

New Zealand Hospital Pharmacists' Association

Te Kāhui Whakarite Rongoā Hōhipera o Aotearoa



Position Statement on Antimicrobial Stewardship

Antimicrobial use is an international public health and patient safety issue due to increasing bacterial resistance. Global collective action is required to effectively address the challenge of optimal antimicrobial use. How we use them today impacts how effective they will be in the future.

Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS) is defined as 'coordinated interventions designed to improve and measure the appropriate use of antimicrobials by promoting the selection of the optimal antimicrobial regimen including dose, route of administration and duration of therapy'. The terms antimicrobial and antibiotic are often used interchangeably.

The New Zealand Hospital Pharmacists Association (NZHPA) supports mandatory implementation of antimicrobial stewardship programmes in both hospital and community settings.

Antimicrobial stewardship programmes aim, and have been proven to, achieve optimal clinical outcomes while minimising adverse events and limiting the selective pressure on bacterial populations that drive the emergence of antimicrobial resistant strains. Implementation of such programmes help ensure patients receive the right antibiotic, at the right dose, by the right route, at the right time and for the right duration. Cost savings result from shorter hospital stays and reduced use of antimicrobials.

A clinical pharmacist with a focus on infectious diseases is essential to ensure successful implementation of antimicrobial stewardship programmes, particularly with the time and resource constraints on infectious diseases physicians and clinical microbiologists.

References

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