

Canada's COVID-19 Vaccine Procurement Strategy: Comparisons with the United Kingdom and Israel

Description

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Canada's vaccination rollout for the COVID-19 vaccine was slow and protracted in the early months of 2021 and this has been mainly attributed to vaccine supply issues. This commentary article compares the country's vaccination procurement strategy with that of UK and Israel. In the early months of 2021, Canada had one of the lowest vaccination rates leading to continual economic shutdown and increasing number of COVID-19 cases. As of the beginning of May 2021, Canada had only fully vaccinated (two doses administered) 3% of its population compared to Israel at 58% and UK at 23%. Canada eventually accelerated its vaccine distribution and by the end of August 2021, 66% of the population had been fully vaccinated. **Methods and Results:** The main drivers of emergency vaccine procurement were identified through review articles, media and government sources. These can be categorized into six key areas: strategic goal of procurement; structural & demographics factors; manufacturing strategy; emergency planning; pricing and contracting strategy; and vaccines ordered. **Conclusion:** Canada's COVID-19 vaccine supply seemed unreliable in the early months of 2021 when both UK and Israel were able to procure a steady supply of vaccines for their population. Canada started with some structural disadvantages relative to Israel and the UK, including less centralized emergency planning and lack of local manufacturing capacity. There are, nonetheless, some important insights that Canada can draw from both Israel and the UK which can be considered for future negotiations, including the procurement of variant-specific booster vaccines, manufacturing strategy, pricing strategy or for planning for other health emergencies that may arise in the future.

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