Guideline for ethical prescribing for self and others in the COVID-19 Pandemic

To be read in conjunction with, Principles of ethical prescribing for self and others in the COVID-19 Pandemic, Coombes I and Roberts J.

1. There is currently no strong evidence of any effective medicines in the treatment of COVID19. This includes the non-evidence based prophylactic use of agents such as hydroxychloroquine.

2. There is a clinically important opportunity to undertake research into potential therapies, following existing clinical trial frameworks which have ethics approval. Consent for enrolment in these trials must occur (either from patient or substitute decision maker).

3. Use of novel medicines outside of these parameters is not supported, except with possible use on compassionate grounds. Independent approval should be sought through existing hospital process and consent provided from patient or substitute decision maker.

4. Doctors should not prescribe for self, family, friends or those you work with. It is normally not considered appropriate to treat family, friends or colleagues, however in a pandemic disaster this may be required if emergent treatment is necessary. Wherever possible ongoing treatment should be transferred to an independent clinician.

Version 1.0
- Developed and endorsed by consumers and clinicians 27 March 2020
- Endorsed by Pandemic Health Response Implementation Group 31 March 2020