



Memorandum

Subject: Procurement and Distribution of PPE and Supplies: COVID-19

To: Health PEI, Joint Response Team, Island EMS, PEI Association of Licensed Community Care Facilities, PEI Nursing Home Association, Medical Society of PEI, PEI Pharmacists Association, Abegweit First Nation Mi'kmaq Wellness Centre, Lennox Island Health Centre, Canadian Blood Services, Emergency Measures Organization, Home Instead, Bayshore Home Health

From: Mark Spidel, Deputy Minister, Health and Wellness

Date: Monday April 14th, 2020

COVID-19 is a global pandemic that has disrupted supply chains and increased demand for critical supplies including personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE is a key infection prevention and control requirement to protect health care providers and others against becoming infected with COVID-19.

The Government of Prince Edward Island is making every effort to assist in securing and allocating the necessary PPE and supplies as a contingency plan to support the health care system (public and private) and certain community-based essential services. We recognize that there are competing demands for these resources and the inventories available for provincial allocation will be subject to product availability. As such we are unable to guarantee sufficient PPE at all times during this global event. To supplement the conventional and traditional procurement practices that all organizations should and must continue to actively pursue, government is working to secure PPE and other supplies through the following strategies:

1. Participation in Federal bulk purchasing efforts and requests for mutual aid through a single point of contact (Chief Public Health Office);
2. Solicitation of community donations, locally and abroad; and
3. Pursuit of innovative methods of supply, including local production and/or non-traditional supply chains.

Health and Wellness has been identified as the lead government department for these three strategies. With regards to the Federal bulk purchasing strategy, all provinces and territories have agreed to work with the federal government to request, allocate and distribute supplies based on the ethical principles of openness and transparency, stewardship, trust and solidarity, equity and reasonableness, and reciprocity. Government has also made significant purchases through new supply chains and we will update you as these supplies become available.

The Department will administer a fair and equitable allocation process among participating organizations based on the weekly inventory information it collects and requests for assistance. Requests for assistance will be received, assessed/allocated, and distributed on a weekly business cycle. We will work to provide regular and timely communication to stakeholders including, but not limited to, acknowledgement of receipt of requests for assistance, information about the availability of requested products in the warehouse, anticipated delivery dates, expected quantities, product substitutions/equivalencies, quality assurance and changes as they occur. Detailed distribution records will be maintained.

To participate in this supportive arrangement with the Department of Health and Wellness, organizations are asked to do the following:

- **Continue their attempts to secure PPE and supplies through conventional procurement channels.** Due to the ongoing challenges of procuring PPE through the efforts noted above, organizations should still seek to meet their own needs through independent procurement efforts. The Provincial Government's procurement and allocation processes are intended to supplement existing activities in the current environment.
- **Commit to use PPE according to sound evidence-based infection prevention and control guidance from the Chief Public Health Office (CPHO).** It is recognized that the work that is done by acute care is different than that done in long term care or the community.
- **Use PPE *sparing and conservation methods* when required.** Organizations must establish internal communication processes that can impart information about sparing and conservation methods to staff in a clear and direct manner, and which allow for urgent implementation if required.
- **Regularly and proactively provide data on PPE inventory levels to Health and Wellness staff via your contact lead who has been assigned.** At a minimum, this information will be required weekly using the PPE and Supplies Inventory Update Form. For supplies identified as critical stock-out within two weeks, we will work with you to secure the supplies. Until the supply is secured, inventory communication updates will be required every three days and for those items identified as critical stock-out within a week or less, daily updates will be required.
- **Identify needs through the weekly submission of a detailed request for assistance form (RFA).** Reallocation of supplies across organizations may be necessary if unexpected surge or stock-outs occur.

Supplies are starting to come into the province in small amounts and a receiving and distribution center was established on April 6th, 2020. The Department of Health and Wellness has initiated an inventory and supply tracking tool, quality assurance practices, and distribution processes. A lead contact has been identified for each sector who will work with organizations to gather required inventory information. If you have any barriers to meeting the inventory reporting



requirements noted above, please notify the appropriate lead point of contact as early as possible.

Decisions on allocation and distribution will be made based on:

- highest need based on risk of infection and transmission;
- known existing inventories and supply available;
- utilization rates (“burn rate”);
- anticipated demand and ‘stock-out’ timeframes; and
- the timeframe the order is expected to cover.

This information will be updated as this very fluid and dynamic situation continues to evolve and we thank you in advance for your patience and your willingness to work together to prevent and mitigate the transmission of COVID-19.

Lead Contacts:

Health PEI, Joint Response Team: Erin Bentley (ebentley@ihis.org)

Abegweit First Nation Mi'kmaq Wellness Centre: Erin Bentley (ebentley@ihis.org)

Lennox Island Health Centre: Erin Bentley (ebentley@ihis.org)

Island EMS: James Sullivan (jasullivan@gov.pe.ca)

Canadian Blood Services: Angela Carpenter (adcarpenter@ihis.org)

PEI Association of Licensed Community Care Facilities: Shelley MacCallum (slmaccallum@ihis.org)

PEI Nursing Home Association: Shelley MacCallum (slmaccallum@ihis.org)

Home Instead, Bayshore Home Health: Shelley MacCallum (slmaccallum@ihis.org)

Medical Society of PEI: Donna Lamont (donna@mspei.org)

PEI Pharmacists Association: Marsha Cusack (mdcusack@ihis.org)

Emergency Measures Organization: Tanya Mullally (tmullally@gov.pe.ca)