

**TRANSCRIPTION**

**BRIEFING**

**Transcription prepared by Media Q Inc. exclusively for Public Health Agency of Canada**

**DATE:** March 30, 2020                    4:30 p.m. ET

**LOCATION:** Teleconference

**PRINCIPALS:** Rhonda Crock, Director General, Health Operations Centre

**SUBJECT:** The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) holds a daily COVID-19 technical briefing for Parliamentarians.

**Moderator:** Good afternoon and welcome to the technical briefing to Parliamentarians on the government's response to Covid 19. Joining us today are the following departments and agencies: Employment and Social Development Canada, Global Affairs Canada, Canada Border Services Agency, Canada Revenue Agency, Global Affairs Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, Innovation Science and Economic Development, Public Safety Canada, Canada Post, Correctional Services Canada, Department of Defence, Service Canada and Transport Canada.

Please note callers will be permitted one question. We would ask that you keep the question to 60 seconds as there are many callers on the line who wish to have a chance to ask their question.

Please identify yourself and inform us which riding you represent. I would like to turn the meeting over to Ms. Rhonda Crock (ph), director general Health portfolio operations centre. The line is your Ms. Crock.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you and thank you to everyone for being here today. Welcome to this call to answer questions for Parliamentarians and Senators. As per normal I'm going to give a brief update at the beginning. I'm going to address a question that was raised yesterday that didn't have an answer. Then we will address a couple of other questions that were raised to ensure that those questions are addressed before we launch into the new questions for today.

In terms of update as Dr. Tam announced today in Canada there are 6,671 Covid 19 cases, 66 deaths and 220,000 people have been tested. Yesterday there was a call regarding Canadians returning to Canada via RV.

We wanted to give an answer to that question. Asymptomatic people traveling in an RV back to Canada will receive instructions that it is permissible for them to stay in their RV. Their RV in this case is essentially their first place of self-isolation and they must avoid going into stores and making purchases as we would advise any other Canadian who is coming home from abroad.

Some people may be staying in their RVs as their place of residence for their mandatory quarantine or self-isolation and this is just fine as long as they maintain the parameters that are required.

As with all returning travelers to Canada the Public Health Agency of Canada will work with federal and provincial partners to verify compliance with the order and as a reminder for the compliance and enforcement measures that go along with that order, failure to comply with this order is an offence under the Quarantine Act.

The maximum penalties include a fine of up to \$750,000 and/or imprisonment for six months. Further a person who causes a risk of imminent death or serious bodily harm to another person while wilfully or recklessly contravening this Act or the regulation could be liable for a fine of up to \$1 million or to imprisonment of up to 3 years or both.

That's a brief answer to the question that was raised yesterday regarding RVs. Basically the RV ends up being the home if you will or the location for self-isolation or mandatory quarantine. There are other questions.

**Operator:** As Rhonda noted before we begin with new questions Canada Revenue Agency, Correctional Services Canada and Canada Post are on the line. They'll each respond to outstanding questions from yesterday. Canada Revenue Agency, your line is open.

**CRA:** Thank you very much. Yesterday there was a question with respect to case work that constituency offices were doing where the Agency would ask the constituency office to send in particulars by fax. Given that we acknowledge the difficulty to access fax machines during this time we will temporarily modify the procedure to allow for email communication.

There will be a confidentiality process to ensure that taxpayer information that is being transmitted is secure and these procedures will be communicated to members of Parliament in the coming days. I hope that helps address the issue raised yesterday. Thank you very much for bringing that to our attention.

**Operator:** Corrections Services Canada please.

**Jennifer Wheatley:** It's Jennifer Wheatley. There was a question about updates on physical distancing and measures for prisons for both those who live and work in them. We have undertaken a number of measures and continue to undertake a number of measures to increase physical distancing within federal institutions.

We suspended visits on the 13<sup>th</sup> and extended that on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. We've also reduced staffing levels significantly going to critical staffing levels only in order to increase physical distance among staff and between staff and inmates. We've also temporarily suspended group programming and group education to focus on the delivery of essential services including health and to further physical distancing.

In addition to those nationally driven initiatives that also include posters and outreach and communications around the importance of physical distancing, each institution has been reviewing their routines to increase social distancing as much as feasible within institutions for both staff and inmates. That's an ongoing continuous activity on our end.

