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## AMDA Statement on the Current Use of Hydroxychloroquine in Persons with COVID-19

AMDA-The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine develops trusted clinical practice guidelines for health care professionals in the post-acute and long-term care (PALTC) settings that are based on scientific evidence. There is currently no evidence in the PALTC population, beyond anecdotal, that hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) is effective for treating persons infected with the COVID-19 virus, and there is also no data to recommend the use of HCQ as prophylaxis for COVID-19.

The drug also has the potential to result in serious side effects, which may be more severe in the PALTC population, particularly when used in combination with azithromycin. Therefore, in a benefit versus risk decision, one would be weighing the lack of any solid evidence of a benefit versus a very real risk of serious side effects.

The Society does strongly support the ongoing randomized controlled trials to test the efficacy and safety of the drug for treating people who have tested positive for COVID-19, including people in long term care. AMDA discourages the off-label use of HCQ to prevent or treat COVID-19 until its use is justified with evidence and its supply is increased to meet demand.

The Society is also concerned that widespread use of HCQ to treat COVID-19 patients in the absence of evidence of its efficacy will lead to increased shortages of the drug, which is currently used to successfully treat patients with immune-mediated diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus, for which there is solid scientific evidence to support this use. In addition, clinical trials have demonstrated that the withdrawal of HCQ can lead to flares of disease, including life-threatening manifestations, such as lupus nephritis.

*Yazdany J, Kim AH. Use of Hydroxychloroquine and Chloroquine During the COVID-19 Pandemic: What Every Clinician Should Know. Ann Intern Med. 2020; [Epub ahead of print 31 March 2020]. doi: <https://doi.org/10.7326/M20-1334>*