

**From the Chief Medical Officer
Dr Michael McBride**



Department of
Health

An Roinn Sláinte

Mánnystrie O Poustie

www.health-ni.gov.uk

HSS(MD) 15/2020

FOR ACTION

Chief Executives, Public Health Agency/Health and Social
Care Board/HSC Trusts/ NIAS

GP Medical Advisers, Health & Social Care Board

All General Practitioners and GP Locums (for onward
distribution to practice staff)

OOHs Medical Managers (for onward distribution to staff)

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FULL CIRCULATION LIST

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST
BT4 3SQ

Tel: 028 9052 0563

Email: Michael.McBride@health-ni.gov.uk

Our Ref: HSS(MD) 15/2020

Date: 19 March 2020

Dear Colleague

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS - ANTI-INFLAMMATORY MEDICATIONS

Action Required

Chief Executives must ensure that this information is drawn to the attention of all clinical staff to enable them to respond accordingly.

The HSCB must ensure that this information is cascaded to all General Practitioners and OOH facilities, General Dental Practitioners, Optometrists and Community Pharmacists immediately.

There has been concern about the use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications (NSAIDs) in relation to Covid-19 following a statement by the French Health Minister (a clinician) advising against the use of ibuprofen.

This statement was based on provisional information reported from French care settings which UK authorities have not seen and is, to date, unpublished. There is no current literature on the impact of NSAIDs use in Covid-19.

There appears to be some evidence for SARS 1 that there may be an adverse impact on pneumonia. There is also some literature suggesting NSAIDs may increase complications from simple acute respiratory infections or slow recovery. However the evidence is not conclusive overall.

There appears to be no evidence that NSAIDs increase the chance of acquiring Covid-19. In view of the current lack of clarity the Commission on Human Medicines (an advisory body of MHRA) and NICE have been asked to review the evidence. It is therefore suggested that, in the interim, for patients, who have confirmed Covid-19 or believe they have Covid-19, that they use paracetamol in preference to NSAIDs.

Those currently on NSAIDs for other medical reasons (e.g. arthritis) should not stop them.

This position will be kept under constant review.

Yours sincerely



Dr Michael McBride
Chief Medical Officer



Mrs Cathy Harrison
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

Circulation List

Director of Public Health/Medical Director, Public Health Agency (*for onward distribution to all relevant health protection staff*)
Assistant Director Public Health (Health Protection), Public Health Agency
Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency
Assistant Director of Pharmacy and Medicines Management, Health and Social Care Board (*for onward distribution to Community Pharmacies*)
Directors of Pharmacy HSC Trusts
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Development, QUB
Joe Brogan, Assistant Director of Integrated Care, HSCB
Michael Donaldson (*for distribution to all General Dental Practitioners*)

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