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New COVID-19 Guidance for Health Care Practitioners

The purpose of this health care alert is to inform Florida health care providers of significant changes to Florida's COVID-19 guidance.

Earlier today, [Governor DeSantis and State Surgeon General Dr. Joseph Ladapo announced significant updates to Florida's COVID-19 guidance](#) which makes clear Florida physicians are expected to exercise their individual clinical judgement and expertise when determining the best treatment options for patients with COVID-19, including off-label prescriptions if they determine that it may help the patient and it is something the patient would like to try and provides informed consent to try.

The Agency expects Florida hospitals to fully empower health care practitioners to utilize their best clinical judgment when caring for COVID-19 patients. The updated guidance from the Florida Department of Health is as follows:

Use of Emerging and Off-Label Treatments

COVID-19 prevention and treatments prescribed under the guidance of a licensed health care practitioner can save lives and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on Floridians. When recommending COVID-19 treatment options for patients' individualized health care needs, physicians should exercise their individual clinical judgment and expertise based on their patients' needs and preferences.

These options may include emerging treatments backed by quality evidence, with appropriate patient informed consent, **including off-label use or as part of a clinical trial**. For example:

- [Fluvoxamine](#)
- [Inhaled Budesonide](#)

We are committed to protecting the comprehensive practice of health care in an environment where treatments continue to evolve, and expect Florida's health care providers to stay apprised of the [availability of COVID-19 treatment options](#), including:

- [Paxlovid](#)
- [Molnupiravir](#)
- [Bebtelovimab](#)
- [Sotrovimab](#)

As guidance continues to evolve, health care practitioners should sustain and maintain in-depth awareness of the data surrounding COVID-19 treatment options. Some treatments should be closely evaluated before administration for both indication and timing, such as [Remdesivir](#) in hospital settings (which recently received FDA approval for [out-patient COVID-19 treatment](#)), and [lopinavir/ritonavir](#).

It is the responsibility of health care practitioners to be informed of evolving and emerging patient care options for COVID-19 in order to assess the risks and benefits for individual patients that oftentimes vary on a patient-by-patient basis.

Reporting Noncompliant and Unlicensed Facilities

It is essential to support health care providers at the forefront of health care delivery to our most vulnerable populations, especially our seniors. **If you are a health care practitioner who is aware of a hospital that is preventing licensed health care providers from using evidence-based care and exercising clinical judgment in treating patients, please report those instances to the Agency for Health Care Administration.**

If you wish to file a complaint against a licensed health care facility regulated by the Agency for Health Care Administration, please contact us at 1-888-419-3456 / 800-955-8771 Florida Relay Service (TDD number) or use our [Licensed Health Care Facility Complaint Form](#).

To file a complaint against an unlicensed health care facility, please contact us at 1-888-419-3456 / 800-955-8771 Florida Relay Service (TDD number) or submit an [Unlicensed Health Care Facility Complaint Form](#).

The Agency for Health Care Administration is committed to better health care for all Floridians. The Agency administers Florida's Medicaid program, licenses and regulates more than 48,000 health care facilities and 47 health plans, and publishes health care data and statistics at www.FloridaHealthFinder.gov.

*Additional information about Agency initiatives
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