

Question Period Summary for Friday, September 25, 2020/Sommaire de la période de questions du vendredi 25 septembre 2020

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Date: Fri, 25 Sep 2020 18:49:08 +0000

Good afternoon,

Please see below a summary of today's Question Period.

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Questions Addressed to the Minister of Health:

There were 3 questions addressed to the Minister of Health today.

Hon. Michelle Rempel Garner (Calgary Nose Hill – CPC): Referenced yesterday's comments by the Government that it relies on the expertise of experts, researchers, and scientists to guide Canada on rapid testing. Ms. Rempel Garner asked when the review of rapid testing will be completed in Canada.

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health): Replied that the Government would like to see additional tools to mitigate COVID-19, including more testing capacity. She noted that the Government is relying on Canadian regulators to inform the Government when testing tools are safe to implement in Canada. She believes that tests that do not provide accurate responses can make situations worse.

Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South – NDP): Asked what the Government is doing to ensure people have access to testing; what the Government is doing to protect seniors, as well as to ensure that Canadians do not have to pay the price for the pandemic?

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health): Replied that the Government has been there for Canadians, PTs and local communities in order to protect the lives of Canadians. Furthermore, he assured that the Government will continue working with PTs and partners to protect the health of Canadians.

Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South – NDP): Asked what the federal government has planned to ensure there are no profiteering from this pandemic.

Hon. Patty Hajdu (Minister of Health): Replied that the Government has worked incredibly hard with PTs and local governments in order to mitigate everything the virus brings, and the Government will continue to ensure that all levels of government work together.

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Questions of Interest to the Health Portfolio:

There were 6 question of interest to the Health Portfolio today.

Alain Therrien (La Prairie -BQ): Referred to the PM's media address yesterday. He called on the Government to increase health transfers to PTs.

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Honore-Mercier - LPC): Replied that the Government will be there to support all PTs. The Government has made significant investments in health care and will continue to make additional investments, including in Quebec. The Government recognizes that provinces are in charge of health care, but the Government will be there to support the health care system.

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg-Haute-Saint-Charles – CPC): Asked how much money was lost due to the cancellation of the vaccine patent deal with China.

Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale - LPC): Replied that the Government has been working with experts in industry partners throughout the pandemic, which has enabled the Government to make an evidence-based approach to vaccine research and development. In the context of continued research and evolving evidence, the National Research Council chose to pursue other vaccine research candidates. Furthermore, the Government will continue actively pursue every possible action for a vaccine.

Pierre Paul-Hus (Charlesbourg-Haute-Saint-Charles – CPC): Referenced a member of the COVID Vaccine taskforce who resigned due to a lack of transparency, and asked if there are any conflict of interest within the COVID-19 task force.

Ali Ehsassi (Willowdale - LPC): Replied that the Government greatly values the work of scientist within the task force. He noted that the task force has robust conflict of interest policies in place that adheres to the highest international best practices.

Marilene Gill (Manicouagan – BQ): Asked when the Government will send provinces more health transfer funding, as well as increase health transfers.

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Honore-Mercier - LPC): Replied that the fight against COVID is a battle of all of parliamentarians and Canadians. The government will continue to work with all levels of government in order to mitigate the effects of the virus.

Gabriel Ste-Marie (Joliette –BQ): Called for an immediate increase in Health Transfers to PTs.

Hon. Pablo Rodriguez (Honore-Mercier - LPC): Replied that cases are rising all over the country and the nation is currently in the midst of a second wave. He believes that all need to work together in order to fight the virus. The Government has previously provided health transfers to every PT, and will continue to work with all them in order to fight against COVID-19

Rosemarie Falk (Battlefords-Lloydminster - CPC): Asked what the Government is doing to aid seniors and their mental health.

Hon. Deb Schulte (King – Vaughan - LPC): Replied that the Government understands the problems seniors are facing. The Government will be providing \$20 million in the new Horizons for seniors funding. This is in addition to the funding that the Government provided in January.

Todd Doherty (Cariboo-Prince George – CPC): Remarked that the pandemic has disproportionately affected seniors and their mental health and called on the Government to address the reason why mental health for seniors was barely addressed in the Speech from the Throne.

