

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

## General Practice

This document provides guidance for healthcare services to support the implementation of antimicrobial stewardship (AMS) programs in general 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 General Practice settings**

AMS program elements with relevant Primary and Community Healthcare Standards Actions	Implementation in General Practice settings
<b>Action 3.14a</b>	
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"> <li>• Ensures prescribers have recommended guidelines readily accessible for use.</li> <li>• Examples of guidelines include <a href="#">Therapeutic Guidelines</a> eTG or the <a href="#">Australian Medicines Handbook (AMH)</a></li> <li>• In rural and remote settings, the <a href="#">Central Australian Rural Practitioners Association (CARPA) Standard Treatment Manual</a> may also be relevant.</li> <li>• Other expert groups that issue guidelines which support clinical care include the <a href="#">National Clinical Evidence Taskforce</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Action 3.14b</b>	
Incorporates core elements, recommendations and principles from the current <a href="#">Antimicrobial Stewardship</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>QS1</b> – General Practitioners recognise when a patient needs referral to an acute care facility e.g., hospital.</li> <li>• <b>QS2</b> – see above 3.14a.</li> </ul>

# AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE

AMS program elements with relevant Primary and Community Healthcare Standards Actions	Implementation in General Practice settings
<p><a href="#">Clinical Care Standard</a> into service delivery</p> <p>Note: not all Quality Statements (Qs) from the Antimicrobial Stewardship Clinical Care Standard will be relevant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>QS3</b> – Patient allergies/ hypersensitivity/ intolerances are appropriately documented in their healthcare record and accounted for when prescribing.</li> <li>• <b>QS4</b> – General Practitioners utilise microbiology testing as appropriate when prescribing antimicrobials.</li> <li>• <b>QS5</b> – Patients are counselled when prescribed antimicrobials as outlined in this QS.</li> <li>• <b>QS6</b> – Antimicrobials are documented in the patient’s healthcare record.</li> <li>• <b>QS7</b> – Any antimicrobial prescription is regularly reviewed, particularly if prescribed for an extended duration.</li> <li>• <b>QS8</b> – Any antimicrobial prescribed for surgical or procedural prophylaxis is provided in accordance with the Therapeutic Guidelines or equivalent evidence-based guideline. This can often mean no antimicrobial is required.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Action 3.14c</b></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"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Action 3.14d</b></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 general practice encompasses multiple activities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that, if repeats are ordered, they reflect the appropriate duration of antimicrobial treatment for the condition.</li> <li>• Auditing and individual clinician feedback on prescribing practices.</li> <li>• Specifying indication and intended duration of the antimicrobial.</li> <li>• Considering, if the prescription requires a private script, question whether it is necessary (e.g., is it recommended in guidelines?).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Action 3.14 e</b></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"> <li>• Materials available to educate patients on antimicrobial resistance and use of antimicrobials.</li> <li>• See the Commission’s <a href="#">Decision support tools for consumers</a>.</li> </ul>

# AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION ON SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTH CARE

AMS program elements with relevant Primary and Community Healthcare Standards Actions	Implementation in General Practice settings
Specialised Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Antimicrobial Stewardship in Australian Health Care (AMS Book)</a> Chapter 13 – Role of general practice in antimicrobial stewardship.</li><li>• <a href="#">Therapeutic Guidelines – Antibiotic Prescribing in Primary Care: Summary Table – Freely Available</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) – Position Statement on Antimicrobial Stewardship</a></li></ul>

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

You can also contact the project team at: [AMS@safetyandquality.gov.au](mailto:AMS@safetyandquality.gov.au)

[safetyandquality.gov.au](http://safetyandquality.gov.au)



© Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care 2023