



IPC Highlight: Stewardship Strategies

Improving Antimicrobial Stewardship in Long-Term Care

This document includes actionable steps and programmatic resources for long-term care facilities (LTCFs) to reduce inappropriate antibiotic prescribing. Building a robust [antimicrobial stewardship program](#) (ASP) is a large undertaking, and the resources in this document serve as a starting point to improve the use of antibiotics in LTCFs. The following sections in this document refer to the [CDC's Core Elements of Antibiotic Stewardship for Nursing Homes](#).

Leadership and Accountability

It is critical for facility leadership, including owners, administrators, the medical director, and nursing leadership to support, promote, and oversee stewardship programs which will create a positive culture to improve antibiotic use.

What you can do:

- Empower the Medical Director to set standards for antibiotic prescribing practices
- Empower the Director of Nursing to set the practice standards for assessing, monitoring, and communicating changes in a resident's condition by front-line staff
- Engage the consultant pharmacist in supporting antibiotic stewardship oversight through quality assurance activities—contact PDPH if you need help finding a consultant pharmacist!

Resources:

[Leadership Commitment Letter](#)
[Leading Antibiotic Stewardship in Nursing Homes](#)

Drug Expertise

Establish access to a consultant pharmacist or other individuals with experience or training in antibiotic stewardship for your facility.

What you can do:

- Partner with antibiotic stewardship program leads at local hospitals
- Work with a consultant pharmacist who has received specialized infectious diseases or antibiotic stewardship training

Resources:

[Consultant Pharmacy Posters](#)

Action

Implement at least one policy or practice to improve antibiotic use.

What you can do:

- Ensure your facility policy includes the following to support optimal antibiotic use:
 - Require documentation of resident's signs, symptoms, and infectious diagnosis
 - Require documentation of dose, duration, and indication for all antibiotic prescriptions
 - Establish best practices for use of microbiology testing, such as urine cultures or *C. difficile* stool tests, to avoid unnecessary antibiotic treatments
 - Follow-up on culture results, and modify antibiotics accordingly
- Implement broad interventions to improve antibiotic use
 - Antibiotic "time-out" or review for all antibiotics prescribed in your facility 2-3 days after prescription
 - Improve evaluation and communication of clinical signs and symptoms when a resident is first suspected of having an infection
- Infection and syndrome specific interventions
 - Identify clinical situations which may be driving inappropriate courses of antibiotics, such as asymptomatic bacteriuria or urinary tract infection prophylaxis. Implement specific interventions to improve use.

Resources:

[Gap Analysis for Antibiotic Stewardship Program](#)

[Policy and Practice Actions to Improve Antibiotic Use](#)

[Sample Policy: Minimum Criteria for Common Infections](#)

Tracking and Reporting

Monitor at least one process measure and at least one outcome measure of antibiotic use in your facility. Provide regular feedback on antibiotic use and resistance to prescribing clinicians, nursing staff and other relevant staff.

What you can do:

- Process measures: Tracking how and why antibiotics are prescribed
- Antibiotic use measures: Tracking how often and how many antibiotics are prescribed
- Antibiotic outcome measures: Tracking the adverse outcomes and costs from antibiotics

Resources:

[Measures of Antibiotic Prescribing, Use and Outcomes](#)

[Antibiotic Use Tracking Sheet](#)

[Sample Monthly Summary Reports](#)

Education

Provide educational resources to clinicians, nursing staff, residents and families about antibiotic resistance and opportunities for improving antibiotic use.

Resources:

[Educational Resources for Healthcare Professionals](#)

[Toolkit to Educate and Engage Residents and Family Members](#)

[Talking with Residents and Family Members about Lower Respiratory Tract Infections](#)

[Suspect a Urinary Tract Infection: An Important Message for Seniors and Their Families](#)