

PM speaking notes for the October 5th COVID update
5 October 2020

Hello, everyone.
Bonjour à tous.

I am happy to be here with Dr. Tam and Dr. Njoo.

I want to start today with an update on COVID-19.

In the last few days, Ontario and Quebec have had their highest-ever numbers of new cases.

And across the country, totals have gone up, including in long-term care homes.

This is not where any of us wanted to be coming into Thanksgiving.

But even if we can't gather this long weekend, we still have a chance to turn things around for Christmas.

[Pause]

You're probably already wearing a mask when you go out - now more than ever, keep it up.

The same goes for staying 2 metres apart, and washing your hands.

And if you haven't already, download the COVID Alert app, which is another way to keep yourself and others safe.

Seven provinces have brought the app fully on line, and we're expecting more news on this later today.

COVID Alert is free and protects your privacy, so download it from Google Play or the App Store.

The more people who sign up, the more powerful this tool will become.

Already in Ontario over 600 people have registered a positive result, which automatically notifies thousands of people they came into contact with.

Now is the time for all of us to use the app.

Across the country, cases of COVID-19 have continued to increase.

Please continue to wear a mask, keep your distance and wash your hands.

I know it is often repeated, but it is because these small actions really make a big difference.

And if you have not done it yet, download the free COVID Alert app from the App Store or Google Play.

Seven provinces have now joined, and the Government of Quebec will make an announcement on this very soon.

[Pause]

Our government's number one priority is people's safety.

We have now procured more than 2 billion personal protective items for Canadians.

Over the past month, our government has delivered tens of millions of items to the provinces and territories—including face shields, masks, gowns and gloves.

Regarding testing instruments, such as swabs, not only have we supplied the provinces and territories, but we now have two Canadian companies that are licensed to supply swabs made right here in Canada with 3D printers.

As for vaccines, last week, Health Canada received its first application for authorization for the AstraZeneca vaccine candidate, which has been secured.

This is another step toward ensuring that Canadians get a safe, effective vaccine as soon as possible.

[Pause]

Our government will continue doing everything we can to support people through this crisis, whatever it takes, as long as it lasts.

Yesterday, I had a very productive call with Mayor Tory of Toronto, about addressing the challenges facing Canada's largest city.

Later today, I'll be speaking with Mayor Watson from Ottawa, and Mayor Brown from Brampton.

I will also soon be speaking with Mayor Plante of Montreal, and I have already spoken with Mayor Labeaume of Quebec City.

Beating this virus is a Team Canada effort, and we're here for Canadians right across the country.

We've created the COVID Testing Assistance Response Team, to quickly deploy across Canada.

The federal government stands ready to help.

Federal lab space is also providing surge support on processing of tests, including for Ontario for 1,000 tests a day.

And additional federal labs will be added.

On contact tracing, we have agreements in place with Ontario, Quebec, and Alberta, with more to come for other provinces and territories.

There are 500 full-time contact tracers provided for Ontario, including 30 tracers specifically for Ottawa.

[Pause]

At the same time, we're moving forward with programs that go directly to Canadians.

As of this morning, applications for the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit and the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit are open.

These two programs are for Canadians not covered at work if they get COVID-19, or if their kids or parents get it and they have to take care of them.

If you need this support, go to the CRA's My Account through Canada.ca, or call 1-800-959-2019 or 1-800-959-2041.

Next week, applications will also open for the Canada Recovery Benefit, to support people who are directly affected by COVID-19 but can't access EI.

These three new programs - the Recovery Benefit, the Sickness Benefit, and the Caregiving Benefit - are there for you.

As of this morning, applications for the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit and the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit are now being accepted.

If you need this help, go to the online tool through Canada.ca to access the CRA My Account section, or call 1-800-959-2019 or 1-800-959-2041.

Next week, the process will open to receive applications for the Canada Recovery Benefit.

These three new benefits are here for you.

[Pause]

This fall is turning out to be pretty challenging for a lot of Canadians, including for young people.

For students:

I know this isn't the Thanksgiving - let alone the year - you had hoped for.

But even if things are different this long weekend, I hope you still take some time - maybe online - with loved ones.

- If you're feeling overwhelmed or you're struggling, reach out.
- You have a whole network - family, friends, teachers - that's there for you.
- I know it's tough, but you've got this.

On that note, I would like to highlight World Teachers' Day.

To all our teachers and educators across the country, I want to say thank you.

This is not easy, and the situation is far from ideal.

But despite everything, you continue to do an incredible job.

Every day, you are dedicated and you are making a huge difference in the lives of young people.

Later today, we will announce the 71 outstanding educators from across the country who will be receiving the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence.

These people believe in our children and, by doing so, they are helping to build a brighter future for all of us.

As a dad, and someone who has spent time at the front of a classroom, I know how important teaching can be.

Of course, even in regular times the job is not without its challenges.

And right now, teachers are facing circumstances that none of us could have ever predicted.

To teachers and educators across the country:

- Thank you for everything you do.
- Not only are you navigating health rules and online learning, you're guiding young people through an incredibly uncertain world.
- You are there for our kids, so know that our government is there for you.

We created the \$2 billion Safe Return to Class Fund, to keep you and your students safe.

For Edmonton Public Schools, this money has helped with rapid testing to protect staff and students.

For schools in London, Ontario, it has meant buying more PPE and hiring additional teachers.

And right across the country, this investment is going towards keeping all our classrooms healthy.

Just as we have done through the Safe Return to Class Fund, we will continue to find other ways to ensure the safety of all Canadians.

Flattening the curve—whether in schools or workplaces—is our top priority for the coming weeks.

Finally, I want to let Canadians know that I've asked the Foreign Minister to travel to Europe, to discuss with our allies the developments in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, particularly in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Thank you.