

December 21st, 2021

New Democrats call on the government to use the military for mass vaccination initiative

OTTAWA – The number of Omicron variant cases is spreading across the country and the demand for COVID-19 booster shots is soaring. While doses are available, provinces and territories don't have enough qualified health care professionals available to administer the shots. New Democrats are calling on the federal government to use all tools at their disposal, including the Canadian Armed Forces, to get the shots to Canadians immediately.

"Canadians are trying to follow public health advice by getting the booster shot. People are lining up for hours in the cold for their third dose – they're doing their part. Yet many Canadians are not able to get timely access to their booster dose. The Liberal government has to do everything in its power to make sure the shots are available and delivered quickly. Canadians' lives

depend on it,” said NDP health critic Don Davies. “As the case number soar and hospitalizations rise, there isn’t any time to lose. The federal government has to act fast to deliver these shots. Deploying the Canadian Armed Forces to help is a common-sense step in the middle of this public health crisis.”

Today, the mayor of Montreal announced she was considering declaring a state of emergency. Meanwhile, Quebec and Ontario recorded thousands of new cases of the Omicron variant causing concern about hospital capacity.

Frontline health care workers have been stretched to capacity for months as the pandemic rages on. New Democrats say the government must provide additional support to these workers by mobilizing the resources available through the Canadian Armed Forces.

“Health care workers need help. If there is anything the federal government can do to make things better for them—they need to do it now,” added Davies. “We have relied on these frontline health care workers and they’ve gone above and beyond for Canadians. Let’s make sure they have the help they need to get everyone their booster shots.”

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