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PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Health & Wellness Supports Use of SD Biosensor Rapid Test

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Medical Technology continues to rapidly advance, helping to slow the spread of COVID-19. One of the acclaimed tests in diagnostic accuracy is the SD Biosensor Rapid Test – one of only two rapid antigen tests to receive emergency use authorization from the World Health Organization (WHO).

The SD Biosensor rapid test has been proven to have an accuracy rate of close to 90 percent and is recognized as one of the leading options worldwide. A review of 64 studies of rapid diagnostic tests for SARS-CoV-2 infection, published in March 2021, found that the top performing manufacturer was South Korean firm SD Biosensor, whose test returned accurate positives 88 percent of the time. It is outperformed only by the approved PCR tests which can take an extended time to provide test results, requiring more human and laboratory resources.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness (MOHW) and most private medical facilities have been utilizing this advanced tool and have credited it to efficient case identification, isolation, and tracking, resulting in saving lives and allowing travel and business to be possible.

The SD Biosensor was first introduced to Belize in October 2020 by way of a donation by the EU-PAHO/WHO and was seen as the way to make testing available in all the districts.

Mr. Juvencio Chan, senior medical technologist and clinical laboratory supervisor at the Central Medical Laboratory, stated, “SARS-CoV-2 Antigen Rapid Test will assist in screening at-risk populations for timely laboratory

diagnosis to ensure rapid patient management response from our healthcare system.”

The public is encouraged to reach out to the Ministry of Health & Wellness or to seek out medical studies that support the use of the SD Biosensor. There is no benefit in sharing misinformation that can undermine the efforts in the fight against COVID-19.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness also reminds the public that two new free testing facilities have been opened - a mobile testing site at the Civic Centre in Belize City and the other next to the Civic Centre in Belmopan - for individuals who are asymptomatic and require a negative COVID-19 test for employment purposes or to access government buildings. Testing at all public health facilities continues for persons with flu-like symptoms as well as persons determined to be close contacts by the MOHW team at health facilities. The only fee being charged is \$100.00 for those requiring a test for travel purposes.

Through the efforts of a conscientious government, dedicated medical personnel, responsible citizens, and availability of quality tools like the SD Biosensor’s Rapid Antigen Test, the ministry remains committed to doing all that is possible to fight COVID-19 in Belize.

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