

COVID-19 Testing Pilot Study

I. Preamble:

The use of testing as a potential component of Canada's border measures is under discussion in the context of reducing the risk of importation of COVID-19 and reducing the period of mandatory quarantine, consistent with efforts to open up the economy while protecting Canada from resurgences.

The Public Health Agency of Canada is in discussion with Alberta officials on a pilot study that would provide evidence to inform decisions on approaches going forward.

II. Testing Pilot Study Objectives:

1. Determine how to use testing to reduce the risk of COVID-19 importation from essential workers
2. Determine how to use testing to eliminate or reduce mandatory quarantine
3. Determine the operational requirements to support border testing

III. Methods:

Pilot will:

- enrol exempted essential workers (short-stay) and test them every 3 weeks to determine the risk of importation of infection into Canada
- enrol exempted travellers (longer stay; > 14 days) who would be tested on arrival and a 7-10 days to determine if testing can be used as an adjunct to reduce risk
- enrol arriving travellers from low risk countries and test at various points during the first 14 days to determine whether testing supports early release from quarantine
- assess operational requirements and costs to implement

IV. Next Steps:

Finalize research protocol and study team as well as the timeframe for completion with Alberta in next 2-3 weeks