**Operator:** Can Canada Post answer the question from yesterday please?

**Chad Challah:** Good afternoon everyone. It's Chad Challah (ph). I'm the general manager of government and community affairs for Canada Post. We were asked this question specifically as it relates to our processing facility in Edmonton. As Ms. McPherson is aware as we've shared in a letter to her already we are in direct conversation with local 730 of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers.

At the end of the day cleansing of our facilities and social distancing is the most important tool we have right now to keeping our employees safe. I want to assure all of you that in all of our facilities keeping surfaces clean and disinfected is paramount.

Social distancing is a constant component of our conversations with our employees and the public and we recognize although this is new, it's a challenging way for our employees to do work, we need to keep reinforcing that message.

We're doing it but I want to assure you without going through the exhaustive list of our cleaning processes we are absolutely cleaning all touch points, regular high traffic areas and we're doing everything we can to ensure the safety of our employees.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you to all my colleagues for the time taken to provide those answers to yesterday's questions, really appreciate it, thank you very much. Greta, we're ready for our first question of the day please.

**Operator:** Please press \*1 at this time if you have a question. The first question is from Paula (unintelligible). Please proceed.

**Unidentified Female:** Thank you very much. This morning Albertans woke to the news that the price of oil in Alberta had fallen to below \$4 a barrel which is a huge crisis for the province economically and there's such a glut on the market that producers who can't easily turn off their production literally don't know what they're going to do with it all.

On Wednesday Minister Morneau promised there would be help for Alberta's energy sector within hours or perhaps days. This would be a really good time. It's been quite a few hours and so I'm wondering if there's anything anybody can tell me about the timeline for some kind of relief for Alberta's energy industry long and short term.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you so much for the question. I can understand there's a lot of people in Alberta who are concerned about the situation. We unfortunately don't have anybody on the line today from Finance Canada who can address your question.

But we do have somebody who is taking questions that we're unable to answer today. We will do our best to try to get a Finance colleague on the phone to address that concern. Thank you very much for the question. Greta, next question please.

**Operator:** The next question is from (unintelligible), please proceed.

**Faycal El-Khoury:** Faycal El-Khoury, sorry Laval. Thank you everyone. We greatly appreciate the work that you are doing. Among other criteria, in order to be eligible for the CERB and the \$2,000 cheque, you must not have had any income for a two-week period over a four-week period.

People who have already had invoices issued before this period will receive it in the coming days or weeks. Will these people be eligible? Is it considered to be new income and so they will be excluded? I would like to have an answer because there are constituents who are asking me these questions. Thank you.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you for the question. My ESDC colleagues, Chris, are you able to address that question please?

**Chris at ESDC:** Yes, of course. I understand that there are a lot of questions about the new benefit. In the coming days, the Canadian government will provide more information on the measure.

This measure targets workers in Canada whose employment income is from self-employment affected by the Covid 19 pandemic. We are working really hard to answer all questions about the measures and we will be in a position to provide more information in a few days.

**Operator:** The next question Alandra Corrigan, your line is open. Please proceed.

**Alandra Corrigan:** Alandra Corrigan from Lethbridge asking the question on behalf of MP Rachael Harder. MP Harder is wondering specifically in regards to the temporary foreign worker program and two questions.

For businesses that have the ability to bring workers over on commercial airlines have the appropriate steps been taken by the department to ensure those workers are able to board commercial aircraft and cross the border without being turned back?

Secondly for countries that don't have commercial flights, MPs have been told that charter flights are being made available. Can we have more information about the specific timelines of those flights and when workers will begin coming into Canada?

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you very much for the question. I think your question may touch on a couple of different departments. ESDC I think I may start with you and then go to CBSA if there are any border measures related to temporary foreign workers that you may be able to add on. Let's start there.

**ESDC:** Thanks for the question. We recognize the importance of temporary foreign workers to the economy and the role they serve. We have made a number of announcements around some flexibility and exemptions for the temporary foreign worker program.

We are still working out the final policy parameters for the exceptions and balancing that with health issues as well. We're working collaboratively with the Public Health Agency as well to determine the process to advance as quickly as possible the entry of our temporary foreign workers.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thanks very much. Given the question relates a bit to border measures I wonder CBSA if you have anything you'd like to add.

**CBSA:** What we're currently doing is looking at the number of temporary foreign workers that have already come in since the measures were put in place and to find out if they are back in stream and coming in. We have now got clear direction they are able to board flights.

