



THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
WASHINGTON

June 17, 2020

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative DeLauro:

Thank you for your April 23, 2020, letter to the Department of Veterans Affairs regarding the use of hydroxychloroquine in patients infected with the coronavirus. Enclosed are enumerated responses to the questions in your letter. I trust this information is helpful to you.

Should you any questions, please have a member of your staff contact Ms. Michelle Myers, Congressional Relations Officer, at 202-717-2979 or [Michelle.Myers3@va.gov](mailto:Michelle.Myers3@va.gov).

Thank you for your continued support of our mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. L. Wilkie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert L. Wilkie

Enclosure

**Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Response to Representative DeLauro  
Regarding the Use of Hydroxychloroquine**

**Question 1: How much Hydroxychloroquine was purchased by the Veterans Health Administration for use in VA facilities?**

**VA Response:** VA continuously makes hydroxychloroquine purchases because it is used for non-COVID, non-malaria purposes, primarily for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. Prior to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, VA dispensed approximately 42,000 tablets of hydroxychloroquine each workday for treatments unrelated to COVID-19 from the VA Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacies (CMOP) alone. This volume is equivalent to over 1 million doses per month for dispensing and on-hand inventory for CMOP. In anticipation of a national hydroxychloroquine shortage, and significant public interest, and to mitigate potential disruptions to the supply chain, VA placed a series of bulk orders of hydroxychloroquine between February 1, 2020 and April 23, 2020. Those orders resulted in VA purchasing approximately 6,339,700 tablets of hydroxychloroquine to ensure that a sufficient supply across its facilities was available to meet non-COVID-19 and COVID-19 requirements.

**Question 2: What funds were used to purchase these quantities of Hydroxychloroquine? How much in total has VHA spent on Hydroxychloroquine in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic?**

**VA Response:** VA uses medical care funds to purchase pharmaceuticals, including hydroxychloroquine. To date, during the timeframe of the COVID-19 pandemic, VA has spent approximately \$2 million on hydroxychloroquine for both COVID-19 and non COVID-19 treatments.

**Question 3: How many VA patients were treated using this drug? Has the VA tracked the use of Hydroxychloroquine on veterans who have been treated in non-VA facilities?**

**VA Response:** VA has treated approximately 8,800 patients with hydroxychloroquine. Of that number, approximately 7,500 were treated for non COVID-19 conditions and about 1,300 were treated for COVID-19.

**Question 4: In light of the guidance provided by NIAD, have VA facilities ceased using this drug on patients suffering from COVID-19? If not, when will you plan to do so?**

**VA Response:** As more information on the effectiveness and safety of hydroxychloroquine is observed by VA clinicians, VA data show it is being used less and less over time. It is expected that the use of hydroxychloroquine will continue to taper off unless well-designed, well-executed, peer-reviewed studies demonstrate conclusive evidence that it is safe and effective. Until such time, VA will continue to make the drug available to VA clinicians, along with current information on potential risks from the Federal Drug Administration and other authoritative sources for COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 uses.

Department of Veterans Affairs  
June 2020