

**Draft – ABBOTT:
Minister Anand Remarks
Presser for COVID-19 Update
October 06, 2020**

Introduction

Good afternoon.

As parts of our country confront rising COVID-19 infections and are faced with renewed restrictions, I want to strongly echo the advice from our hard-working public health officials for every single one of us to redouble our efforts to help slow the spread of the pandemic.

Mon ministère, Services publics et Approvisionnement Canada, continue sans cesse à déployer des efforts visant à acheter de l'équipement de protection individuelle, ainsi que d'autres fournitures médicales essentielles, des traitements et des candidats-vaccins.

My department, Public Services and Procurement Canada, continues round-the-clock efforts to procure vital PPE, other medical supplies as well as potential treatments and vaccine candidates.

Procurement of tests to detect COVID-19 has been - and continues to be - central to our fight to contain this virus.

We know that cases are on the rise, making testing and tracing more important than ever, and the federal government is here to support the provinces and territories in this effort.

Plus tôt cette année, nous avons été en mesure de nous procurer un-virgule-deux million tests rapides de Cepheid et cent dispositifs GeneXpert d'Inter Medico aux fins d'utilisation dans les collectivités du Grand Nord.

As the testing technology evolves, we are taking action to ensure that Canada has access to the most effective and efficient testing solutions.

Earlier this year, we were able to procure 1.2 million Cepheid rapid tests and 100 GeneXpert devices from Inter Medico for use in Northern communities.

In addition, we have contracts with Biomérieux Canada for nearly 700,000 of their rapid tests.

These, and the contract for Abbott tests we announced last week are some examples of how the federal government has been procuring to supplement the current testing regime.

Announcement: New Rapid Test Agreements

Today, I am pleased to announce that we are adding to that lineup.

The Government of Canada has signed a new agreement with Abbott Rapid Diagnostics to purchase a total of up to 20.5 million additional COVID rapid tests.

This is in addition to the 7.9 million ID NOW rapid tests we announced last week that Abbott will provide.

The Federal Government has procured enough swabs, reagent, and other materials to conduct 200-thousand test a day in Canada for at least the remainder of this year.

However, as we have seen in a number of parts in this country, there are challenges in scaling-up laboratory capacity to process the increasing number of samples in the required time.

Beyond providing rapid turn-around for results and much needed capacity in Northern and remote parts of our country, these point-of-care test are crucial to expanding testing capacity— because these samples can be analyzed in situ and do not require transportation to a laboratory to produce results.

To be clear, the strategy in procuring these rapid test kits is not to replace the current PCR testing, but to enhance the capacity of provinces and territories to keep up with the increasing demands for tests.

On behalf of the Public Health Agency of Canada, our work to procure a range of tests is ongoing and we are on track to purchase additional types of rapid tests in the coming weeks and months.

Closing

It has been months - and we are all living with pandemic fatigue. But please be assured, our Government is steadfast in its commitment to your health and safety.

Nous ne cesserons pas nos efforts visant à fournir de l'EPI de base à nos travailleurs de la santé de première ligne et à nos fournisseurs de services essentiels.

Nous ne cesserons pas nos efforts visant à nous assurer que les Canadiens aient accès à un vaccin sûr et efficace. Et nous ne cesserons pas nos efforts visant à procurer des tests de dépistage de la COVID-19 pour les Canadiens.

Nous nous battons pour vous, et à vos côtés, pour que notre pays puisse se hisser de l'autre côté de cette pandémie.

Merci – Thank you.

We will not cease our efforts to procure the PPE essential to our frontline healthcare workers and providers of essential services.

We will not cease our efforts to make sure that Canadians have access to a safe and effective vaccine. And we will not cease in our efforts to procure COVID-19 tests for Canadians.

We are fighting for you, and alongside you, to make sure our country gets through to the other side of this pandemic.