



WORKING TOGETHER



SAFE SERVICE: MP Cathy McLeod gives 250 protective medical masks to Mario Borba, managing director of the Mustard Seed, and Michaela Jyrkkanon, clinic and advocacy service manager. The masks will be used by front-line staff who serve clients of the charitable organization. The Mustard Seed provides 100-150 free meals daily over lunch and dinner.

Contact-tracing app: healthy or not?

Privacy concerns raised about using tool to track public

As you may have heard, some countries including Canada are considering, or have already implemented, contact-tracing apps as a public health tool.

I'm wondering what you think . . . would you voluntarily put such an app on your cellphone if it helps contain the spread of the virus, or do your

privacy concerns outweigh potential benefits?

The app would work like this: A user downloads it to their phone and it sends out a signal to other phones with the same app when in close proximity.

This information is recorded and if someone tests positive for COVID-19, anyone with the app who came near the infected person will be notified.

The plus of this is,

people who might have been exposed can be tested and take next steps based on public health guidance. This alleviates a wholesale lockdown of the public.

But there are serious privacy concerns about tracking people's whereabouts, and for the app to do what it's supposed to, it will require many people to download it.

If the provinces and federal government undertake this contact-trac-

ing idea, it will be essential for users to know how their information will be protected, who will have access to the data, how it will be used, and how long it will be retained.

There should be a start and end point clearly outlined, and oversight by an independent third-party.

I'd like to hear from you! Please send me an email (cathy.mcleod.c1@parl.gc.ca) and let me know your thoughts.