



SASKATCHEWAN
COLLEGE OF PHARMACY
PROFESSIONALS



March 25, 2020

A Joint Message to Saskatchewan's Doctors, Registered Nurses/Nurse Practitioners and Pharmacists

Use of Hydroxychloroquine (Plaquenil®) and Azithromycin for COVID-19

During this time of unprecedented challenge and fast-moving information, we understand how difficult it is to keep up with all available evidence related to treatment of COVID-19. With the recent barrage of social media on the use of these two drugs for COVID-19 treatment, we want to be sure you are clear on the current evidence and related risks.

First – there is currently a **lack of scientific evidence** to support the use of these drugs for treatment of COVID-19 infection. There are also contraindications, adverse effects, and drug interactions that can be problematic and patients with certain chronic diseases are particularly at risk.

Second – there are **growing concerns about shortages of these and other medications** and we will soon be faced with having to manage our patients who use these medications for treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, Lupus, and malaria. In addition, in a world where antibiotic resistance is growing more challenging every year, we must all be stewards of appropriate use of antibiotics.

Third – the **demand is growing from patients as they are understandably scared** and do not have the same insights as health providers do into these matters. It is our duty, collectively, to ensure that patients are provided with the best, evidence-based drug therapy, even when that means denying requests and prescriptions for these drugs when they are not supported by clinical evidence.

We ask that you take this information into all of your discussions with patients, and provide the usual excellent and ethical care you do.