



16 September 2020

Mr. John Gilmour, CEO  
Canada HealthLabs  
120 Adelaide Street West, Suite 2150  
Toronto, ON M5H 1T1

Dear Mr. Gilmour,

I am writing to offer the University of Toronto's enthusiastic support to Canada HealthLabs.

The University of Toronto is a globally renowned institution with tremendous expertise across a broad range of disciplines. During this pandemic, our community has stepped up to support the response to COVID-19 by shifting the majority of our instruction and work to remote means. Our researchers have been leading projects across a broad range of areas, including in the development of new methods for detecting and diagnosing this disease.

But COVID-19 is having a significant effect on our operations. Under the current conditions, our students will not experience many of the most important aspects of their time with us – engaging with colleagues and mentors and building life-long relationships. While borders remain closed, our students cannot benefit from international exchange experiences, and most of our international students have not been able to travel to Canada.

The potential role of reassurance testing is immense, as it will provide access to testing outside the health system for non-clinical purposes. The model proposed by Canada HealthLabs will allow for testing that could help reopen borders and support us in providing a richer on-campus experience for our students.

Recent experience with those international students who were able to travel to Canada and required testing has demonstrated that it is extremely difficult to get testing for that purpose through existing means. While there is potential for new point-of-care tests, including some being developed by our own faculty, it will take a considerable amount of time and evaluation before they are available.

The proposed Canada HealthLabs will also provide a significant platform for research, as demonstrated through the current Border Testing Study at Pearson, on which Professor Vivek Goel of our Dalla Lana School of Public Health is co-Principal Investigator. We have many other faculty who will be interested in collaborating on projects with Canada HealthLabs. In

particular, the flow of specimens that will be generated will be a significant resource for those seeking to evaluate new diagnostic technologies.

We support the creation of a national network of fast, readily-accessible PCR tests using self-collected samples. I also appreciate that while your solution is to be created outside the health care system, it uses the same tests at the same quality as those employed by the health care system and, in an emergency, could also be used for health care purposes.

We are very pleased to endorse Canada HealthLabs to the Government of Canada.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Meric S. Gertler". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Meric S. Gertler  
President