

## Meeting Summary

- Spoke to new guidance posted on May 30
  - Advice for essential retailers;
  - Risk mitigation tool for workplaces/businesses operating;
  - Community-based measures to mitigate the spread of coronavirus disease; and
  - Guidance for a strategic approach to lifting restrictive public health measures.
- Shared high level summary of Canadian Thoracic Society's position statement on clinical triage thresholds in respiratory disease patients in the event of a major surge during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as CIHI's efforts on race-based data collection and health reporting.
- Dr. Tam presented an update to the Forum on testing and the Immunity Taskforce as well as highlights of the National Laboratory Testing Indication Guidance.\* She outlined the differing modalities of testing and their sensitivities and usefulness to epidemiology. Also recognized that some provinces are widening their testing criteria and using mobile clinics. Molecular testing is the gold standard, but point of care kits would benefit rural and remote care. Presently two approved serology tests and PHAC will be supporting and funding serological surveys to find out where the virus has been.
- Kerry Robinson provided an update on the three-week social media plan developed with CPAB and reminded members they can use the foundation key messages document for their own planning.

\*As no questions were submitted in advance by participants, the Q&A session focused on questions to Dr. Tam regarding her briefing.

## Questions/Discussions

- Main questions answered in the meeting:
  - CPhA – Is rapid testing in community settings coming to Canada?
    - Dr. Tam: There will be more options for point of care testing in the future. Some devices require specialized expertise so can not be used in a family physician setting.
    - AMMI Canada: Lots of devices coming out of China. Spartan Cube can be used for research purposes in Canada. The real question remains: what does a positive serology test indicate especially in regards to protection against reinfection?
    - Dr. Tam: Noted that PHAC does not support immunity passports at this point (AMMI Canada concurred). Still need to further study serology and immunology of the virus.
  - PHPC – Are there plain language summaries of testing for the public?
    - Dr. Tam: That is something PHAC continues to work on.
    - AMMI Canada offered to share a plain language FAQ they have developed to help people understand the test results.
    - Dr. Tam outlined the strategy continues to focus on testing, quarantine, isolation and public health measures with hopefully a two year timeframe. It uses a holistic public health measures approach that takes into account unintended consequences (e.g., mental health, access to care, etc.)

- CMA – Is there capacity for contact tracing? Is a national strategy being considered?
  - Dr. Tam: These are discussions happened at a higher level (PM and premiers). We recognize this is a critical aspect of the pandemic response and are trying to figure out where the gaps are. Provinces/territories are presently increasing their capacity (e.g., training for a surge in cases) and federal support includes staff from PHAC, Health Canada, Statistics Canada and other departments to support contact tracing. The next frontier is the use of applications to assist with contact tracing (AB and NFLD are looking into it) and there have been active discussions and a desire to see if this can work in Canada keeping in mind privacy considerations.

### **Topics for future meetings**

- Preparations for Flu Season (technical expert to be invited from Epi Flu team) – July TBD

### **Follow-up Items**

- PHAC Secretariat to inform HP Forum members when four-week social media plan is approved.
- AMMI Canada to share plain language FAQ with PHAC.
- PHAC Secretariat to request forward agenda items from members as part of follow up email (e.g., key topics of interest, presentations on guidance from experts, forward planning themes, etc.)
- Next meeting June 15; invitation to be sent and stakeholders to be invited to send questions/agenda items.