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AB 2098 would de-license doctors for hydroxychloroquine, Ivermectin 'COVID misinformation'

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Dr. Wilson | Reedwilson.com

By **Juliette Fairley**

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When the pandemic started two years ago, there was no treatment for COVID-19 and physicians began prescribing hydroxychloroquine and Ivermectin.

Dr. Reed Wilson, a Beverly Hills cardiologist, was among them.

“Someone published a set of patients who did better on hydroxychloroquine and so with whatever little information we had, that's what I started prescribing,” he said.

“You wanted to be up on the latest and give everybody an option.”

After more data came out, Wilson shifted away from using the drug.

“It was on the fly because there was literature being dispensed pre-peer review,” he said. “If there was something low risk, like those drugs, you wanted to try it and patients also were reading the news and they wanted to try it.”

But a proposed state law, Assembly Bill (AB) 2098, would strip physicians of their license to practice for prescribing treatments that are unapproved by the state.

Wilson is perplexed by the proposal, which was approved by the California Assembly.

“At the time, it was informed as best of consent on both sides and now you are going back to discipline me for having used it when that was the standard of care for a few days in my community?” he said. “Where does it end and where does it begin? They can do this with any disease if they want to. They're starting with COVID.”

While the goal of AB 2098 is to curb the dissemination of alleged disinformation about COVID-19, the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) blames vaccine hesitancy on misinformation.

“Misinformation has been directly linked to much of the vaccine hesitancy and disregard for practical safeguards against infection, including masking and distancing, and is a contributing factor hindering national efforts to combat the virus,” the ABMS said in a [statement online](#). “The spread by a diplomat of unscientific misinformation harmful to public health is unethical and unprofessional and may threaten certification by an ABMS Member Board.”

Under AB 2098, which has yet to be signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom, disinformation is classified as unprofessional conduct, according to [media reports](#), and if Newsom signs the bill, Wilson foresees it having a chilling effect on physicians.

“I would think twice, but ultimately I'm going to do what's right for my patients and I'll have to tolerate whatever the government does because I obey a higher order than the government,” he said. “I have a contract between me and my patient. My contract is not with the government. If I want to do that, I'll move to China.”

The 20 lawmakers who voted against the legislation include Republicans, as well as Democrat Ken Cooley of Rancho Cordova.

“The whole handling of COVID has been a disappointment in California,” Wilson told the *Southern California Record*. “We did no better than those states that allowed much less stringent requirements.”