are able to best address the management of chronic disease and co-morbidities as Canada’s aging population continues to grow. Technology in these areas will be vitally important to ensure Canadians are better able to manage their care, thus keeping them out of the high cost acute care space to the extent that is possible.
Canada spends $200 billion on health care annually yet there is no strategy on how to best integrate this investment with economic potential. MEDEC and its members already invest substantially in Canada and contribute significantly to the economy – our industry is an economic driver. Recognizing that patients come first, governments can better align health care spending with opportunities to foster jobs and economic growth in the health care environment. Working together with this complementary goal in mind, Canada has an opportunity to be a global leader in driving a healthcare economy.

Governments can drive a health care economy by working with MEDEC in the following areas:

Providing Adequate Support for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs)

The medical device industry employs more than 35,000 people in close to 1,500 corporate facilities, and many MEDEC member companies are developing medical products here in Canada. Often this development is done with the support of provincial and federal government programs. These programs are generally run through the governments’ Ministries of Industry, Trade, and/or Innovation. However, when it comes time to commercializing these products, the same governments, through their Ministries of Health, have conflicting objectives that need to be resolved to the benefit of patient care and system optimization.

Canada is unique in its publicly funded, single-payer system. In many cases, the government is the only customer for medical products. However Ministries of Health across Canada do not allocate adequate funding for new technologies. Consequently, there is little support to commercialize products that have been developed and made in Canada. As an innovation nation, governments should foster Canada as being the first place to adopt some of these innovative technologies instead of forcing them to go to global markets first.
Improved government collaboration across various levels in supporting Canadian SMEs through accelerated adoption within the Canadian healthcare system would be a boon to innovation and the economy.

**Strengthening the Research and Commercialization Environment**

MEDEC and its member companies conduct extensive research around the globe in both developing and testing medical technology. Canada is uniquely positioned with its strong research institutions and highly skilled workforce to drive economic growth by fully enabling this innovation environment.

Canada has traditionally had strong research capabilities; however, there is much to be improved in commercialization of medical technology. Commercialization opportunities remain limited within Canada. Governments can partner with industry to better leverage their strength in research to drive a commercialization agenda that will further entrench medical technology development as a driver of the Canadian economy. If successful, Canada has an opportunity to be a global leader in driving a leading healthcare economy.

**Improving the Business Climate of Innovation**

The government has an important role in promoting programs and tax strategies that encourage all companies, large and small, to continue to invest in Canada, as well as continuing to encourage innovation and technology development through facilitation of research and development with our nation’s academic medical research communities.

Bringing technology to Canadians, and making it cost effective for device manufacturers to do so, would be well served by having harmonization of device licensing reviews. By Health Canada recognizing the review process of the USA or Europe to achieve market authorization, costs would be lower to obtain Canadian authorizations, and therefore we would have faster time to market in Canada and less burdensome financial impact. Health Canada is strongly encouraged to identify a process where mutual recognition of other country authorizations would become a reality, with positive outcomes for suppliers and Canadians, and no compromises to patient quality or safety.

Now, more than ever, capital and people are global and move to jurisdictions where they welcome industry and where their investment can demonstrate return on investment. Canada has a positive track record to date, but as other nations move quickly, the Canadian system has to be dynamic in its response. This means active attention to our tax structure and our regulatory structure to ensure business can be successful in Canada. On tax, MEDEC is supportive of the extensive research and development support structure (SR&ED), which should continue to be leveraged.

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**ABOUT MEDEC**

MEDEC is the national association representing the medical technology industry in Canada. Our members are committed to providing safe and innovative medical technologies that enhance patient care and advance patient outcomes. The medical technology industry in Canada employs over 35,000 Canadians in close to 1,500 corporate facilities, and has sales of nearly $7 billion per annum. We are committed to ensuring that Canada has a strong and vibrant medical technology industry.

**MEDEC**

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