



GTAA Rapid COVID-19 Point-of-Need Testing Research

Background

Today's announcement heralds the creation of new point-of-need testing capacity at the airport, which will relieve pressure on testing resources used by airport workers and passengers. This research will make free COVID-19 tests available to employees, as well as eligible passengers on select routes, who are willing to volunteer as participants. Testing services are made available at the airport through Fionet, together with OnPoint1 Health, and under the supervision of a licensed medical doctor.

The National Research Council of Canada funded study will begin on March 1, 2021 starting with operations in Terminal 1 and will gradually increase to full operation in both Terminal 1 and Terminal 3 by mid-March 2021. Airport Workers and passengers will be able to access the testing in Terminal 1 first on March 1. Passengers travelling from Terminal 3 would be tested in Terminal 1, until services are available in Terminal 3.

Clinical analysis of test swabs will take place on-site at the airport, using LuminUltra's rapid PCR test, with results provided to the participant within two hours. Participants will also be tested using Response Biomedical rapid antigen tests for research purposes.

To be eligible to participate in the **NRC funded research**, volunteers cannot have any symptoms of COVID-19 and must also be five years of age or older.

Health professionals at terminal testing sites will administer the tests, with each study volunteer receiving two tests:

- Rapid PCR: These tests are the standard COVID-19 lab tests currently used in Canada. The studies will use the Health Canada-authorized LuminUltra technology, a point-of-need lab testing solution that provides clinical diagnosis on site within two hours. This is the result that will be returned to participants.
- Rapid Antigen: Rapid antigen testing is used for screening purposes and positive results are considered presumptive. Participants in the pilot program will be tested using Response Biomedical Corp.'s RAMP COVID-19 Antigen Test, which provides results in approximately fifteen minutes directly from a nasal swab sample. The RAMP COVID-19 Antigen Test is currently undergoing validation; volunteers will not receive the RAMP test results.

The **Workplace Antigen Testing Study**, led by Drs. Schwartz, Jah and Bogoch, will recruit 500 volunteers from Toronto Pearson's airport worker community. This program will be available to all airport workers at the Terminal 1 testing centre beginning March 1.



- To be eligible, volunteers cannot have any symptoms of COVID-19 and must be airport workers, employed by a company that operates at Toronto Pearson.
- Volunteers will be tested 3 times per week, using Abbot's Panbio COVID-19 antigen tests, processed on the Fionet Deki RDT processing device.
- By testing multiple times per week over multiple weeks, researchers will be able to study how frequent use of antigen tests can improve workplace safety by reducing the risk of spreading COVID-19 through identification of positive but asymptomatic workers.
- The findings may also have application to other workplace settings.