

March 19, 2020

### **Merck Canada Update on COVID-19**

As confirmed cases of COVID-19 are increasing in Canada and Government bodies are beginning to implement measures to limit the spread of the outbreak, you have been many to ask what Merck has been doing to ensure business continuity and more importantly access to medicines for patients.

To begin, we want to underline that our company is prioritizing the safety of our employees and their families, our Canadian customers and patients, and limiting the spread of the disease, while also ensuring the continuity of supply of medicines and vaccines and caring for patients enrolled in clinical trials.

We continue to track the COVID-19 outbreak closely and we want to assure you that we have a comprehensive plan in place for all areas of our business to ensure we can appropriately support our customers during this difficult time. Here are some examples:

#### **SUPPORT TO OUR CUSTOMERS**

To limit the spread of disease, we have asked our employees to work from home. This situation will be reassessed regularly based on government recommendations.

We have also paused in-person interactions with health care providers and our field-based employees are working from home. However, we are committed to continuing to support you through various platforms. Such as:

- For Medical information, reporting an AE or to file a product quality complaint you may contact our Medical Information Center:
  - **Website:** [www.askmerck.ca](http://www.askmerck.ca)
  - **Email:** [medinfocanada@merck.com](mailto:medinfocanada@merck.com)
  - **Phone:** 1-800-567-2594 ext. 2
  
- For placing an order or obtaining information on the availability of our products:
  - Order Management Centre at 1-800-4MERCK1 (1-800-463-7251).
  
- For other inquiries, you may reach out to your local representative by phone or email.

#### **MANUFACTURING AND SUPPLY**

While supply and demand vary by product, we are not aware of any significant near-term impacts from COVID-19 on the production and supply of our medicines and vaccines. Our objective has been to protect the safety of our employees and to produce and supply our medicines and vaccines for those who need them. That is our unique responsibility as a company, and we factor that into every decision

that we make. Our manufacturing plants and clinical supply sites remain open around the world and we are taking steps to make sure that continues to be the case.

We have also assessed potential longer-term impacts of the outbreak. The situation is fluid, but at this point we do not anticipate impacts to our supply chain unless the outbreak were to continue for an extended period of time.

In Canada, we are in contact with our third-party logistics (3PL) provider daily to ensure business continuity by all parties. We wish to thank these partners for their on-going support.

We also want to reassure you that we are not implementing restrictions on orders at this time. We continue to monitor the situation closely to ensure quick action in case of potential disruption and will keep you informed should anything change.

### **CLINICAL TRIALS**

Ensuring that patients who are enrolled in clinical trials are able to continue their treatment is another top priority and we are making every effort to ensure that these patients continue to receive appropriate care and monitoring. The rates of enrollment of new patients into current studies, as well as the start of new studies are likely to be fluid and dependent on the degree of regional disruptions and rates of recovery.

### **RESEARCH EFFORTS**

We, and many other pharmaceutical companies, are actively engaged in scientific efforts to develop safe and effective therapeutics and vaccines against COVID-19. As a company, we have enormous experience in inventing antivirals and vaccines. Merck has shown with our Ebola virus vaccine that we know what it takes to get a vaccine across the finish line in a global public health emergency like the one we are facing now. But, as we know all too well, the path to a new medicine or vaccine is not fast, and not easy. As was the case with Ebola virus, HIV and more, we are optimistic that our industry's efforts will create new tools to combat this coronavirus. This pandemic underscores the need for our company and our industry to continue to invest in research for the greatest health threats.

### **RELIEF EFFORTS**

We are continuously evaluating how we can support our communities where it will have the most impact.

#### **Globally, Merck has supported the following relief:**

- *Donated 1 million RMB (~\$145,000 USD) to the Chinese Red Cross Foundation.*
- *Donated ~US\$225,000 to support Direct Relief, Give2Asia and Project HOPE in their efforts to help the people of China in responding to the outbreak.*
- *Merck and MSD employees around the globe have donated more than US\$10,000 to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Foundation's Emergency Response Fund.*

We recognize this situation is evolving rapidly. We will be adjusting our plans as needed as new information becomes available and we will keep you informed as necessary.

In the meantime, we thank you for your patience and collaboration and wish you and your loved ones health and well-being during this challenging time.