

**From the Chief Medical Officer  
Professor Sir Michael McBride**



Department of  
**Health**

An Roinn Sláinte

Mánnystrie O Poustie

[www.health-ni.gov.uk](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk)

**HSS(MD)67/2021**

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*)  
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Dear Colleague

## **THE USE OF UNLICENSED MEDICINES IN THE TREATMENT OF COVID-19**

This letter is to remind all prescribers and healthcare professionals that only licensed medicines should be prescribed for the treatment or prevention of COVID-19.

Reports in some media outlets including social media platforms are continuing to suggest that certain types of medicines such as ivermectin, chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine can protect patients from coronavirus or treat COVID-19. The Department is aware of a number of reports from GPs who have been asked to prescribe unlicensed and unproven treatments for COVID-19 by other healthcare professionals and by members of the public.

You are reminded that these medicines remain unlicensed for the treatment of COVID-19 related symptoms or the prevention of COVID-19 infection and should not be prescribed to patients for this purpose.


A number of clinical trials are ongoing around the world to test these medicines as potential agents in the treatment and prevention of COVID-19. Until we have clear, definitive evidence on the safety and efficacy of these treatments, they should only be prescribed or supplied within the context of a clinical trial within a controlled research environment.

We are continuing to keep this position under constant review in line with emerging research. A copy of this letter will be available on the Department's website as well as the latest information relating to COVID-19 – <http://www.health-ni.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Yours sincerely



**Professor Sir Michael McBride**  
Chief Medical Officer



**Mrs Cathy Harrison**  
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

This letter is available on the Department of Health website at

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/professional-medical-and-environmental-health-advice/hssmd-letters-and-urgent-communications>

## CIRCULATION LIST

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Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency  
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