The State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy on Thursday withdrew a rule that would have barred pharmacists, licensed distributors of drugs and medical institutions from prescribing the controversial anti-malaria drug hydroxychloroquine to treat or prevent the novel coronavirus after Gov. Mike DeWine (R) voiced concerns.

The state pharmacy board said in a memo on Wednesday that the rule would, in general, prohibit the use of hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine for the treatment or prevention of COVID-19. No prescription would be allowed to be dispensed by a pharmacist and a licensed distributor of dangerous drugs would not be permitted to sell it, according to the rule, which also applied to hospitals and nursing homes.

But the rule quickly met with pushback from DeWine (R), who urged the state board to reconsider the decision the day it went into effect. In a series of tweets, DeWine cited new comments from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) commissioner in which he said decisions regarding the use of hydroxychloroquine should be between a doctor and patient.

"As a result of the feedback received by the medical and patient community and at the request of Governor DeWine, the State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy has withdrawn [the] proposed rule," the board said in a statement. "Prohibitions on the prescribing of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine in Ohio for the treatment of COVID-19 will not take effect at this time."

The State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy is responsible for administering and enforcing laws regarding pharmacy and the distribution of drugs. The board said that the move to delay the rule would allow it and other agencies in Ohio to determine appropriate next steps. DeWine has also called for the state board to open the process up for comment and testimony from experts.

Hydroxychloroquine has gained attention for months now thanks to its promotion by President Trump and other top White House officials. Trump claimed earlier this year that the drug had the opportunity to be a "game changer" for efforts to treat the deadly virus.

However, studies have consistently shown that the anti-malaria drug has done little to improve coronavirus patients' conditions. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease expert and a key member of the White House coronavirus task force, said this week that clinical trials have "overwhelmingly" indicated it is ineffective in treating coronavirus patients.

The FDA in June revoked its emergency use authorization for chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine after clinical trials showed it was not helping to treat COVID-19 and

could cause adverse health effects.

In the face of criticism, Trump has doubled down on his defense of the drug. During a White House press conference on Tuesday, the president claimed that the drug was "safe," citing the 14-day period in which he took it earlier this year.

“Many doctors think it’s extremely good, and some people don’t," Trump said. "I think it’s become very political."

Cameron McNamee, director of policy and communications for the state board, told The Columbus Dispatch on Wednesday that the rule was initially put into place because “basically, it’s a patient safety issue."

“We’re looking at the best science to determine what’s best for the patients of Ohio," he said.

McNamee said the Ohio board's decision was not associated with Trump's continued promotion of the drug. He told The Dispatch that the state wanted people to "focus on what works, such as social distancing and mask use."

“We ultimately want to make sure people are being safe and not exposing themselves to drugs that have shown not to be effective in treating COVID-19," he said.

Trump struggles to stay on script, frustrating GOP again

California records 219 deaths in one day, breaking previous record

The same day the rule was set to go into effect, FDA Commissioner Stephen Hahn said on NBC's "Today" that considerations regarding the use of hydroxychloroquine should be between a doctor and patient.

“A doctor and a patient need to assess the data that’s out there, FDA does not regulate the practice of medicine, and that in the privacy of the doctor-patient relationship is where that decision should be made," Hahn said.

Updated at 1:15 p.m.