



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Reference: 2020/03/22/EDP/02

NOTICE: REQUEST TO USE CHLOROQUINE RATIONALLY

The World Health Organisation declared the COVID-19 pandemic a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020. The President, Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, called for a National State of Disaster in South Africa on the 15th of March 2020, as the number of infected people in the country grows steadily.

In patients with severe disease or mild disease with risk factors for severe disease, similar emerging international data suggests that chloroquine may have clinical benefit. As a result, this has prompted a substantial increase in the use of chloroquine tablets across the country, often in patients without symptoms, to be stored for personal use if required.

The risk is that equitable access of chloroquine will be severely restricted to those patients who may require it. In order to preserve the stock of chloroquine; the public, all prescribers and dispensers must adhere to the following:

- To stop the prescribing, sale and purchase of chloroquine for any indication other than its use for COVID-19;
- All healthcare professionals are requested to follow the management of COVID-19 in accordance with the latest guidelines from the National Department of Health;
- Treatment of COVID-19 is still under investigation and is subject to change based on recent studies;
- The use of chloroquine or any medicine for the treatment of COVID-19 should only occur whilst in medical care.

The National Department of Health is therefore calling on all citizens of the country not to panic-buy essential medicines and thereby cause undue overload on the medicine supply chain, in order to ensure that the necessary medicines are available to treat those that urgently require it.

Kind regards


DR T PILLAY
ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL: HEALTH

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