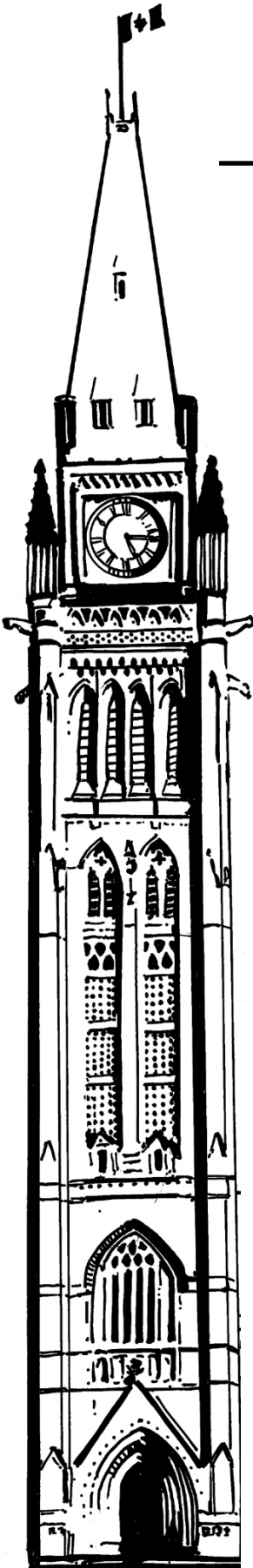


Dean Del Mastro, Member of Parliament – Peterborough

Media Release

For immediate release



Canada's New Government Invests \$2 million to Develop New Drugs to Combat Influenza

(March 23, 2007) Peterborough, ON – On behalf of Health Minister Tony Clement, Dean Del Mastro, Member of Parliament for Peterborough, ON, today announced that Canada's New Government is investing \$2 million to support research to develop drugs that are effective in combating a pandemic influenza virus.

The funding will be provided to the International Consortium on Antivirals (ICAV), a non-profit Canadian consortium founded to foster collaboration among experts in the public, private and academic sectors. The funding will aid in the establishment of the international headquarters for ICAV in Peterborough at Trent University.

Antivirals are medications used to treat those who become sick with influenza and can also be used to prevent illness. At the onset of a pandemic, when an effective vaccine may not be available, antivirals will be an important part of the public health response.

"Canada's New Government is committed to enhancing our capacity to respond to a public health emergency, including an influenza pandemic," said Mr. Del Mastro. "Antivirals are one component of our comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to pandemic planning. This investment in international research will assist in the development of more effective, low-cost antivirals that will be an important part of our early response to an influenza pandemic."

The International Consortium on Antivirals includes representation from leading national and international researchers. The goal of the organization is to rapidly transform world class international research results into low cost, antiviral drugs with high public health benefits. The ICAV's initial focus is to develop anti-influenza drugs that have demonstrated early potential and warrant further investment for eventual production.

"This \$2 million grant over the next two years will allow ICAV to continue working towards its goal of discovering and developing new therapeutic interventions for viral infections," said Dr. Jeremy Carver, ICAV's Chief Executive and Scientific Officer. "Ultimately, we'll leverage the expertise we develop through our research on antivirals effective against an influenza pandemic to deliver low-cost antiviral drugs to patients around the world for diseases such as HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B and C, dengue fever, rotavirus infection in children and many others."

Dean Del Mastro, M.P. Peterborough

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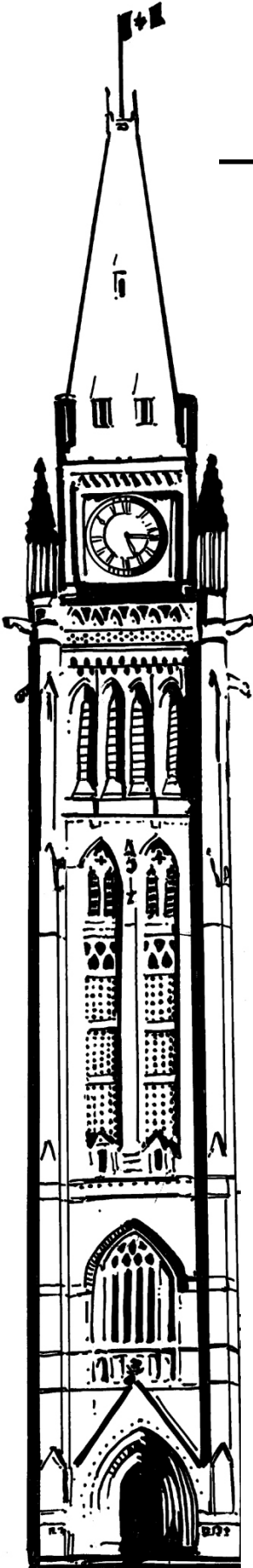
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"ICAV's close association with our university will have a profound impact on the Trent community by enriching the educational and research opportunities for faculty and students while expanding Trent's footprint in the international arena," said Bonnie M. Patterson, President and Vice-Chancellor, Trent University. "Trent faculty and students will be introduced to acclaimed scientists who are developing the antivirals required to respond to the threat of an influenza pandemic."

As part of Canada's Pandemic Influenza Plan, a National Antiviral Stockpile has been established to treat Canadians who will require medical attention during a pandemic. At the same time, the Government of Canada is investing in the development of a pandemic influenza vaccine, the most effective protection against a global outbreak of a new influenza virus.

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