

Options for implementation of Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS) in primary care:

Dental Practice

This document provides guidance for healthcare services to support the implementation of antimicrobial stewardship (AMS) programs in dental practice.

The guidance should be considered in the context of local requirements and policies. **Table 1** below outlines strategies that could be implemented to demonstrate that a healthcare service meets the AMS actions of the **National Safety and Quality Primary and Community Healthcare Standards** (Primary and Community Healthcare Standards).

Table 1: Options for implementation in Dental Practice healthcare settings

AMS program elements with relevant Primary and Community Healthcare Standards Actions	Implementation in Dental Practice healthcare settings
Action 3.14a	
Provides healthcare providers with access to, and promotes the use of, current evidence-based Australian therapeutic guidelines and resources on antimicrobial prescribing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures prescribers have recommended guidelines readily accessible for use. • Examples of guidelines include Therapeutic Guidelines eTG, specifically Oral and Dental Therapeutic Guidelines. • It should be emphasised that in most cases, dental treatment must be prioritised over using antibiotics as first line therapy. • Antibiotics should be used as an adjunct to dental treatment.
Action 3.14b	
Incorporates core elements, recommendations and principles from the current Antimicrobial Stewardship Clinical Care Standard into service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QS1 – Dentists recognise when a patient needs referral to an acute care facility e.g. hospital or General Practitioner • QS2 – see above 3.14a • QS3 – Patient allergies/ hypersensitivity/ intolerances are appropriately documented in their healthcare record and accounted for when prescribing. Refer for allergy testing as appropriate.

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AMS program elements with relevant Primary and Community Healthcare Standards Actions	Implementation in Dental Practice healthcare settings
<p>Note: not all Quality Statements (Qs) from the Antimicrobial Stewardship Clinical Care Standard will be relevant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QS5 – Patients are thoroughly counselled when prescribed antimicrobials as outlined in this QS • QS6 – Antimicrobials are documented in the patient’s healthcare record. • QS7 – Any antimicrobial prescription is regularly reviewed, particularly if prescribed for an extended duration. • QS8 – Any antimicrobial prescribed for surgical or procedural prophylaxis is provided in accordance with the Therapeutic Guidelines, specifically Oral and Dental Therapeutic Guidelines, or equivalent evidence-based guideline.
<p>Action 3.14c</p>	
<p>Supports healthcare providers who prescribe antimicrobials to review compliance of antimicrobial prescribing against current local or Australian therapeutic guidelines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescribers or others in their team may perform an audit of antimicrobial prescriptions as a quality improvement activity to assess the appropriateness of antimicrobial prescriptions. These results can be presented to prescribers as part of ongoing practice reflection and education.
<p>Action 3.14d</p>	
<p>Supports healthcare providers to identify the areas of improvement and takes action to increase the appropriateness of antimicrobial usage</p>	<p>AMS in dental practice encompasses multiple activities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional education/development for dentists • Increased adherence to dental-specific prescribing guidelines and clinical decision tools • Audit and individual clinician feedback on prescribing practices • Engaging with consumers about antimicrobial use.
<p>Action 3.14 e</p>	
<p>Has mechanisms to educate consumers about the risks, benefits, and alternatives to antimicrobials for their condition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials available to educate patients on antimicrobial resistance and use of antimicrobials. • See the consumer pamphlet Do I really need antibiotics?.
<p>Specialised Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antimicrobial Stewardship in Australian Health Care (AMS Book) Chapter 18 - Antimicrobial stewardship in dental practice • FDI white paper: The essential role of the dental team in reducing antibiotic resistance • Tackling Antibiotic Resistance: What Should Dental Teams Do?

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For more information, please visit: [National Safety and Quality Primary and Community Healthcare Standards](#)

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