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Editorial

While the global COVID-19 pandemic started disrupting research laboratories around the world in the first half of 2020, many scientists turned their attention to the SARS-CoV-2 virus, seeking opportunities to make contributions to the health crisis through medicinal chemistry. The virus presented a variety of novel targets for drug discovery, which were opportunities for drug development. In particular, a SARS-CoV-2 protease —the 3-chymotrypsin-like cysteine protease (3CL^{pro}) also named the main protease (M^{pro}) — proved a popular target for the development of protease inhibitors. Nucleoside and nucleotide analogues targeting viral transcription provided additional opportunities for drug development, as did molecules to block the ability of the virus to bind to the ACE2 receptor and enter host cells. Other approaches

targeted associated health problems, such as the “cytokine storm” of inflammation associated with SARS-CoV-2 infection. This special issue of the *European Journal of Medicinal Chemistry* presents contributions of researchers around the world describing their efforts to fight this major health crisis.

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