



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

APEC Digital Hub welcomes recommendations to grow health care sector in innovative ways

Government must support small and large innovative health projects in timely fashion for ideas to grow into outcomes for Canadians

OTTAWA, FEB. 7, 2017—The APEC Digital Hub for Mental Health welcomes the Advisory Council on Economic Growth's recommendation to help grow "high potential sectors" in Canada, including health care, in innovative ways in its report, *The Path to Prosperity*. The report, released on Feb. 6, directly references the creation of sector-specific hubs as a means to increasing economic growth.

"The APEC Digital Hub embodies everything that the Council puts forward in its recommendation on the importance of collaborative and innovative centres of excellence," said Phil Upshall, APEC Digital Hub chief financial officer. "The Digital Hub is a key platform for Canadian scientists, innovators, businesses, industry, health institutes and governments to share knowledge, research, data, public policies and best practices while helping those suffering from mental illness and contributing to economic growth. In the process, we will be shaping mental healthcare through global science excellence and world-leading partnerships and clusters that will allow us to successfully compete in the digital world."

The Council identifies eight sectors that "stand out" as areas "where Canada has a strong endowment, untapped potential, and significant global growth prospects" that need a "focused approach that removes barriers and galvanizes the sector around a bold growth agenda." The sectors include agriculture and food; energy and renewables; mining and metals; healthcare and life sciences, advanced manufacturing; financial services; tourism and education.

The report states that hubs are vital because they "provide an organizing body to collectively market (including identifying international outlets and building a strong brand), encourage innovation (providing immediate opportunities to pilot and scale new technologies), provide financial services, and promote growth-oriented policies (such as tax incentives, streamlined regulations, and rapid technology registration)."

Trade focus

Upshall noted that the report also focuses on fostering trade with Asia as an economic growth mechanism. The APEC Digital Hub can play a central role in fostering these international trade ties. "As a strong partner at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, Canada is well-positioned to lead in innovative ways in the global fight against mental illness while helping Canadians benefit from the knowledge, research, best practices and public policies generated through the Digital Hub," Upshall said. "There is no better example of creating opportunities for Canada and strengthening the relationship with APEC economies than the Digital Hub."

International, Indigenous Peoples health focus, and more

The Digital Hub's focus areas include: workplace wellness and resilience; integration with primary care and community settings; advocacy and public awareness; vulnerable communities and children, mental wellness of Indigenous communities; disaster resilience and trauma; and data collection and standardization. These all cut across several government departments and policy priorities, requiring a whole-of-government collaboration—something the Advisory Council noted in its report as an important factor to remove obstacles to economic growth.



Mood Disorders Society of Canada
La Société Pour Les Troubles de L'Humeur du Canada



a place of mind

“The Digital Hub touches on all aspects of high-priority policies for the federal government, including mental health, innovation, international trade, global affairs, youth, primary care, science, public safety and post-traumatic stress disorder, Indigenous health, and more,” Upshall said. “We look forward to Canada’s leadership at the APEC forum in Vietnam this fall to further showcase how the Digital Hub can help grow our economy while addressing one of the biggest challenges of our time.”

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For more information

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About the APEC Digital Hub on Mental Health

The University of British Columbia hosts the APEC Digital Hub, working in collaboration with the University of Alberta and the Mood Disorders Society of Canada (MDSC). With Canada’s leadership, the Hub will serve as the epicentre of APEC’s plan to promote mental wellness across the Asia Pacific.

Website: <http://mentalhealth.apec.org/>

Video: <http://bit.ly/APEChub>

Finance Committee 2017 pre-budget submission on APEC Digital Hub: <http://bit.ly/APECDigitalHub>