**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** Tuesday, September 29, 2020

**To:** HHP Providers

**From:** HPH Infectious Disease Workgroup, HPH P&T Committee

**Subject:** Use of Dexamethasone in Outpatients with COVID-19

This memo addresses questions related to dexamethasone use in outpatients diagnosed with COVID-19.

The RECOVERY (Randomized Evaluation of COVID-19 Therapy) trial provides evidence that treatment with dexamethasone at a dose of 6 mg once daily for up to 10 days reduces 28-day mortality in patients with COVID-19 who are receiving respiratory support (oxygen without invasive mechanical ventilation or invasive mechanical ventilation). The study found no benefit (and the possibility of harm) among patients who did not require respiratory support. In addition, NIH and IDSA COVID-19 treatment guidelines currently recommend against dexamethasone use in patients without a supplemental oxygen requirement.

The benefit of corticosteroids in moderate to severe disease (hypoxia requiring oxygen, cytokine storm) results from tempering the host immune response. In mild disease (outpatient, no oxygen requirement) when the host immune response is fighting the virus, dexamethasone may do more harm than good.

**Recommendation:** At this time, we do not recommend routine use of dexamethasone in outpatients diagnosed with COVID-19.

Please reach out to Dr. Kwock for any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Douglas Kwock, MD Venkataraman Balaraman, MBBS Jen Dacumos, PharmD, MBA

VP Medical Affairs, HPH Chair, HPH System P&T Committee System Director Pharmacy, HPH

References:

1. The RECOVERY Collaborative Group. Dexamethasone in Hospitalized Patients with COVID-19 – Preliminary Report. Accessed September 21, 2020. Available at: <https://www.nejm.org/doi/10.1056/NEJMoa2021436>.
2. Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) Guidelines on the Treatment and Management of Patients with COVID-19. Accessed September 21, 2020. Available at: <https://www.idsociety.org/practice-guideline/covid-19-guideline-treatment-and-management/>.
3. National Institutes of Health (NIH) Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Treatment Guidelines. Accessed September 21, 2020. Available at: <https://www.covid19treatmentguidelines.nih.gov/>