Options for the Control of Influenza VI

June 17-23, 2007 • Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Welcome Letter from the Conference Chair

Options for the Control of Influenza has grown from a small scientific symposium in 1985 to what is today the largest international conference exclusively devoted to influenza, and covering every imaginable topic from basic science to healthcare policy. Whatever your domain of expertise—science, veterinary medicine, human medicine, public health policy, industry, or the media—your insights are needed to meet the challenges of a single threat: influenza.

Expanding the depth and breadth of previous Options, this meeting will provide comprehensive scientific guidance for all disciplines involved in influenza prevention, control, and treatment, including seasonal and pandemic planning. We recognize the critical importance of communicating these issues in an understandable way to those outside a given area of expertise, and are especially interested in fostering interdisciplinary conversations among all participants, including members of the media.

As we are all too well aware, influenza prevention, control, and treatment present formidable challenges for global healthcare and research. This perennial adversary exacts an enormous toll in terms of its morbidity, mortality, and economic burden; consequently, we eagerly anticipate presentations about new vaccines and treatments for influenza. Options VI provides a forum for the international collaboration that is essential to the timely detection and control of new influenza strains. As influenza A (H5N1) and other viruses continue their seemingly inexorable advance, the need for comprehensive, effective pandemic planning has never been more urgent.

To address these needs, Options VI presentations and session topics have been designed to maximize the opportunities for informal discussions and exchange of ideas between representatives of government agencies, academia, and industry. Presentation formats will include keynote addresses, state-of-the-art lectures, invited lectures, scientific workshops, oral abstract presentations, satellite symposia, and poster sessions. To further stimulate conversation, we have augmented the scientific program with a rich variety of cultural and culinary activities in and around Toronto.

The key objectives of Options VI include:

- Provide comprehensive, state-of-the-art scientific information for all disciplines involved in influenza prevention, control, and treatment, including seasonal and pandemic planning
- Promote genuine international and multidisciplinary collaboration supporting the full spectrum of influenza research, from basic science, to the development of new vaccines and antiviral agents, to epidemiology and control programs
- Provide a collegial atmosphere within which scientists working in public health and scientists working in agricultural or veterinary agencies may exchange information to develop collaborative approaches to the control and prevention of pandemic influenza
- Maximize the opportunities for informal discussions and exchange of ideas between representatives of government agencies, academia, and industry
- Knowledge is power: your participation in Options VI will provide up-to-the-minute access to comprehensive information and key authorities spanning the full extent of influenza research, prevention, control, and treatment.

On behalf of both the organizing committee and the scientific program committee, I sincerely thank you for your participation,

Nancy J Cox, PhD
Conference Chair
Chief, Influenza Branch
Director, WHO Collaborating Center for Epidemiology and Control of Influenza
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention