EVALUATION OF THE HUMAN HEALTH THERAPEUTICS RESEARCH CENTRE

NRC-EVALUATION

The Human Health Therapeutics (HHT) Research Centre provides technological and scientific support to public and private-sector research organizations – particularly Canadian small and medium-sized enterprises – in an effort to de-risk and accelerate the discovery and development of innovative medicines for Canada. The evaluation assessed HHT's relevance and performance between 2014-15 and 2018-19.

HHT's Budget (2014-15 to 2018-19)

Total Expenditures: $168.95 Million
Total Revenues: $65.72 Million

HHT's Resources (as of 31 Mar, 2019)

Staff: 340 full-time equivalents
Locations: Ottawa, ON / Montreal, QC / Halifax, NS

RESULTS

HHT's research has consistently aligned with both industry needs and government priorities, and the Research Centre has relied on staff that are well recognized for their expertise and capabilities. Key accomplishments include:

Impact on Business Innovation

- Increased commercialization and market valuation for clients
- Increased investment for clients
- New and/or improved capabilities for clients

Advancement of Scientific Knowledge

- Leading-edge research in therapeutics across the Blood-Brain Barrier
- Largest intellectual property portfolio at the NRC
- Research used in best practices, clinical practice guidelines, good manufacturing practices and experimental/manufacturing protocols

Government Policy Solutions

- Some research aligned with federal government priorities
- Collaboration with federal partners has contributed to important public health research, such as the development of an antibody cocktail against Ebola

HHT's way forward looks promising with programs and initiatives that are tackling important needs of the sector. To help HHT achieve its new objectives, the evaluation noted a few areas for improvement:

Strategic Focus

HHT's 2019-24 strategic plan is aligned with both government priorities and industry needs, but may be too ambitious. Activities carried out under large-scale biomanufacturing were noted by the PRC to be beyond the suggested scope of an R&D institution such as HHT. However, the PRC acknowledges that these activities currently address a critical gap in Canada.

Impact on Government Policy Solutions

HHT research has contributed to important advancements in public health, particularly in the area of emerging infections. To better position itself to respond to new or changing federal public health priorities, HHT will require a more systematic approach to engaging with OGDs.

Resource Planning

Significant challenges, such as recent increases in workload, budget reductions, aging facilities and a workforce nearing retirement, may hinder HHT's ability to achieve objectives moving forward.

Project Selection

HHT's former strategy was client-focused and revenue-driven. Consequently, projects had limited strategic alignment with broader federal or organizational priorities.

Research Data Management

HHT holds a wealth of high-quality raw data. Thoughtful integration of data mining and data management techniques into project lifecycles could lead to increased efficiencies and more informed decision-making.

Impact on Research Innovation

HHT's blood-brain barrier technologies are leading-edge, but risk not generating their anticipated impact should the right industry partner not be secured in a timely way.

The full report is available on the NRC's website: https://nrc.canada.ca/en/corporate/planning-reporting/evaluation