

CPHO Remarks – Monday, May 11, 2020

Good afternoon. As usual, I'll start with the latest figures for COVID-19 in Canada. There are now **68,738** confirmed cases, including **4,870** deaths and **31,600** people who have recovered (**47 percent**). To date, laboratories across Canada have analyzed the COVID-19 screening tests of more than **1,090,000** people; the result was positive in about **6 percent** of those tests. Over the past week, an average of **26,000** people a day took a screening test. These figures change quickly and are regularly updated on the [Canada.ca/coronavirus](https://canada.ca/coronavirus) site.

Here we are, beginning a new week after celebrating our mothers and our caregivers, whether they are at home with us, at the other end of a virtual connection, or treasured and not forgotten in our memories, the strength of their emotional support is not lost on any one of us. So, at the end of the week, we reflected on this basic human need that we have for that powerful force for good. Emotional support is that quiet thing that speeds up the healing of our cuts and scrapes, that calms our fears, and reassures us that everything is going to be all right.

That leads me to this very special week, where the goal is to recognize the work of the most important caregivers in our society, and that is National Nursing Week, which begins today.

We all know that nursing staff provide expert care, marked by such special emotional support, and we have all witnessed the numerous sacrifices that these people have made in all areas of healthcare during this crisis.

However, their expertise and their influence does not stop there; they shine in all areas of healthcare, from education to developing standards and guidelines, to delivering public health programs like immunization, to implementing infection prevention and control practices, and to contributing to research and innovation.

Nursing staff contribute to wellbeing wherever they go, and we feel much better thanks to them.

This week, let's take the time to thank Canada's nursing staff, by participating at 7 pm, in giving encouragement from your doorway by making a sign thanking the heroes of healthcare in your community, or by putting a light in your window in their honour on Tuesday night.

Why Tuesday?

Because nurses everywhere will be celebrating the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale, who revolutionized nursing care. That revolution had a modest beginning, with putting hygiene and handwashing practices in place to save lives by limiting the spread of potentially fatal infections.

Slowly, but with steadfast determination, Ms. Nightingale set higher standards and raised the profile of the nursing profession, and left an indelible mark on the education of nursing staff. Consequently, in recognition of the emotional support, the daily sacrifices, and the unwavering professionalism of nurses everywhere, put a light in your window on Tuesday night!

Thank you