

StJames, Louise (PHAC/ASPC)

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To: StJames, Louise (PHAC/ASPC); Gargum, Taha (PHAC/ASPC); Cluney, Craig (PHAC/ASPC); Frost, Evan (PHAC/ASPC)
Cc: Parliamentary Affairs / Affaires Parlementaires (PHAC/ASPC)
Subject: Daily Briefing to Parliamentarians Call Summary: March 17, 2020

Hi all,

Today's briefing to Parliamentarians on COVID-19 was conducted by Dr. Njoo. Dr. Njoo began by immediately answering questions from parliamentarians due to the media availability conducted earlier by PHAC officials covering most relevant information.

Questions asked by Parliamentarians include;

- Jeremy Patzer (Cyprus-Hill Grasslands): Will Temporary Foreign Workers be able to participate in Employment Insurance, and will they will be allowed in the country to help with the farming season.
 - o *Deferred to ESDC.*
- Lloyd Longfield (Guelph): How will the government coordinate messages/a plan on EI between provincial and federal counterparts.
 - o *Deferred to ESDC, but noted a need for coordination.*
- Jenny Kwan (Vancouver-East): What is the plan for homeless/vulnerable people who cannot social distance or do things like wash their hands. How is the government providing provisions to vulnerable populations.
 - o *Local officials best to address this, these responses then could get rolled up into a provincial plan that could supported by the federal government.*
- Bruce Stanton (Simcoe-North): When will the number of cases reach their peak, when will we get to some degree of normal again, and how long will these new measures last.
 - o *The goal is trying to break chains of transmission. Local public health role is to investigate case transmission. As cases increase, flattening the curve is key. Have to wait to see to see in the next few weeks how well social distancing is working.*
- Blaine Calkins (Red Deer-Lacombe): What is the R0 of the virus, how many people are actually infected, what is the status of procuring more ventilators for Canadian hospitals.
 - o *R0 could be anywhere between 1-5. While there is over 430 positive cases, over 36,000 people have been tested. Planning on purchasing ventilators, and will work with provinces for a bulk purchase. We have enough for now due to low rate of critical cases.*
- Gord Johns (Courtenay-Alberni): Can we be assured of these daily update calls, and how do we address the closing of things like food banks, and relief for small business, implantation of EI.
 - o *Daily update calls are certain. Might need to implement a call specifically with ESDC officials to address social aspects of COVID-19 response.*
- Nelly Shin (Port Moody-Coquitlam): Will the government help implement a national closure of schools across all provinces.
 - o *The closure of schools is not universally recognized as the best public health practice, but it may be useful during times like March break. Provincial responsibility.*
- Yasmin Ratsani (Don Valley East): There are 2500 doctors who have signed a petition are calling for more ventilators, and calling for the closure of the US border. What's the government response to this.
 - o *Right now, there are enough ventilators, but the government will be proactive in procuring more as needed. Economic integration and essential service provision makes border closure impractical, and Americans would have to be self-isolated if they came anyways to visit.*
- Rene Arsenault (Madawaska—Restigouche): Are there common factors that lead to higher death rates.

- *Seniors, and those with underlying medical conditions. Long-term elderly care facilities are thus the areas most at risk for higher rates of COVID-19 related death.*

If you have any questions/comments, please let me know.

Best,

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