

17 June, 2020

**Statement from the National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce on media release of results of dexamethasone arm of the UK RECOVERY Trial**

The National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce (the Taskforce) has noted the [media release of preliminary results](#) from the dexamethasone arm of the RECOVERY (Randomised Evaluation of COVID-19 thERapY) Trial in the UK. As soon as peer-reviewed data from this study are available, the Taskforce will incorporate this evidence into its rapid guideline development process and make appropriate recommendations about use of this treatment in patients with COVID-19 in Australia.

This is an important study led by researchers at the University of Oxford in collaboration with multiple hospitals around the UK and funded by multiple partners including the UK Government. The RECOVERY trial is comparing multiple potential treatments for COVID-19 and has so far recruited more than 11,500 patients. Of these, 2104 patients were randomised to receive a low-dose of the corticosteroid dexamethasone. Dexamethasone is an anti-inflammatory with a well-established pharmacological profile, that is already used to treat a range of conditions.

The media release reports that dexamethasone reduced deaths by one-third in ventilated patients, and by one fifth in other patients receiving supplemental oxygen. No benefit has been reported among those patients who did not require respiratory support.

The Taskforce acknowledges that this is a very promising finding, as this is the first randomised controlled trial to suggest that a drug can reduce COVID-19 mortality. We are hopeful that the initial reports of benefit are confirmed in a peer-reviewed publication in the very near future. At this time, the living evidence approach employed by the Taskforce will enable us to respond rapidly to provide evidence-based recommendations about the use of dexamethasone in COVID-19.

The National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce comprises 29 peak health professional bodies across Australia whose members are caring for people with COVID-19. For more information visit [www.covid19evidence.net.au](http://www.covid19evidence.net.au)

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Media contact: Eloise Hudson, 0417 437 967 [eloise.hudson@monash.edu](mailto:eloise.hudson@monash.edu)