News from the Chairperson

This past August, the Board released a Notice and Comment on its draft revised Excessive Price Guidelines, soliciting submissions from its stakeholders by October 6, 2008. These draft revised Guidelines come on the heels of extensive consultations with stakeholders over the last three years.

The Board received a total of 44 submissions, all of which are posted on our Web site.

To assist stakeholders, Board Staff held information sessions in mid-September to summarize the Board's positions reflected in the draft revised Guidelines as well as those recommendations of the various Working Groups that the Board did not pursue. It was also an opportunity to clarify the content of the draft revised Guidelines and to respond to questions stakeholders may have had on the document.

It has been the Board's objective to ensure that the Guidelines remain relevant and appropriate in the context of an ever evolving pharmaceutical environment. The Board remains committed to provide transparency and predictability in its price review process, important elements to offering guidance to patentees. To that end, the Board met with the Board of Directors of Rx&D on October 21, 2008 and with representatives of BIOTECanada on October 22, to further discuss the draft revised Guidelines and issues which remain of concern to the industry.

On October 22, the Board also met to review the submissions and discuss next steps. The Board is continuing with its assessment of the submissions and will update stakeholders of its progress through the Web site and in upcoming issues of the NEWSletter.

On behalf of my colleagues, I take this opportunity to thank all those who have taken the time to review the draft revised Guidelines and provide the Board their thoughtful and valuable feedback. ■

Brien G. Benoit, MD, Chairperson