

# ANTIMICROBIAL STEWARDSHIP

Hōtaka kaitiaki patu huakita

Together we can keep antimicrobials working



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**Te Whatu Ora**  
Health New Zealand  
Waitaha Canterbury

## WORLD ANTIMICROBIAL AWARENESS WEEK (WAAW) 18 – 24 November 2022

- WAAW aims to improve awareness and understanding about antimicrobial resistance ('AMR').
- AMR threatens medicine as we know it. Currently, over 1 million people die globally each year from bacterial-resistant infections, but this figure may swell to 10 million by 2050 unless we take effective action now.
- The theme for WAAW22 is "Preventing antimicrobial resistance together". Collective action is critical as AMR impacts human, animal, plant, and environmental health, and action (or inaction) within each sector contributes to the overall AMR burden.
- AMR may seem like an abstract concept, and often feels like it is "someone else's problem" (check out the framing of AMR vs sepsis in the table below). It can be difficult to know what we, as individuals, can do to help so we've popped some ideas in this bulletin. If we all work as "antimicrobial guardians" the collective result will help keep antimicrobials working for future generations.

### ANTIBIOTIC AMNESTY

Help prevent antibiotic resistance in Aotearoa New Zealand

Return unused or old antibiotics to your pharmacy for safe disposal

World Antimicrobial Awareness Week  
18–24 November 2022



#### National initiative

##### Antibiotic Amnesty

This is our national focus for WAAW22.

We hope that asking people to return old or unused antibiotics to a pharmacy for safe disposal will stimulate discussions on AMR.

We also want to lessen environmental harms of discarding antibiotics in sinks, toilets or rubbish, and human harms of inappropriate later antibiotic use, e.g. for a viral infection.

#### Resources

Find our printable (e.g. [poster](#)) and digital (e.g. [email signature](#)) resources at [www.psnz.org.nz/practicesupport/antimicrobial](http://www.psnz.org.nz/practicesupport/antimicrobial).

#### Video competition

- This is open to all in Aotearoa NZ. Total prize pool is \$350.
- Create a video in line with the Antibiotic Amnesty theme, upload it to Twitter, Instagram or TikTok during WAAW22 and tag in @namsipeg to be in with a chance to win.
- Find more details [here](#).

#### What else can you do to help slow AMR?

##### Be an antimicrobial guardian

- Only use antimicrobials if the benefits outweigh the harms. Never use them 'just in case' or for 'worry'.
- If you do need to use them, use them as well as possible. Check local guidelines to ensure your prescribing practice is up to date. Seek specialist advice if needed. Think the "4Rs" – right agent, route, dose and duration.
- Document the indication in the prescription to help individual patient care and wider AMS work. See our [WAAW20](#) resources.
- Document the duration or review date – most courses should be short and sharp.
- Challenge the veracity of penicillin allergies. See our [WAAW21](#) resources.
- Practice and support infection prevention strategies like hand hygiene, vaccinations, food safety, and removal of unnecessary IV lines.

Table: Differences in framing of sepsis and AMR<sup>1</sup>

Problem aspect	Sepsis	AMR
Geographical scope	National/local	Global
Problem definition	Individual patient safety	Public health issue
Immediacy of threat	Immediate	Future
Concreteness of threat	Concrete	Vague
Emotive nature	Emotional	Abstract
Complexity	Straight forward	Complicated
Responsibility	Individuals	Government
Solution	Behavioural	Biological/technical

<sup>1</sup> Fitzpatrick F, et al. *BMJ Qual Saf* 2019;28:758–61.