

Lockington, Elliott (SPAC/PSPC)

From: MacKnight, Aisling (HC/SC)
Sent: March 23, 2020 8:18 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: COVID19 updates

Good morning,

Please see below for our lines:

COVID19 — PERSONAL PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS

- We **all** have a part to play to flatten the curve of COVID-19
- Most people that contract COVID-19 will **not have severe symptoms, which** is why it is so important that everyone does their part:
 - Wash your hands
 - Self-monitor for symptoms
 - Stay home if you are sick
- We have to be careful about **vulnerable** people in our lives. We need to take care of each other.

COVID-19 — MEDICAL SUPPLIES PROCUREMENT

- We are **all working together** to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Earlier this month, we announced **\$50M** towards the purchase of personal protective equipment and other necessary medical supplies and equipment.
- Your governments at **all** levels are working **together** to promote the appropriate use of personal protective equipment, assess potential shortfalls, identify priority items, and collaborate on procurement.
- We are **taking all action** to secure necessary equipment in real time, in direct collaboration with all provinces and territories, and with industry to identify suppliers to meet our shared needs.

If pressed:

- Products are being sourced from a number of suppliers from various countries.
- Procurement efforts will support the ramping up and building of domestic capacity, protecting jobs and securing long-term investment in Canada.
- We are building Canadian industrial capacity to serve our needs for the short and long terms. These efforts will help keep Canadians safe and healthy, while also ensuring a reliable domestic supply over the years to come.

If pressed on getting products approved:

- We are committed to expediting the review of products and safe alternatives, while maintaining the health and safety that our regulatory system is based on.

- Regulatory review and approval timelines will be **accelerated** to ensure that personal protective equipment is readily available for our frontline healthcare workers.

COVID-19 — TESTING

- We have been testing **symptomatic** individuals for COVID-19.
- We have chosen to prioritize testing for those that are displaying symptoms of COVID-19, rather testing asymptomatic people.
- We have also approved the use of **two new testing kits**, to increase our testing capacity.
- As our knowledge on COVID-19 evolves, we will be updating our policies and protocols accordingly.

If pressed on asymptomatic people not being tested:

- *It is important to focus on testing the right people at the right time.*
- We are focused on testing people who present with symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
- Testing people who are asymptomatic is not considered an effective approach to detecting and preventing the spread of this virus and may give a false sense of reassurance.

We are awaiting updates from dept on the Northern hospitals and preparedness, I will circle back with those.

Thanks,

Ash

Aisling MacKnight

Office of the Minister of Health

(613) 327-2803