

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.

Let me start today by thanking all of those on the frontlines, working tirelessly to care for COVID-19 patients, as well as the doctors and scientists working behind the scenes to develop better treatments and identify an effective vaccine.

Permettez-moi tout d'abord de remercier tous ceux et celles qui travaillent sans relâche en première ligne pour soigner les personnes atteintes de la COVID-19, ainsi que les médecins et les scientifiques qui s'emploient en coulisses à mettre au point de meilleurs traitements et un vaccin efficace.

With cases rising in recent days, we are reminded of the fragility of the progress we've made to bring COVID-19 under control, and the importance of continuing to follow public health advice, such as practising physical distancing and wearing a mask.

L'augmentation du nombre de cas des derniers jours nous rappelle la fragilité des efforts déployés pour freiner la propagation de la COVID-19, ainsi que l'importance de continuer de suivre les consignes de santé publique comme la distanciation physique et le port du masque.

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 GSK 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 exercising our option for additional doses from 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'obtention des doses optionnelles prévues dans l'entente avec 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 is to invest up front in a diverse portfolio to ensure that, as the science progresses, Canada will have rapid access to an effective vaccine.

Notre approche à cet égard consiste à investir d'emblée dans un portefeuille diversifié pour faire en sorte qu'au fur et à mesure que la science progresse, le Canada aura accès rapidement à un vaccin efficace.

The development of these vaccines is occurring in an innovative yet uncertain environment. The fact is, we do not know how many of these candidates will be successful.

Ces vaccins sont mis au point dans un contexte à la fois novateur et incertain. En fait, nous ne savons pas combien d'entre eux vont aboutir.

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

The Government has set aside more than 8 billion dollars for the purchases of vaccines.

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 once enough data has been collected on a vaccine, there are still critical steps ahead, including Health Canada review and regulatory approval.

Bien sûr, nous savons que lorsque suffisamment de données sont recueillies sur un vaccin, il reste des étapes décisives à franchir, notamment l'examen de Santé Canada et l'approbation réglementaire.

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 SiO2, a materials science company out of the United States, for syringes and vials for use in filling vaccines. The vials we are receiving from SiO2 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 only weeks ago, the Prime Minister announced that the Government of Canada will invest 126 million dollars over two years to build a new facility in Montreal for the National Research Council. This facility will enable an increase in domestic vaccine manufacturing by up to two million doses a month.

Et il y a quelques semaines à peine, le premier ministre a annoncé que le gouvernement du Canada investira 126 millions de dollars sur deux ans dans la construction d'une nouvelle installation pour le Conseil national de recherches, à Montréal. Cette installation va permettre d'augmenter la production de vaccins au pays à hauteur de deux millions de doses par mois.

This is great news for the bio-manufacturing industry in Canada.

Voilà une excellente nouvelle pour l'industrie canadienne de la biofabrication.

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 demonstrated effectiveness 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 keep Canadians safe, and we will continue to take action that will protect Canadians from COVID-19.

Notre gouvernement continuera de tout mettre en œuvre pour veiller à la sécurité de la population canadienne, et nous continuerons de faire le nécessaire pour la protéger contre la COVID-19.

I want to again thank everyone on the frontlines, as well as those working so hard behind the scenes to develop treatments and vaccines to combat this virus.

Je tiens à remercier une fois de plus toutes les personnes qui sont aux premières lignes, de même que celles en coulisse qui s'emploient avec acharnement à mettre au point des traitements et des vaccins contre ce virus.

It is your hard work and dedication that will get us through this pandemic.

C'est grâce à votre travail acharné et à votre dévouement que nous passerons au travers de cette pandémie.

When a vaccine is ready, Canada will be ready.

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

Thank you.

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