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South Carolina
Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
Board of Nursing



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**BOARD OF NURSING GUIDANCE REGARDING PRESCRIBING AND DISPENSING OF
HYDROXYCHLOROQUINE, CHLOROQUINE, AND AZITHROMYCIN**

WHEREAS, South Carolina is currently in a declared public health state of emergency due to the evolving nature and scope of the public health threat or other risks posed by COVID19 and the actual and anticipated impacts associated with the same;

WHEREAS, there have been early reports that Hydroxychloroquine or Chloroquine and Azithromycin have produced positive results in the treatment of some patients diagnosed with COVID-19 infections. These reports have been based on the treatment of a very small sample of patients, and additional research is ongoing;

WHEREAS, the Board of Medical Examiners and the Board of Pharmacy have issued a Joint Order of Guidance regarding the prescribing and dispensing of Hydroxychloroquine, Chloroquine, and Azithromycin, attached herein;

WHEREAS, the Board of Nursing has jurisdiction over Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs);

WHEREAS, APRNs are bound by the same prescribing rules and regulations set forth by the Board of Medical Examiners;

WHEREAS, the Board of Medical Examiners has previously opined that a physician generally cannot establish an appropriate physician-patient relationship with him/herself or with members of his/her family due to the physician's loss of objectivity in treating these individuals;

WHEREAS, a prescription must be issued for a legitimate medical purpose by a practitioner acting in the usual course of his/her professional practice;

WHEREAS, the Board of Nursing issued Advisory Opinion #60, wherein the Board of Nursing concluded that it is outside the scope of good nursing practice for an APRN to prescribe medications for his or her family members except for a bona fide emergency situation where the health and safety of an individual may be at great detriment;

WHEREAS, a licensee's prescriptive authority may be terminated by the Board of Nursing if the licensee prescribes outside the scope of the approved practice agreement, violates a provision of Section 40-33-110 or violates any state or federal law or regulations applicable to prescriptions, pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §40-33-34; and

WHEREAS, pharmacists have the right to refuse to fill or refill a prescription. See S.C. Code Ann. § 40-43-86(E)(6).


NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Nursing concurs with, and joins in, the Order of Joint Guidance of the Boards of Medical Examiners and Pharmacy and issues the following guidance regarding prescribing and dispensing of Hydroxychloroquine, Chloroquine, and Azithromycin:

1. APRNs should not prescribe Hydroxychloroquine, Chloroquine, and Azithromycin to themselves or family members unless faced with a bona fide emergency involving an actual diagnosis of a COVID-19 infection;
2. APRNs should consider the tremendous stress placed upon the supply chain caused by prescribing Hydroxychloroquine, Chloroquine, and Azithromycin prophylactically and/or simply for the patient to have available in the event the patient develops a COVID-19 infection. APRNs should also consider that irresponsible prescribing can prevent patients with a diagnosed COVID-19 infection from receiving these drugs, even in a hospital setting, should they be determined to be effective in treating the condition.
3. APRNs should include a bona fide diagnosis on any prescription issued for Hydroxychloroquine, Chloroquine, and Azithromycin and could be subject to discipline for including an inaccurate diagnosis.
4. APRNs should be aware that, in accordance with the Order of Joint Guidance, pharmacists will use their professional judgment in determining whether to fill prescriptions for Hydroxychloroquine, Chloroquine, and/or Azithromycin and will consider the needs of patients previously prescribed these medications for conditions for which the medications have been approved by the FDA or for which have been historically used off-label to treat certain conditions. Pharmacists will also consider the effect on the supply of Hydroxychloroquine, Chloroquine, and/or Azithromycin prior to filling prescriptions for these drugs.
5. The Board of Nursing, in conjunction with the Board of Medical Examiners and the Pharmacy Board, will continue to monitor the supply of the medications, as well as additional data regarding their effectiveness in the treatment of COVID-19 as it comes available. Should the circumstances so dictate, the Board will issue additional guidance.

The guidance set forth above shall remain in effect until further Order of the Board of Nursing.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

**STATE BOARD OF NURSING
FOR SOUTH CAROLINA**


SALLIE BETH TODD, MSN/Ed., RN
Board Chair

March 27, 2020