

Issue: Procurement of COVID-19 vaccines

Context

Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) is working with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), Health Canada and Industry, Science and Economic Development Canada, along with the COVID Vaccine Task Force to prepare for the procurement of COVID-19 vaccines and related supplies.

Suggested response

- Given intense global competition, the Government is taking an aggressive approach to secure access to the most promising vaccine candidates so that Canada is prepared to deliver vaccines to its citizens as quickly as possible
- On behalf of the Public Health Agency of Canada, based on recommendations from the COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force, we have already established agreements with AstraZeneca, Sanofi and GlaxoSmithKline, Novavax, Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer and Moderna to secure up to 282 million doses of their vaccine candidates
- The agreement with GlaxoSmithKline secures their established pandemic adjuvant technology that will help the Sanofi vaccine produce a stronger immune response
- The Government continues to negotiate additional agreements with both domestic and international suppliers to establish a guaranteed supply of potential vaccine
- I would like to thank the members of the COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force for their expert advice, as we work toward securing future vaccines to protect Canadians

If pressed on the details of advance purchase agreements:

- To date, the Government of Canada has allocated approximately \$1 billion for the six agreements that are in place
- This includes some upfront payments that the pharmaceutical companies require to support vaccine development, testing and at-risk manufacturing prior to regulatory approval
- While not recoverable, this investment guarantees Canada's earliest possible place in production runs

If pressed on the status of clinical trials or regulatory approvals:

- We are all eager to deliver safe and effective vaccines to Canadians as soon as possible, and that is exactly what we are working on every single day

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Date:
2020-07-03

- As you are aware, clinical trials for these vaccine candidates are ongoing and any vaccines require Health Canada approval
- While Health Canada will be expediting the review of vaccines for COVID-19, this will be done without sacrificing standards for safety, efficacy and quality
- In particular, it is important that there is evidence from large clinical trials that demonstrate that the vaccine can provide protection from infection

If pressed on Canada's participation in the COVAX Facility:

- Canada supports the objectives and principles of the COVAX Facility, which supports equitable global access to safe, effective, and affordable COVID-19 vaccines, once developed
- On September 18, Canada signed an agreement to participate in the COVAX Facility
- This will allow us to diversify our portfolio of vaccine candidates, provide an additional mechanism to donate or sell surplus doses to other nations, potentially secure earlier access to vaccine doses, and reduce the risk of export controls preventing delivery of doses to Canada
- Through this agreement, Canada will also have access to up to 15 million vaccine doses, if required, while supporting equitable global access to safe, effective, and affordable COVID-19 vaccines
- This facility allows us to accomplish together what none of us could accomplish alone

If pressed on provincial and territorial collaboration:

- From the outset the Government of Canada has been working directly with provincial and territorial governments to ensure that we are considering their needs
- We are in regular contact with provincial and territorial counterparts to ensure that we are working cohesively and collaboratively, and that they are getting the support they need

If pressed on whether Canada will have adequate amounts of influenza vaccine doses:

- The Government of Canada buys influenza vaccines on behalf of provincial and territorial governments, who determine the number of seasonal influenza vaccine doses purchased each year
- Canada usually orders around 11 million doses each year. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is anticipated that more Canadians may wish to receive the seasonal flu vaccine this year
- In order to meet this increased demand, we have secured access to 14.5 million doses of flu vaccine already and are working on securing additional quantities

- Five manufacturers are under contract to provide these doses. 9.5 million have already been made available, with the remainder to be delivered between now and December

If pressed on material shortages:

- The Government of Canada is purchasing supplies from a number of sources and countries, both internationally and domestically
- We have entered into contracts for materials such as syringes and needles to ensure sufficient supplies to support immunization clinics
- This is over and above the efforts provinces and territories are taking to secure their own supplies

If pressed on National Security Exception (NSE) contracting:

- The NSE is invoked to remove procurements from the obligations of Canada's trade agreements for reasons of national security
- In the case of COVID-19, after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the pandemic, PHAC made a request on behalf of the federal government that PSPC invoke the NSE with respect to the acquisition of goods and services required in order to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Some of the procurements being carried out in response to COVID-19 are being done under a NSE, meaning that many solicitation documents are not published on Buy and Sell. This allows us to move rapidly as we purchase goods and services to protect the health and safety of Canadians as we face this pandemic
- In line with our commitment to transparency, we have published information on COVID-19-related contracts on the Public Services and Procurement Canada website

Background

The Government of Canada has signed agreements in principle with the following companies to obtain access to their vaccine candidates:

- AstraZeneca, which will supply up to 20 million doses of its viral vector vaccine candidate ADZ1222
- Sanofi and GSK, which will supply up to 72 million of doses of their protein subunit vaccine candidate. The agreement with GSK secures their established pandemic adjuvant technology that will help the Sanofi vaccine produce a stronger immune response
- Johnson & Johnson, which will supply up to 38 million doses of its viral vector vaccine candidate Ad26.COV2.S
- Novavax, which will supply up to 76 million doses of its protein subunit vaccine candidate NVX-CoV2373

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- Pfizer, which will supply a minimum of 20 million doses of its mRNA vaccine candidate, BNT162. The government is negotiating with the company to have the agreement include options for obtaining additional doses
- Moderna, which will supply up to 56 million doses of its mRNA vaccine candidate mRNA-1273

Currently, no vaccines have been approved to prevent COVID-19. Many vaccines are in clinical trials or under development. When additional studies have been completed, Health Canada will review the evidence of safety, efficacy, and manufacturing quality for each vaccine to determine whether individual vaccines will be approved for use in Canada, before they are used to vaccinate Canadians.

COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force

The COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force, supported by a secretariat housed at the National Research Council of Canada, provides advice to the Government of Canada on COVID-19 vaccines, which can include the following:

- Prioritizing vaccine projects seeking support for activities in Canada
- Attracting to Canada promising non-Canadian vaccine candidates, or partnering with developers of non-Canadian vaccine candidates
- Optimizing the tools needed to develop vaccines
- Supporting effective research and development, and supply chain coordination for COVID-19 vaccine projects
- Facilitating solutions to manufacture the most promising COVID-19 vaccines in Canada
- Identifying opportunities to enhance business connectivity globally to secure access to vaccines with key commercial sponsors

The COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force will be in place for a period of at least 12 months, subject to extension at the discretion of the Government of Canada.