

**Speech
for a
Member of Parliament**

Adjournment Proceeding on COVID-19 Vaccines

The Government of Canada is committed to ensuring that all Canadians will have access to a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine.

Efforts are underway around the world to develop a COVID-19 vaccine. However, vaccine development is a highly complex process that typically takes over 10 years to complete. This is due to the extensive research required to ensure a safe and effective product for human use.

Nevertheless, work is progressing at an unprecedented pace with over 120 COVID-19 vaccine candidates in the global pipeline. The Government understands that ensuring Canada has a diverse portfolio of vaccine candidates will give Canada the best chance of early access to safe and effective vaccines.

We are aware that COVID-19 continues to have a significant impact on the lives of Canadians, and I can assure you that our government has a plan to address this public health issue.

The Government of Canada has invested more than \$1 billion in support of a national medical research strategy to fight COVID-19 that includes vaccine development, production of treatments, and tracking of the virus.

In Canada, at least 30 experimental vaccines are currently in the early stages of development, many of which are expected to enter human clinical trials in the coming months.

In addition, the Government has entered into agreements with six suppliers to secure millions of doses of the leading COVID-19 vaccines, and negotiations are underway with other potential vaccine suppliers.

The Government of Canada understands that advance purchase agreements with suppliers are an investment in the promise of vaccines. We know that a diverse portfolio of vaccine candidates will give Canada the greatest chance of securing sufficient supply of vaccines for Canadians.

While every effort is being made to expedite vaccine development - safety, efficacy and quality must not be compromised. To ensure the appropriate balance has been struck, the Government of Canada is reviewing its regulatory pathways to help expedite access to safe and effective vaccines for Canadians.

In addition, the Government is working with regulators and international partners to accelerate clinical trials and applications for vaccines, treatments and diagnostic tests, as well as to share information on any signs of disruption in global supply.

Furthermore, as part of our response, the Government has convened a Vaccine Task Force to provide advice to the Government of Canada on how best to support domestic vaccine research and help ensure Canadian leadership in

vaccine development, bio-manufacturing and international partnerships. Task force members include vaccine experts, as well as industry leaders with proven ability in developing and commercializing vaccines.

In addition to the working group, Canada's National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) will formalize national recommendations and directions on the optimal use of vaccines against COVID-19 that will be approved by Health Canada.

The Government of Canada is also working closely with academia and the private sector to advance research and development of candidate vaccines by partnering on pre-clinical research, bio-manufacturing requirements to support large-scale production, enhancing capacity and access for clinical trials, and seeking solutions for domestic capacity.

Lastly, our Government is working very closely with our provincial and territorial partners. Provincial and territorial governments have the responsibility to deliver vaccination programs and determine public health requirements in their jurisdictions.

Our Government is committed to working with the Provinces and Territories to ensure that the health system is prepared for a national roll out of a COVID vaccine when one becomes available so that all Canadians will have access to a safe and effective vaccine. We are also

working to ensure there are sufficient supplies, such as needles and syringes, for COVID-19 vaccination clinics.

As we continue our efforts to combat this pandemic, Canadians can rest assured that we will continue to monitor and support scientific data and ensure that the best available evidence supports our efforts, decisions and advice.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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Mr. Speaker, the COVID-19 pandemic is unprecedented and Canadians expect strong action from the Government of Canada.

I can assure you that the Government of Canada is firmly committed to supporting the timely development and distribution of COVID-19 vaccine and securing sufficient supply for Canadians.

The Government of Canada is making the necessary investments and partnering with industry specifically because we are determined to secure the earliest possible access to safe and effective vaccines against COVID-19.

The Government is proud to be contributing to collective efforts towards a safe, effective, and affordable COVID-19 vaccine. Through our \$1 billion investment, the

Government of Canada is supporting multiple organizations who are working at unprecedented speed to develop candidate vaccines.

We recognize the importance of a COVID vaccine for long-term recovery in Canada and internationally and Canadians can rest assured the Government will ensure all Canadians will have access to a COVID vaccine when one becomes available.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.