Of course if the flights are coming in if there are seats available. What we've committed to do is to start tracking the number that come in on a daily or weekly basis so we'll know if it's back on stream and people are coming back in.

**Operator:** The next question is from Charlie McCauley. Your line is open.

**Kelly McCauley:** It's Kelly McCauley. At the beginning of each of these calls it mentions these calls are recorded. We've asked repeatedly if we can get transcripts of these which are not being provided. Would you be able to provide these recordings to use so my staff can go through and dig out answers to questions we're not able to get if we're not on this call every single day?

**Rhonda Crock:** Thanks very much. I will take that away so we can consider that request internally with our folks. Thanks very much. Next question please.

**Operator:** The next question is from Tamara Jansen. Please proceed, your line is open.

**Tamara Jansen:** Tamara Jansen Cloverdale Langley City. I'm curious about the situation with Nepal, where we're at with Nepal. I might have missed what you said. Did you say a million dollar fine or six months to a year in prison, is that correct? Did I hear that right?

**Rhonda Crock:** Thanks very much. Yes, absolutely that is what I said. The failure to comply with the order. As you know all travelers that are returning back to Canada now will be subject to the Quarantine Act and will receive an order.

That order will differ depending on whether the person is asymptomatic or symptomatic but regardless the maximum penalties include a fine of up to \$750,000 and/or imprisonment for six months.

To go further, if somebody causes a risk of imminent death or serious bodily harm to another person while wilfully or recklessly contravening the Act they could be liable for a fine of up to \$ 1 million or imprisonment of up to 3 years or both.

That is the penalties that are under the Quarantine Act under which the orders that are currently being issued at the airport support. In regards to your question regarding Nepal I will turn to our colleagues at Global Affairs Canada please. Heather, are you there from Global Affairs?

**Heather Jeffrey:** Sorry, I just dialed in. I wonder if you could repeat the last part of the question. My apologies.

**Rhonda Crock:** It's just in case we can't get the question back again. The question was an update on the flights from Nepal.

**Heather Jeffrey:** The flights from Nepal we're working hard on that. You'll have seen earlier today that Minister Champagne announced we would be having flights for India and Pakistan which is great progress. We've been working very hard on those. Nepal is proving to be more complicated.

We still don't have agreement on some of the transit arrangements but we're working hard on that. We will find a solution. I don't have one this afternoon to announce but it is the top of our priority list. We know there are Canadians there seeking to get out. We're also working with our likeminded partners who are experiencing similar challenges. More news to come on options for Nepal.

**Operator:** The next question is from David Sweet. Please proceed.

**David Sweet:** My other colleagues have mentioned before but I have not so I think I should express it. Thank you very much for these calls. It's the only information we're getting that's tactical that we can relay to our constituents. I greatly

appreciate it. I have a number of questions but I'm going to stay disciplined because you said only one.

I have not heard of any kind of emergency shelter/temporary hospitals being set up across the country. I notice in other jurisdictions that was one of the first things they did to make sure their healthcare system wasn't overrun and to preserve the integrity of the hospitals.

Is this a provincial responsibility? How come we're not hearing about anything particularly in high population areas like Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal where we know the cases are going to arise and we need to be ready with facilities? Is there anything the federal government is doing or is that strictly a provincial responsibility?

**Rhonda Crock:** Thanks very much for the question. The setting up of the temporary shelters or hospitals within jurisdictions is a provincial or territorial responsibility. That being said we are working very closely with our provincial and territorial counterparts to keep a close eye on the state of the healthcare system within Canada and to note if and when there is a need for such infrastructure to go up.

At the same time we're also taking very good notice of what our federal infrastructure support could potentially be. As you know we have our mobile labs and we have other infrastructure in our national emergency stockpile program that could prove to be supportive for our provincial and territorial partners should they need it.

To your point yes it is a provincial and territorial responsibility but the federal government is working very closely with the provinces and territories both to monitor what's going on in that space and be aware of the federal infrastructure we could potentially infuse in the system should there be a need to support the provinces and territories down the road. Thanks very much for the question. Next question please Greta.

**Operator:** The next question is from Alistair MacGregor. Please proceed.

**Alistair MacGregor:** It's Alistair McGregor, the MP for Cowichan Malahat Langford. I missed yesterday's call but the day before I had asked a question about the agreements the city of Vancouver came to with the federal government. Specifically the federal government approved a safe supply of drugs.

