

# Physicians coordinating a new protocol for COVID-19 patients

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A quick call to action by 88th Medical Group doctors has potentially resulted in a groundbreaking treatment for COVID-19 patients.

Air Force doctors Maj. Evan Fisher, Chief of Nephrology, and Maj. Matthew Koroscil, a Pulmonary and Critical Care Specialist at the Wright-Patterson Medical Center, are leading the way in coordination with the Dayton, Ohio medical community on a new drug protocol for COVID-19 patients.

Their work on the project allowed Premier Health's Miami Valley Hospital to potentially lead the country in administration of the Mayo Clinic approved plasma protocol.

On March 24, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration released an emergency investigative new drug protocol for COVID-19 convalescent plasma (CCP) for severe disease.

Having already begun research, Doctor Koroscil discussed his ideas (based on the plan of his brother, Air Force Dr. (Maj.) Michael Koroscil, 81st Medical Group at Keesler Air Force Base) with Doctor Fisher to bring this treatment to the Wright-Patterson Medical Center.

After writing their own protocol based on independent research on plasma used in prior viral infections (SARS, MERS-CoV, and Ebola), Fisher and Koroscil initially had the idea for Wright-Patterson Medical Center's Blood Donor Center to become a CCP collection site.

While it was ultimately determined it would be difficult to collect CCP on base, they knew off-base collection sites could still support their plans. They reached out to the Dayton medical community and its regional hospitals.

Fisher and Koroscil began discussing their research with Dr. Roberto Colón, System Vice President of Quality and Safety, Premier Health and Dr. James Alexander, Medical Director for the Community Blood Center. Fisher also contacted Mount Sinai Hospital and the New York

City Blood Bank to get their protocols for collection and treatment with CCP in order to adapt them for Dayton. All within just three days of the FDA's call for investigation.

The next step was to find a donor who had already contracted and recovered from the COVID-19 virus.

Here in Dayton, Fisher and Koroscil identified a donor and brought Premier Health, the Dayton VA Medical Center, Kettering Health Network and Dayton Children's Hospital into the initiative while continuing to share their protocol with dozens of physicians, administrators, and laboratories across the city.

By the following week, Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease, and various news outlets had picked up CCP as a possible COVID-19 treatment.

On April 6, after more than 100 hours of Fisher and Koroscil's personal time researching, organizing, planning and coordinating this project, the first convalescent plasma donation was taken at the Community Blood Center in Dayton.

The donor's plasma has already been used to treat COVID-19 patients.

"After Doctor Fischer and Doctor Koroscil first reached out with this novel idea, it became apparent that we could assist with additional collaboration to further develop and operationalize this idea," said Dr. Colón. "We were able to rapidly gather a team with additional resources to further support and move forward this initiative. In just under two weeks, this therapy went from a concept at the Wright-Patterson Medical Center to operational across the city of Dayton."

The 88th Medical Group has a long history of partnerships within the

local community and this effort was no different.

This collaboration is an example of the continuous partnership between the Wright-Patterson Medical Center and the entire Dayton region.

Both Fisher and Koroscil completed their [residency training](#) in internal medicine at the combined United States Air Force and Wright State University Residency in Dayton, Ohio and now, as attending physicians, had a key role in helping develop this therapy to help patients across the same community.

"Wright-Patterson Air Force Base prides itself on our interaction and coordination in our local community," said Air Force Col. Michael Foutch, 88th Medical Group Commander. "We could not be more proud of these dedicated physicians and our ever expanding partnerships with the greater Dayton area [medical community](#)."

"It has been truly gratifying to continue building on these longstanding relationships where we can share expertise across our city," shared Dr. Colón.

Provided by Air Force Office of Scientific Research

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