Hon. Deb Schulte (King – Vaughan - LPC): Replied that the Speech from the Throne was excellent for seniors. The Government is helping seniors through the new Horizons for seniors program, through \$350 million in community support for seniors including mental health support. The Government launched the Wellness Together Canada portal to help seniors' mental health and keep them safe.

Main Issues Raised During Question Period:

Most Members focused their questions on their impression of the Speech from the Throne.

Issues Raised:

Issues raised by the Conservative Party:

- Intergovernmental Relations
- Bill C-2
- Economic Support for Canadians
- Canada-China relations
- Official Languages
- WE Charity
- Infrastructure Investments
- Indigenous Treaty Rights
- Mortgage Deferral Program
- Canadian Emergency Business Account (CEBA)
- Oil and Gas Sector
- Aviation Industry

Issues raised by the Bloc Quebecois:

- Intergovernmental Relations
- Health Transfers to PTs

Issues raised by the New Democratic Party:

- Early Childhood Education
- Indigenous Treaty Rights
- Veterans

Issues raised by the Liberal Party:

- Official Languages
- Infrastructure Investment
- Forestry Sector

Issue raised by the Green Party:

N/A

Issue raised by an Independent:

- Criminal Justice System Reform
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Members' Statements in the House of Commons:

There were 7 Member's Statement of interest to the Health Portfolio today.

Dean Allison (Niagara West – CPC): The pandemic has been difficult for many Canadians, and Canadians do not know when everything will go back to normal. The Government has done well to help people, but needs to do more. Many Canadians have lost their jobs, and too many people have lost their lives. The Government has made no commitment to increase Health Transfers, and provinces have made it clear on the need for more funding. In addition, the Government needs to increase testing capacity. The Government needs to provide support where it is needed, immediately.

Pam Damoff (Oakville North – Burlington – LPC): Forty years ago, Terry Fox embarked on a marathon of hope to find a cure for cancer. On September 20th, Canadians celebrated by taking part in their own way. While this year's Terry Fox run was different and distant, it still remains Canada's largest one-day fundraiser for cancer research. Many people participated differently that benefited the fund. It is important to note, that anything is possible if one tries.

Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East – Cooksville – LPC): Mr. Speaker, throughout the pandemic the community of Mississauga East has risen to the challenge with decisiveness and determination to help beat the pandemic. Seniors, front line workers, those with disability, young people, and businesses amongst many others have stepped up during this time. There has been thousands of meals donated to the Mississauga food bank. The Speech from the Throne sets out an ambitious plan, and the Government will continue to build a stronger country together.

Tracy Gray (Kelowna-Lake Country – CPC): Mr. Speaker, it has been over six months since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic. Members from the Kelowna community have done their part to try to flatten the curve. Taking days to receive covid-19 testing has been stressful for many Canadians. Health Canada has been slow to approve rapid testing devices. The process of receiving test must improve. The Government must develop methods to keep people safe and keep businesses open.

Hon. Bernard Genereux (Montmagny-L'islet-Kamouraska – CPC): Canada is currently in its 7th month of the pandemic, and the Government is delaying approval of rapid testing. The Government needs to approve these testing, so that less people become infected. The rapid testing has been approved in other countries, and the Government needs to approve these tests that can save lives.

Daniel Blaikie (Elmwood-Transcona – NDP): The pandemic has shined a light on the lack of care of seniors in long-term care homes. It has shown the effect of privatization of LTC and the impacts that is having on the cares that seniors receive. This is a call for the Government to step up and have better standards for LTC homes and the NDP will be here to ensure this occurs.

James Cumming (Edmonton Centre – CPC): Canada needs to ensure there is rapid testing occur fast. There are businesses shutting down and people are becoming infected. In addition, Canada's unemployment rate surged to 13%. COVID is here to stay for a long term, and the Government needs to

adapt to rapid testing in order to get the country back to work. The Government needs to instill rapid testing immediately in order to prevent any further hardship to Canadians and the economy.

The official transcript (Hansard) will be available on the next business day by visiting the following link:

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/HouseChamberBusiness/ChamberSittings.aspx?View=H&Language=E>

Le compte rendu officiel (Hansard) est disponible le prochain jour ouvrable en visitant le lien suivant:

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/HouseChamberBusiness/ChamberSittings.aspx?View=H&Language=E>

Regards,

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