I have a lot of community members and service organizations in my riding that are asking me questions about this agreement. We despite Covid 19 we still have a fairly large population of people who are addicted to opioids.

That crisis is still going on and you weren't able to provide the answer two days ago so I need to know how I can follow up on this, who I can contact or someone with Health Canada to consult with me because I need to have this information to figure out who I

contact on behalf of my constituents. Please send me any information you can on the agreement with the city of Vancouver. Thank you.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you so much. We don't have anybody on the call today from Health Canada. I recognize that's frustrating. We will however pass this question over to our colleagues at Health Canada with your name and contact info. Hopefully they will get back to you but it is Health Canada that is responsible for that component. We do promise to pass that on. Greta, next question.

**Operator:** The next question is from Paul Manly. Please proceed.

**Paul Manly:** Thank you. I'm the MP for Nanaimo Ladysmith. People have been asking for transcripts and recordings of these calls but I think just having a frequently ask questions sheet so questions that keep on coming up are available to all the MPs would be helpful to get some background on a number of these things.

I'd really appreciate a fact sheet for these calls and sent to my (unintelligible). I know in my community there's a whole bunch of people who have all the symptoms of Covid 19. They have fevers and coughs. They're home sick. They can't get tested because they're not healthcare workers. The numbers in this country are definitely skewed.

I wonder when we're going to get a cheaper faster testing system that they have in other countries so we can get a better idea of who has Covid 19 in this community. I'm also wondering about aboriginal friendship centres who have had their funding cut, clawed back over the years and have health centres and provide a lot of services in our communities to the urban Indigenous population. Are they going to get some funding to help them as frontline healthcare providers and service providers in our communities?

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you very much. Let me address your first question first. You made a comment regarding the possibility of having a set of FAQ's related to the most commonly asked questions on the line. I think it's a great suggestion.

We're going to take that away and figure out a way we would be able to do something of that nature, recognizing that this situation is evolving so quickly it may be that some of the answers we give today may be expired within a couple of day.

Let us take that suggestion away and see if there is something that we can come up with that will allow for something that is evergreen and wouldn't become stale or out of date quickly. Thank you for that.

Your second question regarding testing, as I've mentioned before on these calls there are rapid test kits that are currently being tested in terms of their quality assurance and

being piloted and we would very much like to have those available in Canada as quickly as possible.

They will be a large game changer for the availability and speed with which testing will be done. I don't have a timeline to provide for you now but I can provide assurance that every effort is being made to work towards having kits of that nature available in Canada as soon as possible.

Our folks at the national microbiology lab are actively involved in doing quality assurance and testing of those kits in the Canadian context. I'm hoping I will be able to answer this question with a different answer as quickly as possible in terms of the availability of those tests. In terms of the friendship centres I wonder if I may pass the floor over to my colleague Valerie at ISC.

**ISC:** Absolutely. As part of the Prime Minister's announcement of the Covid 19 economic response plan there was an envelope specific for First Nations, Inuit and Metis, an Indigenous community support fund which was intended to be used very flexibly.

Within that there is an envelope for urban Indigenous organizations such as friendship centres or urban based Indigenous health organizations that are continuing to provide essential services and require support.

We're currently in our department working on the process to send out information to that broader community in order for them to be able to submit requests to us for funds. It will be a quick process. We're not asking for 50 page proposals. We do already have some requests that have come in where people will not need to resubmit.

We will be considering those as well. There is also the funding announced for shelters for women fleeing violence or sexual assault centres including a specific \$10 million for those serving Indigenous individuals. There will be resources for those service delivery organizations.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you so, so much. I know we're at the 5:00 o'clock mark but Greta let's do a few more questions. The next question please.

**Operator:** The next question is from Rachael Harder. Please proceed.

**Rachael Harder:** My question is this. I'm wondering if employers who started the process of applying for the 10% wage subsidy should still continue to go in that direction if they should hit the pause button, given the announcement with regards to 75% wage subsidy.

With regards to that subsidy, how will the reporting work for that where businesses have to show a reduction of 30% or more in their profits. I'm wondering how they report that and how they'll be held accountable to ensure the system isn't abused.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you very much for the question. I'm going to open the line to both my ESDC and CRA colleagues who can address that question.

