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### 2020-03-30 A Message from Chancellor Roth

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# HEALTH SCIENCES

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## OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

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## A Message from Chancellor Roth

Dear Colleagues:

The United States now has more than 150,000 recorded cases of the novel coronavirus. Here in New Mexico, 237 people have tested positive for the novel coronavirus, and more than 11,000 tests have been administered statewide. Please visit the [New Mexico Department of Health website](#) for the latest updates.

The rapid increase in the number of new cases underscores the terrible burden this pandemic is placing on our health care workers. Today – National Doctors’ Day – I want to salute the men and women who have devoted their careers to serving the community’s health needs, often at great personal cost.

Now, when the need for their services is greater than ever, their selflessness and professionalism serve as an inspiration to us all.

I’m pleased to report that we are joining in two newly launched clinical trials of medications that could potentially serve as treatments for COVID-19 infection. One drug – an antiviral called remdesivir – will be tested in patients who have both the infection and pneumonia symptoms.

The other, an antimalarial drug called hydroxychloroquine, will be combined with an antibiotic called azithromycin as a possible treatment for patients who test positive for the virus but lack pneumonia symptoms.

The research into these drugs is part of an urgent national research initiative to find a way to treat this disease. I’m cautiously optimistic about their therapeutic potential.

Finally, in the face of the all the negative news we've had to cope with lately, I think it's worth remembering that the human spirit is capable of great resilience in the face of adversity – and that's a message I would like to accentuate.

Toward that end, I want to encourage you to share with me – and the HSC community – instances in which you or your coworkers have gone above and beyond the call of duty in meeting the challenges we are facing. I think we all could use a little encouragement in these troubled times.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul B. Roth".

Paul B. Roth, MD, MS  
Chancellor for Health Sciences  
CEO, UNM Health System  
Dean, UNM School of Medicine