

# Medicines Matters

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## World AMR Awareness Week

Act Now: Protect Our Present, Secure Our Future



Next week, 18 to 24 November marks the launch of the 2025 World AMR Awareness Week (WAAW). This annual campaign, led by the World Health Organisation (WHO), aims to increase awareness and understanding of AMR (antimicrobial resistance) and to promote best practices among the general public, health workers and policy makers to reduce the emergence and spread of drug-resistant infections. The theme for the World AMR Awareness Week 2025 is: Act Now: Protect Our Present, Secure Our Future.

In primary care, there has been a significant change in the prescribing of antibiotics for children since the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic 27% of all children in England aged under 10 years received an antibiotic in any given year; after the pandemic this has risen to 36%. Following this, a new England target has been set for children 0-9 years prescribed antibiotics to be less than 27%. LSC ICB is currently significantly above this at 30.4% (12 months to Aug 25). This increase in prescribing for children is against a backdrop of an overall reduction of 3.2% in antibiotic prescriptions issued to patients of all ages in general practice between 2022/2023 and 2023/2024<sup>1</sup>.

During WAAW the NHS England AMR Programme Team will be delivering a series of free webinars across a range of themes including the potential long-term consequences of antibiotic exposure in children and are aimed at healthcare professionals. To access and register a place, go to: [World AMR Awareness Week 2025 | NHS England Events](#). WAAW resources can be found at [UKHSA World AMR Awareness Week 2025](#) and [WHO World AMR Awareness Week 2025](#) including the WAAW global colour campaign: **Go Blue for AMR**. Explore the TARGET antibiotics toolkit designed for healthcare professionals in all primary care or community settings which can be accessed at [TARGET antibiotics toolkit hub](#).

### Antimicrobial Stewardship Messages for Healthcare Professionals:

As the COVID-19 pandemic and recent outbreaks have highlighted, management of viral infection remains an important challenge for healthcare professionals in patients of all ages and can have an adverse impact on the use of antibiotics. To avoid inappropriate antibiotic prescribing in the context of COVID-19 and other viral infections, UKHSA recommends that healthcare professionals<sup>2</sup>:

- Ensure treatment is in line with [antimicrobial prescribing guidelines](#).
- To avoid inappropriate antibiotic prescribing in the context of viral infections, it is recommended to follow current NICE guidelines to infer if pneumonia has a COVID, viral or bacterial cause.
- Explain to patients that antibiotics do not prevent or treat viral infections – antibiotics can cause side-effects, including nausea and diarrhoea; their use can also increase the risk of spreading infections that are caused by bacteria resistant to antibiotics.

1. The Pharmaceutical Journal, PJ, June 2025, Vol 314, No 998;314(7998):DOI:10.1211/PJ.2025.1.359094  
2. UKHSA. Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness: toolkit for healthcare providers