



CANADIAN ANESTHESIOLOGISTS' SOCIETY  
SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DES ANESTHÉSIOLOGISTES

SCIENCE • VIGILANCE • COMPASSION

March 19, 2020

The Honourable Patty Hajdu  
Minister of Health

Dr Stephen Lucas  
Deputy Minister of Health

Dear Minister Hajdu & Deputy Minister Lucas,

As the President of the Canadian Anesthesiologists' Society, I am compelled to bring this urgent matter to your attention. Our members – anesthesiologists across Canada – are on the front line during this COVID-19 pandemic and are facing both personal health risks, as well as risking the health and safety of their families and the communities in which they live. They are striving to respond to the ever-increasing number of cases and potential cases in their hospitals and clinics and are attempting to ensure that all the necessary precautions and guidelines are followed.

Currently, we are receiving notice from across the country of shortages of many items required for the safety of healthcare workers as well as items required for testing. While some provinces are more dire than others because of the higher number of current cases, we know that all other provinces are facing impending shortages as well. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is currently critical – N95 face masks are of primary concern. Vital shortages include testing kits and items such as nasal swabs and hand sanitizer.

The Canadian Anesthesiologists' Society asks that the government of Canada prioritize the expansion of PPE production – most importantly N95 masks – as well as testing materials for COVID-19. It is also vital that we expand access to ventilators in many areas – support is required for funding and immediate access. We compel government to invoke the *Emergencies Act* to ensure the expedition and expansion of resources, resulting in the production of significant numbers of N95 masks and other critical equipment and supplies.

CAS is committed to working with Health Canada and the government to ensure the safety of our healthcare workers, as well as to manage and eradicate this pandemic. We are ready and willing to meet with you to discuss this crisis. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Dr Daniel Bainbridge  
President

Dr Roanne Preston  
President, ACUDA  
Association of Canadian University  
Departments of Anesthesia