

**Draft – Vaccine Procurement Update**  
**Minister Anand Remarks**  
**Presser for COVID-19 Update**  
**September 22, 2020**

**Introduction:**

Good afternoon and thank you all for joining us on the line.

*First let me thank all those who are working tirelessly on the front lines caring for people with COVID-19, and the doctors and scientists who are working behind the scenes to develop better treatments and an effective vaccine.*

*The increase in the number of cases over the past few days is a reminder of the fragility of the efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19, and of the importance of continuing to follow public health guidelines like physical distancing and wearing a mask.*

Our Government remains vigilant in preparing for the possibility of a resurgence. And my department, Public Services and Procurement Canada, continues to procure vital supplies for our frontline healthcare workers and Canadians providing other essential services.

## **Announcement: Vaccine Agreement**

At the same time, on behalf of the Public Health Agency of Canada, and based on recommendations from the COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force, we are looking to the future and readying Canada for a vaccine to help pull us out of this pandemic.

These past few weeks, our Government has announced several agreements to secure Canada's access to a successful vaccine or vaccines.

Today, we are taking another significant step on that front.

### *Announcement*

I am pleased to announce that the Government of Canada has signed agreements with Sanofi and GlaxoSmithKline for up to 72 million doses of their vaccine candidate, adding to our portfolio of potential vaccines.

This is part of our ongoing strategy to secure a diverse range of potential vaccines.

Alongside the previously announced agreements with Johnson & Johnson, Novavax and Pfizer, and the increase of our order with Moderna, [Canada has now secured access to a guaranteed minimum of 154 million doses and up to 262 million doses of potential vaccines, to protect Canadians and save lives.](#)

*Avec les ententes déjà conclues avec Johnson & Johnson, Novavax et Pfizer, ainsi que l'accroissement de notre commande auprès de Moderna, [le Canada a maintenant accès à un minimum garanti de 154 millions de doses de vaccins potentiels, et à un maximum de 262 millions de doses, afin de protéger la population canadienne et sauver des vies.](#)*

These vaccines represent the three main types of vaccine candidates – known as mRNA, Protein Subunit and Viral Vector.

Having a diverse portfolio of vaccines from multiple supply sources will provide assured access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines when they become available.

## Complexity of Vaccine Candidate Agreements

I will note that all of the vaccine agreements we are signing contain delivery schedules, with the first doses arriving early next year. The distribution of a vaccine is contingent on that vaccine being proven safe and effective, and receiving regulatory approval from Health Canada.

Before any product is authorized for use in Canada, it is subject to a thorough assessment through Health Canada's regulatory process to ensure sufficient evidence of safety, effectiveness and quality.

Vaccine negotiations are rigorous, intricate and vary from company to company. Elements such as dosage requirements can also vary, and each company has unique manufacturing and finishing needs.

We continue to aggressively pursue more agreements, and our procurement teams are working around the clock to move this complex work forward.

*Our approach from the outset has been to invest in a diversified portfolio to ensure that as the science progresses, Canada will have rapid access to an effective vaccine.*

*These vaccines are developed in an environment that is both innovative and uncertain. In fact, we do not know how many of them will be successful.*

But investments today to secure rapid access on multiple fronts are investments in the future health and safety of every Canadian.

To date, we have committed roughly 1 billion dollars to secure access to five vaccine candidates.

This includes some upfront payments that the pharmaceutical companies require to support vaccine development, testing and at-risk manufacturing.

This investment guarantees Canada's earliest possible place in production runs.

Subsequent payments are contingent on the vaccines passing clinical trials and obtaining regulatory approval, and all contracts

Canada signs with vaccine developers contains off-ramps and exit provisions should they be required.

The amounts of future payments will depend on which vaccine candidates are successful and the number of doses Canada decides to ultimately purchase.

That is our focus, and that is our goal.

*Of course, we know that when enough data is collected on a vaccine, there are still critical steps to get through, including Health Canada review and regulatory approval.*

These steps will take time, but will ensure that a safe, effective and high-quality vaccine is available. And when those vaccines arrive, Canada will be prepared.

Just recently, we signed two contracts with SiO<sub>2</sub>, a materials science company out of the United States, for syringes and vials for use in filling vaccines. The vials we are receiving from SiO<sub>2</sub> are anticipated to provide filling for up to 80 million doses.

These contracts will prove essential for the efficient distribution and administration of a vaccine.

We are also procuring supplies required to manufacture and package vaccines right here in Canada. This includes securing domestic production lines to rapidly fill and finish vials. It also includes buying syringes, needles and alcohol swabs to support safe and effective immunization.

The Canadian component to all of this is important.

For example, we have awarded contracts to Cardinal Health to provide Canada with alcohol swabs, adhesive bandages, non-sterile gauze and sharps containers.

In addition, Becton Dickinson Canada, which is already providing consumables such as syringes and needles, will also be supplying sharps containers under a new agreement that we recently signed with them.

*And just a few weeks ago, the Prime Minister announced that the Government of Canada will invest 126 million dollars over two years in building a new facility for the National Research Council*

*in Montréal. This facility will increase the country's vaccine production to two million doses per month.*

*This is excellent news for the Canadian biomanufacturing industry.*

In short, when a vaccine is ready, we will be ready to offer it to Canadians in every corner of this country, from coast to coast to coast.

We are also ensuring that Canadians have access to the most effective treatments available if they do become ill.

### **Announcement: Treatment**

Today, I am pleased to announce that the Government of Canada has signed a new agreement with Gilead Sciences and McKesson Canada to secure a supply of up to 150,000 vials of remdesivir—an important drug used to fight COVID-19.

On July 27, Health Canada authorized remdesivir for the treatment of COVID-19. Remdesivir is the only known anti-viral



drug at this time that has been shown to be effective in treating COVID-19 patients.

We know that COVID-19 will be with us for some time, and this endeavour is imperative as we prepare for all possible scenarios, including a spike in cases heading into the fall and winter seasons.

## **Closing**

*Our government will continue to do everything possible to ensure the safety of Canadians, and we will continue to do what is necessary to protect them from COVID-19.*

*Once again, I would like to thank all those who are on the front lines, and those behind the scenes who are working hard to develop treatments and vaccines against this virus.*

*It is thanks to your hard work and dedication that we will get through this pandemic.*

When a vaccine is ready, Canada will be ready.

*Lorsqu'un vaccin sera prêt, le Canada le sera aussi.*

Thank you.

-30-