

**MEDIA RELEASE – EMBARGOED UNTIL MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2021, 7:00 AM ET**

## **Biomanufacturing partnership boosts Canada's life-saving treatment and vaccine capacity**

***The Ottawa Hospital, the University of Alberta and BioCanRx collaborate to manufacture vaccines, gene therapies, cell therapies and more***

As Canada seeks to rebuild its biomanufacturing sector and support made-in-Canada solutions to global health challenges, The Ottawa Hospital, the University of Alberta and BioCanRx have collaborated to create Canada's first full-service, end-to-end biomanufacturing solution for academic and industrial clients.

The three organizations have signed a memorandum of understanding to enhance collaboration between:

- The Ottawa Hospital's Biotherapeutics Manufacturing Centre (BMC), which has a 15-year track record of biomanufacturing and is home to Canada's only hands-on biomanufacturing training program
- Alberta Cell Therapy Manufacturing (ACTM), which has some of the most advanced biomanufacturing facilities in Canada
- BioCanRx, a Canada-wide research network focused on developing and translating life-saving biotherapies and immunotherapies for cancer

The partners are already collaborating to manufacture many therapies and vaccines, including:

- A potentially curative gene therapy for lipoprotein lipase deficiency, an inherited disorder that is more common in Québec
- Mesenchymal stem / stromal cells for septic shock, a deadly condition that occurs when the immune system overreacts to an infection
- COVID-19 vaccines, in partnership with Entos Pharmaceuticals

"Canada has some of the best scientific minds in the world working to develop new therapies and vaccines, but they have been limited by our lack of domestic biomanufacturing capacity," said Dr. Duncan Stewart, Executive Vice-President of Research at The Ottawa Hospital and a professor at the University of Ottawa. "This new partnership, which combines areas of strength across the country, will greatly enhance Canada's ability to produce life-saving medical treatments and vaccines."

"For Canada to play a key role in new breakthrough therapies and vaccines, we must invest in multiple facilities across the country, and foster collaboration," said Dr. Greg Korbitt, Scientific Director of ACTM and Professor of Surgery at the University of Alberta. "This agreement sets the stage for that, a Canadian biomanufacturing ecosystem."

“This partnership will not only scale up our domestic biomanufacturing capacity, but include hands-on GMP training to meet the astounding demand for biomanufacturing personnel,” said Dr. Stéphanie Michaud, President and CEO of BioCanRx. “More importantly, it serves to support our 'made-in-Canada' approach focused on expanding access to clinical trials for potentially life-saving cancer treatments, right here, in Canada.”

“Canada has deep biopharma research experience, so it's great to see expansion in the biomanufacturing sector. Hopefully, Canada continues to invest in initiatives such as this,” said Entos CEO John Lewis. “Accessing the facilities and expertise at ACTM and The Ottawa Hospital has significantly helped propel our COVID-19 vaccine candidate into clinical trials.”

Photos and video are available for media.

### **About The Ottawa Hospital's Biotherapeutics Manufacturing Centre**

The Ottawa Hospital's Biotherapeutics Manufacturing Centre (BMC) is the most experienced and successful facility of its kind in Canada, having manufactured more than a dozen different cell and virus-based products for human clinical trials in Canada, the United States, Europe and Asia. With eight manufacturing suites and 40 full-time staff, BMC offers a full range of services to both academic and corporate partners, all done according to Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) standards. BMC also leads Canada's only hands-on training program in biomanufacturing, in partnership with Algonquin College, the University of Ottawa and Mitacs. Founded in 2006, BMC has been supported by the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the Ontario Research Fund, BioCanRx and generous donors to The Ottawa Hospital Foundation. [www.ohri.ca/bmc](http://www.ohri.ca/bmc).

### **About Alberta Cell Therapy Manufacturing**

The University of Alberta's [ACTM facility](#) helps bring new vaccines and cell-therapies to patients. Purpose built for biomanufacturing to regulatory Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) requirements, this 10,000-square foot multi-purpose facility contains 6 separate cleanrooms, a quality control lab and a soon to be completed fill-finish suite. This combined with ACTM's expert GMP staff help research and industry clients translate cell-based therapies from bench to bedside.

### **About BioCanRx**

BioCanRx, Canada's Immunotherapy Network, is a network of scientists, clinicians, cancer stakeholders, academic institutions, NGOs and industry partners working together to accelerate the development of leading-edge immune oncology therapies for the benefit of patients. Our vision is to cure patients and enhance the quality of life of those living with cancer. BioCanRx invests in leading edge immune oncology research translating world-class technologies from the lab into early phase clinical trials. BioCanRx provides researchers with access to funding, expertise, training and manufacturing facilities and is a leader in the translation, manufacture and adoption of cancer immunotherapies. The network is committed to training and developing the talent needed for a thriving health biotechnology sector in Canada. BioCanRx receives funding from the federal government's Networks of Centres of Excellence,

and support from industry, the provinces and charities. The network is hosted by the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute. <https://biocanrx.com/>

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