



The Council Of The Pharmaceutical Society Of Uganda

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

Date:

050/PSU/2020

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PRESS STATEMENT

CALL FOR DRUG RESEARCH AND CARE AND TREATMENT PROTOCOLS FOR COVID-19

Kampala 22nd March 2020 – On 21st March 2020 Uganda registered the first case of coronavirus in the country. This fundamentally reshapes our focus from testing to care and treatment. As the Pharmaceutical society of Uganda, we note as follows:

1. There is currently no cure for coronavirus (Covid-19).
2. Management is through symptomatic treatment including nutrition in order to boost the capability of the immune system to fight the virus.
3. There are ongoing clinical trials on possible vaccines for COVID-19. However, any outcomes are 12 to 18 months away.
4. A number of trials on use of existing drugs for possible management are ongoing most notably on use of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine in combination with azithromycin.
5. Uganda has played a pivotal role and mitigated the early spread of the virus in-country. However, with the registration of the first case, there is now need to heighten efforts towards case management.
6. We also note an increased number of Ugandans going to Pharmacies to ask for chloroquine in light of spreading information on chloroquine's possible use for COVID-19 management.

As the Pharmaceutical society of Uganda, the professional body of Pharmacists in this country, we call upon the government of Uganda to do the following:

1. Provide and widely disseminate care and treatment protocols for the first aid management of any suspected coronavirus cases at a health facility including drug outlets as referral is pending. We note that referral facilities may be far away especially for cases in rural areas and may take time to



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reach. In addition, any escalation in cases may over stretch the healthcare system capabilities for a timely response.

2. As part of strengthening prevention, provide a range of foods and nutrition including possible supplements that Ugandans can immediately undertake.
3. Review existing drug trials data on chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin combination and assess possibilities of use in the management of COVID-19 patients.
4. Assess capacity for Uganda to import or locally produce any needed medicines and put in place mechanisms for their expeditious import or local manufacturing approvals. Moreso, emphasis should be placed on local production as any potential successful treatment trials may cause a surge in demand and restrictions on exports by affected countries leading to local shortages.
5. Consider research on herbal medicines and set up a team to review possibilities of their use. We have turned to God as a nation in prayer, we can do the same again and turn to nature which God has richly provided to us in Uganda.

The pharmaceutical society of Uganda is ready to assemble a team of Pharmacists to provide input in the above areas.

Per medicatum servium (with medicines we serve)



Dr Opio Samuel

Secretary, Pharmaceutical Society of Uganda



Dr Ogwang Engeu

President, Pharmaceutical Society of Uganda