**ESDC:** I think it should be directed to ISED.

**Rhonda Crock:** Fantastic. ISED, Patrick are you on the line?

**ISED:** I think we'll need to come back on that one if that's okay.

**CRA:** It's (unintelligible) from Canada Revenue Agency. We will be administering those two measures. We're currently working out the details of what employers will have to attest to, how they will attest, the kind of validities that will be in place at the time. There should be more information in the coming days. I don't have an answer for that at the moment.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you. We'll take note that's another one that may come back again, a question that may return to this table. Thanks very much. Greta, can we have the next question.

**Operator:** The next question is from Nelly Shin. Please proceed.

**Nelly Shin:** Thank you so much for your response to the CRA question, we so appreciate that. My question has to do with business owners specifically in the tourism industry like restaurants and hotels. Is there anything the government is planning in terms of specific tax relief or benefits, supports that pertain to that industry because they're obviously being very much hit at this time?

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you very much for the question. May I turn it over to my colleagues at CRA?

**CRA:** I don't have an answer for that. The specific sectoral measures would come at the direction of the Department of Finance. The tourism sector would however be eligible for those measures that are more general in nature that have already been identified for the employees, the emergency response benefit and some of the wage subsidy programs for employers.

**ISED:** It's Patrick here at ISED. Tourism falls under the department here. The issue of what's happening with the tourism sector is something that we follow very closely and we as a department continue to monitor and look at where Finance and other departments working with them to ensure we bring together measures to support industries that are particularly hard hit. Again as CRA mentioned

the measures that have already been announced are also very applicable to the tourism sector.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you everybody. Greta, next question please.

**Operator:** The next question is from Rachel Blaney. Ms. Blaney, please pick up your handset and unmute your line please.

**Rachel Blaney:** You said Rachel Blaney? That's me. My question first of all is a statement. I did ask a question about how the seniors funding was going to roll out to the New Horizons program. That was not addressed yet. I want to make sure that's put forward.

The other question is for Indigenous Services. We have constituents who are on reserve on social assistance but are asking questions about if there's going to be any top up or any programming for people in more isolated communities having to get food delivered to them and are very low income. We wanted to see if that's going to be addressed any time soon.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you very much. I'll turn the floor to Valerie at ISC and then turn back to Chris at ESDC to see if there is anything additional regarding seniors funding.

**ISC:** Absolutely, the answer is yes. There has already been and will be increased income assistance funding for communities to meet the increased demand occurring today and will continue to occur with respect to Covid 19. The Indigenous community support fund as well where every First Nation, Inuit, Metis community is receiving funding.

It can be broadly used to help support food distribution and other measures in communities to support households that are struggling not just through income but through other measures as you say such as purchasing supplies and the distribution of those. Those measures are in place.

**ESDC:** I did look into that. As was announced the \$9 million going to United Way but United Way will further redistribute those funds at the local level. It's not explicit in the agreement to who it would go. They could choose to go through their existing networks or they may work with other not for profit organizations to help seniors and provide groceries, medication and other services to them.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thanks very much. Greta, next question.

**Operator:** The next question is from Iqra Khalid. Please proceed.

**Iqra Khalid:** Thank you very much to everybody for having these calls. They're very informative. My question specifically is with respect to commercial tenants. I know this does fall into the provincial realm and I want to ask the experts if there's something that at the federal level we could do to provide assistance to those small businesses that are not able to pay their commercial rents even though their businesses are closed.

Also with respect to restaurants I have a couple of constituents who applied for loans through the BDC and were rejected because they sell alcohol or 30% of their sales come from alcohol. I'm wondering if there can be any exemptions made for the restaurant industry which is basically shut down at this time.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you very much. A few of your questions do sit within the provincial and territorial realm but I'll open it up to all of my colleagues on the phone to see if anybody has any comments on this.

**ISED:** It's Patrick at ISED. The Business Development Bank of Canada does fall within the portfolio of ISED. We'll have to take that question back to the folks at BDC.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thanks very much. We'll take note that's a question that ISED will take back. Anybody else on the line have a comment for that question? Okay, Greta we'll take another question.

**Operator:** The next question is from Carol Hughes. Please proceed.

**Carol Hughes:** Hello and thank you once again. There was a question I asked a few days ago that didn't get a full answer. I'm wondering for someone who is retired and has an income for CPP and OAS but they're not retired, they're in receipt of that but they were working a full time job because they have mortgages and stuff. Can exceptions be made for them to qualify for the \$2,000 because they are losing their income that they are needing to pay bills with? That didn't get answered.

