

Clinical Pearls

wardmm
institute
medication management training

Clinical Pearl 04/06/19

Each week we will aim to bring out a concise email that provides 4-5 key pieces of information addressing a specific issue in clinical therapeutics.

This week: Supporting Standard 8 - Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS)

Natalie Soulsby – Head of Clinical Development

The new Aged Care Quality Standards promote strong organisational governance (Standard 8). Integral to this is clear clinical governance. To support our partners, this Clinical Pearl addresses a fundamental pillar of clinical governance – Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS).

- AMS is used to ensure appropriate use and review of antibiotics to optimise a patient's health outcomes, reduce the risk of adverse effects and emergence of antibiotic resistance.
- AMS refers to a set of commitments and activities designed to “optimise the treatment of infections whilst reducing the adverse events associated with antibiotic use”.
- In 2011 the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared that antimicrobial resistance is one of the greatest threats to human health.
- In Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs) up to 70% of residents will be prescribed an antibiotic in ONE year.
- Of these 40-75% of antimicrobials prescribed are either unnecessary or inappropriate.
- Antimicrobial resistance is a global health problem.
- It occurs when micro-organisms change in some way that reduces or eliminates the effectiveness of the drug to cure or prevent infections.
- The bacteria survive and continue to multiply causing harm.
- We are creating a tool kit for you to use if you suspect one of your residents may have an infection.
- This material will be available on our website from mid-July.

Clinical Pearls

wardmm
institute
medication management training

- Further instructions on how to access this information will be sent out nearer the time.
- In the interim, please consider the following:

Principles of antimicrobial management³

- Decisions about antimicrobial prescribing should be based on careful clinical assessment, ensuring that the benefits of antimicrobial use are always weighed against the potential for harm.
- Decisions regarding the prescribing of antimicrobials should be based on the best available evidence. National guidelines such as the Therapeutic Guidelines: Antibiotic should form the basis of prescribing recommendations, with adjustment for individual resident factors (allergies, comorbidities).
- Documentation for all antimicrobial prescriptions should be clear to enable effective communication between all staff members.
- Residents should always receive clear information about their clinical
- Regular review and refinement of the antimicrobial therapy should occur based on the resident's clinical progress (improvement or deterioration) and available clinical information (investigation results).

1. Antimicrobial Stewardship Clinical Care Standard ACSQHC 2014
2. CDC, The Core Elements of Antibiotic Stewardship for Nursing Homes. Atlanta GA:US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2015 Available at: www.cdc.gov/longtermcare/index.html
3. Aged care AMS Policy v1.0

Please consider these issues when preparing or interpreting RMMR reports or education sessions. Contributions of content or suggested topics are welcome and should be sent directly to natalie@wardmm.com.au