

Lockington, Elliott (SPAC/PSPC)

From: MacKnight, Aisling (HC/SC)
Sent: May 4, 2020 8:12 AM
To: Khalil, Samantha; Tojiboeva, Muna
Cc: Bélair, Thierry (HC/SC); Pascuzzo, Matt (HC/SC); Davidson, Cole (HC/SC); Exton, Adam (HC/SC)
Subject: Health lines: May 4

Good morning,

As per the call, please see below for our lines. **More lines to follow**

COVID-19 – SPARTAN TEST

- As part of our procurement process, the National Microbiology Lab thoroughly tested the Spartan Cube test kit.
- Unfortunately, the Spartan Cube test kit is **not ready** to be used to diagnose COVID-19. Health Canada has now placed conditions on the Spartan Cube so that it can be used for **research purposes only**.
- This shows **our system is working**. Canadian scientists are our **safeguard** while we search for new ways to respond to the virus, testing new technologies to ensure Canadians are safe.
- The company has said they will issue a **voluntary recall** while they address these challenges.

If pressed: what's wrong with the kit?

- When the National Microbiology Lab tested the kits, they found that the **swabs** in the kit were not up to standard.
- This problem could not have been detected without clinical testing.

If pressed: are any other Canadian devices going to be recalled?

- **No**, we have not been informed of issues with other test kits.
- **[If further pressed]** Spartan's kit uses a specific swab while other test kits use a standard one. Testing showed that the swab was the issue.

If pressed on distribution to provinces:

- Some provinces were assisting the National Microbiology Lab with **validation testing** for the Spartan Cube.
- The federal government has **not** provided these tests for **clinical use to diagnose** COVID-19
- However, Spartan has indicated that they sold tests to institutions in Alberta, Quebec, and Ontario
- The company is confirming the extent of the use of their kits, although we understand most was related to validation and research.

COVID-19 – GUIDELINES FOR REOPENING

- Your governments at all levels have been working **together** to keep Canadians safe
- On April 28, we released guidelines on reopening our economy. They were developed **with** the provinces and territories, showing our cooperation and collaboration over the past months
- In order to reopen the economy, we need to know that Canadians are **safe**. These guidelines provide a framework for **how** we can reopen sectors **without putting Canadians at risk**
- There will be a future without this virus – if we are careful and measured in our approach, we will get there safely.

If pressed on parameters:

- There are specific parameters we must meet in order to **safely** reopen.

- That includes **controlling transmission** of COVID-19, **increasing** our public health capacity, and **supporting vulnerable communities**
- We also need to have measures in place to keep Canadians safe at their jobs – because when Canadians **do** return to work, they need to be safe there.
- We will be working with the provinces and territories to **ease restrictions on travel** in a **managed and coordinated** way

If pressed on QC:

- On April 28, we released guidelines for reopening our economy. These guidelines outline what steps we need to **safely** reopen
- In order for provinces to reopen, they need to control their outbreaks and prevent further spread.
- It is important that we maintain strong public health measures while reopening our economy. There are significant risks to lifting public health measures too early or too quickly.
- We will keep working with Quebec to fight this virus, and keep Quebecers safe.

COVID-19 – STOCKPILE CONCERNS (holding lines for [TorStar article](#))

- We have been working with the provinces and territories to assess their needs, and we are supporting **suppliers and industry** to encourage domestic production and get products to market faster.
- The provinces and territories are the **first front** for providing PPE for their workers. But your governments at **all** levels are working **together** to ensure that Canadians are healthy and safe.
- As we face a global competitive market for personal protective equipment, we are working on solutions that keep Canadian healthcare workers safe.
- We will **continue supporting** the provinces and territories as they work to supply PPE for their workers.

COVID-19 – NON-MEDICAL MASKS (holding lines for [G&M article](#))

- These are difficult times. Some people are using homemade masks as a means to protect themselves against COVID-19.
- Non-medical masks **have limitations**, and may not provide the desired protection. **Even if you choose to wear a non-medical mask, you must practice social distancing**
- The **best** protection against COVID-19 is **still** to:
 - **Stay at home**
 - If you must leave, **practice social distancing**
 - If you are sick, **do not go outside** and **isolate yourself from others in your home**
 - Wash your hands regularly and clean commonly-used surfaces
- We encourage Canadians to seek the latest advice on COVID-19 through our website (Canada.ca/coronavirus) or through the Canada COVID-19 app.

COVID-19 – UNILINGUAL LABELLING UPDATE

- We heard French speakers across the country. I know they were disappointed to learn that temporarily unilingual labelling was allowed for certain products.
- **Products made in Canada must have bilingual labelling.** Only **imported** products, like those from the United States, can have a unilingual label.
- We made **changes** to the temporary rules. A **sticker** must now be put on unilingual products to explain where to find product information in French, like on the company's website.
- These products can be household cleaners, workplace cleaners, hand soaps, hard surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers.\
- I also want to be very clear that this is a **temporary** measure, which **will be lifted** as soon as there is no longer any risk of shortages

If pressed on timelines:

- As of **May 4**, new Canadian manufacturers will need to use bilingual labels on all products under the order

- Manufacturers who are currently using unilingual labelling must switch to bilingual labels by **June 8**

FR

- On a bien entendu les francophones partout au pays. Je sais qu'ils ont été déçus d'apprendre qu'on permettait temporairement l'affichage unilingue pour certains produits.
- **Les produits faits au Canada doivent obligatoirement avoir une étiquette bilingue.** Seuls les produits **importés**, des États-Unis par exemple, peuvent avoir une étiquette unilingue.
- **Des changements aux règles temporaires ont été faits.** Un collant doit maintenant être posé sur les produits unilingues pour expliquer où trouver l'information en français, sur le site web de la compagnie par exemple.
- Ces produits peuvent être des nettoyeurs ménagers, des produits de nettoyage utilisés sur le lieu de travail, des savons pour les mains, des désinfectants pour surfaces dures et des désinfectants pour les mains.
- Je veux aussi être bien claire qu'il s'agit d'une mesure temporaire, qui sera **annulée** dès qu'il n'y aura plus de risque de pénurie.

Thanks,
Ash

Aisling MacKnight

Office of the Minister of Health | Cabinet de la Ministre de la Santé
(613) 327-2803