**Response to Request for Follow-up Information on national IT platform for vaccine management from PSPC Appearance at OGGO on April 14**

**Ms. Julie Vignola:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. My questions concern tracking systems. Last January, the firm Deloitte received a contract for $ 16.1 million to develop an improved national IT platform for vaccine management that will strengthen IT systems. Government computer systems - it has been said ad nauseam - are outdated and heavily used. What is the ability of current networks to support a new platform while ensuring data security?

**Mr. Bill Matthews:** Thank you for the question. I could give you a more detailed answer in writing. In fact, we awarded a contract to Deloitte after organizing a competitive process to improve the systems.

I'm not sure it's possible. My colleagues Michael and Arianne have an update on how that project is going, but I don't have one. Certainly if my colleagues do not have one, we can get back to you with a written update.

**Ms. Arianne Reza**: Thank you for the question, Mr. Chair.

**Ms. Julie Vignola:** I would appreciate it.

**Ms. Arianne Reza**: Only to note that the milestones of linking to the provincial databases and systems have been met and progress continues. We can work with PHAC to get you a mise à jour.

**Ms. Julie Vignola**: Thank you very much.

## RESPONSE:

Canada does not have a centralized vaccine-tracking system since health care comes under provincial authority, which has resulted in individual systems that differ from province to province. Management of vaccine distribution on a national scale during a pandemic, such as COVID-19, necessitated a new system that would build on existing Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) capabilities to enhance vaccine distribution, administration and reporting, while supporting and ensuring data security and privacy. The system has been newly branded as VaccineConnect, from the previous National Vaccine Management IT Platform (NVMIP). The initial release of VaccineConnect was launched in early February 2021, with continued enhancements and releases being delivered during the succeeding months.

Since January, more than 30 meetings and discussions have taken place with provincial and territorial partners. PHAC has met with each province and territory to discuss VaccineConnect and its three key modules – the Intelligent Supply Chain (ISC), Immunization Information System (IIS) and Immunization Program Management (IPM).

It is not mandatory for provinces and territories to use all VaccineConnect platform modules, with the exception of the ISC module, which is necessary to order vaccines.

The ISC functionality allows to process vaccine orders, track inventory and logistics in near real-time. All provinces and territories are currently ordering vaccines using ISC, but the module will be updated to seamlessly introduce a new web-based portal in early June 2021. The new web-based portal will allow for a more integrated management of supplies and a more accurate fulfilment of supply needs for Canadians. The new web-based portal will also better manage vaccines and supplies needs, be more user friendly, provide quicker order fulfilment through automation, provide better visibility into the supply change, and better manage contracts, allocations and rules.

The IIS will analyze and report national immunization effectiveness, safety and coverage levels. The module provides improved data management and intake processes of data, robust data visualization enablement to enhance analysis and decision-making at the federal, provincial and territorial level, and a modern, secure and cloud-enabled platform. As of June 4, all provinces and territories will have been engaged to discuss the integration of the IIS functionality in their jurisdictions to simplify and streamline their submission of vaccination coverage and safety reports to PHAC.

The IPM will help manage end-to-end vaccine program execution at points of administration, with tools to support making appointments, scheduling second doses and issuing reminders. Two provinces are currently in final discussions to sign on to the IPM solution to support their COVID-19 vaccination campaigns. Of these, one province was provided access to IPM in March 2021 directly from Deloitte, and will soon transition under the federal contract and licencing agreement. The other province is expected to go live in June 2021.

If provinces and territories choose not to adopt the IIS or the IPM modules, they will still be able to share important vaccination data via existing systems. The benefit of increased uptake of the VaccineConnect platform is more seamless integration and information sharing across federal, provincial and territorial systems.

The Government of Canada has a collaborative relationship with the provinces and territories for information sharing on vaccination efforts. PHAC, however, cannot impose any requirements on data sharing, vaccination rollout and prioritization or technology to

adopt. PHAC does not have ownership to any of the data retained by provinces and territories, as data ownership/use/disclosure remains with each province and territory exclusively. Data safety is a priority, and as such PHAC has worked in collaboration with partners to ensure data safety and protection on the platform.