

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, there is a critical shortage and considerable competition for personal protective equipment, including N95 respirators used to help protect health care workers from exposure to coronavirus via airborne particles. The federal government continues to aggressively pursue large-scale procurement abroad and options for scaling up domestic manufacturing, and the Public Health Agency of Canada has provided guidance on how to optimize the use of these respirators.

We are also actively pursuing options for the large and small-scale reconditioning of N95 respirators. Our understanding is that N95 respirators can be reconditioned and re-used up to 20 times without loss of performance. We are therefore pursuing options for:

- Rapid reconditioning of small batches at point of care, and
- Collection and centralized reconditioning, and redistribution of large volumes of N95 respirators.

Similar approaches are being developed around the world, and are already in use in some jurisdictions including in the US. Sterilization approaches include such things as the use of gaseous ethylene oxide, ozone, or hydrogen peroxide, or irradiation. Canada is in preliminary discussions with a number of providers that are likely to be viable for each strategy, and we are working with them to understand how rapidly these options can be scaled up over the coming days. We are also developing options relating to the logistics of collection, processing, redistribution, and tracking of the respirators.

We believe this is a critically important element in our strategy to ensure that N95 respirators remain available for our health care workers. We therefore would ask that you:

- Immediately develop and implement measures to ensure that N95 respirators are collected and not disposed of (further to our discussion of April 3<sup>rd</sup> and our email of April 4<sup>th</sup>);
- Ensure that there are no regulatory requirements within your jurisdiction that would preclude this approach (e.g. rules concerning procurement, use, disposal, or transport of used or reconditioned N95 respirators).

We would also ask you to provide us with:

- A inventory of existing stock of N95 respirators in your jurisdiction
- Current and projected information on the rate of consumption of N95 respirators basis expressed on a per day or per week
- Information concerning your current protocols for use and re-use of N95 respirators, including how many times on average health care workers are expected to change respirators during the day

Please provide this information to the Secretariat [hc.fpt.hsc.secretariat-csss.sc@canada.ca](mailto:hc.fpt.hsc.secretariat-csss.sc@canada.ca). If you have not already, please also send a point of contact to the Secretariat so that we can confirm your jurisdiction's interest in collaborating on potential measures to sterilize personal protective equipment (PPE) as per our message of April 5th. We would also welcome any input you may have if your province or territory has undertaken assessments of existing equipment or supplies within your hospitals or other medical facilities that could be used for sterilizing PPE.

Regards,

SL and TN