My other questions are with respect to small businesses. Concerns first of all, everybody is happy there's a 75% wage subsidy being provided. However for those businesses who are considered essential and continue to work the problem is this will impact their businesses because those who have 75% wage subsidy as they come back to work will now compete against those who don't have that 75% wage subsidy.

They are very concerned as to the impact this will have on their businesses. The other one is for CRA and that is with respect to the Canada emergency business account and the requirement because that wasn't clear in the announcement but it's also requiring people to have \$50,000 in payroll in order to be able to access those loans which makes no sense to a business who consists of a wife and like a couple.

It's saying you must have \$50,000 in payroll in order to access that funding. I'm wondering if there could be some adjustments there or if you could take that back to make that adjustment. Thank you.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you very much. I'll open the floor first to my colleagues at ESDC and then I'll pass it over to CRA.

**ESDC:** I'm sorry, I don't have a better answer with respect to the CERB other than we're working hard to put forward all the questions and answers and get responses out in a much more consistent and coherent manner. We're working as hard as we can to get it launched on the same timeframe as was announced, also better communication over the coming days for the CERB.

**CRA:** It's (unintelligible) from the CRA. With respect to the loan I don't think that falls within the portfolio of the CRA, the design of that measure. It might be better directed to someone else, sorry about that.

**Rhonda Crock:** Sorry, no. It's unfair for me to direct questions that aren't yours to you. Is there anybody else on the line that may have a comment on the loan portion? It may very well be a question that would be directed towards our Finance colleagues who aren't with us today. We'll take note of the question, thank you very much. I know some of my colleagues had to leave right at 5:00 so we're probably losing some of our folks but let's take one more question.

**Operator:** The next question is from Robert Kitchen. Please proceed.

**Robert Kitchen:** Thank you for this. I appreciate this. I apologize if this question has already been asked. We heard initially that the CERB was going to be taxed. We heard a day later it wasn't going to be taxed. I'm wondering if someone could clarify, is it going to be taxed or is it something that would be included on your income come the next tax year.

The second question I have is I know we've established treatment protocols. We have treatment protocols for in hospital. I'm assuming we'll have treatment protocols for those people that are sent home that are diagnosed. Can you provide for us what those treatment protocols are, in particular for those sent home, at what stage would they be eligible to be retested to confirm they recovered?

As we've indicated we need two tests to indicate we're recovered. Those two tests need to be separated by at least two days. It takes at least two days to do those tests, if we can get a clarification on that too.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thanks very much. I can address your final question first. In regards to guidance for treatment, the Public Health Agency of Canada has a

number of different guidelines that have been produced for different care settings. There's guidance for acute care settings, for long term care settings, critical care. They're all slightly different.

I would suggest if folks are interested in looking at those particular protocols you're more than welcome to check what's on the Public Health Agency of Canada website for whatever environment you may be interested in. The definition of a negative test and when that testing would be done is included in that guidance.

There's additional guidance that's going to be produced over the coming weeks for different environments. Encourage folks to continue to check on the website to see what is being posted as they're being developed very rapidly as you can imagine both within Public Health Agency of Canada but also with our colleagues outside of the Agency who work with critical care and other settings where that expertise sits. In regards to your other questions I will go first to our colleagues at the CRA.

**CRA:** The Canada Emergency Response Benefit is considered taxable income and a T slip will be provided to recipients of the benefit. However no withholdings will be taken from each individual payments. Recipients will receive the full \$2,000 payment and they will declare that \$2,000 as income when they file their taxes in 2021.

**Rhonda Crock:** Thank you for that. Is there anything ESDC wanted to add?

**ESDC:** No, Sirvana did a great job.

**Rhonda Crock:** Fantastic. With that I know a number of our colleagues had to leave and we do appreciate all the folks that dial into this call to ask your questions and to our colleagues in other departments who join us to answer questions as they arise.

We appreciate the time that is spent for the Parliamentarians and our Senators on the calls, gathering the questions of your jurisdictions and presenting them here. We are delighted to have the opportunity to try to answer them to the best of our ability.

We do thank our colleagues as well from the departments who have taken the time and go overtime almost every time because I'm not a good moderator in terms of time. Thank you very much everybody. I encourage everyone to stay healthy and well.