



Surveillance report 2018 – Antimicrobial stewardship: systems and processes for effective antimicrobial medicine use (2015) NICE guideline NG15

Surveillance report

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Contents

Surveillance decision	3
Reason for the decision.....	3
How we made the decision	5
Evidence.....	5
Views of topic experts.....	5
Views of stakeholders	6
NICE Surveillance programme project team.....	7

Surveillance decision

We will not update the guideline on [antimicrobial stewardship](#) at this time.

Reason for the decision

Assessing the evidence

For this guideline, we checked any policy or other guidance documents that had been issued or updated since NICE guideline NG15 was published. We also checked any Cochrane reviews related to the guideline – this included any updates to the 4 Cochrane reviews used to inform the recommendations during development of the guideline, as well as any new Cochrane reviews published since October 2014 when the original search took place. We additionally checked for any relevant [National Institute for Health Research \(NIHR\) Signals](#). Each piece of evidence was checked against the guideline recommendations to assess any potential impact (see [appendix A](#)).

The policy, Cochrane reviews and NIHR Signals we examined did not indicate a need to update the guideline, therefore we did not undertake a formal evidence review. Furthermore, members of the original guideline committee were in agreement that there had been no substantial changes to the evidence base that would affect the guideline at this point (see [views of topic experts](#)).

We also checked for any relevant ongoing studies, and the impact of any publications arising from these in future will be monitored.

Equalities

No equalities issues were identified during the surveillance process.

Overall decision

After considering the evidence described above as well as the views of topic experts and stakeholders, we propose to not update this guideline.

See [how we made the decision](#) for further information.

How we made the decision

We check our guidelines regularly to ensure they remain up to date. We based the decision on surveillance 2 years after the publication of NICE's guideline on [antimicrobial stewardship](#) (NICE guideline NG15) in 2015.

For details of the process and update decisions that are available, see [ensuring that published guidelines are current and accurate](#) in developing NICE guidelines: the manual.

Evidence

As well as checking any relevant policy or other guidance that had been issued or updated since the guideline was published, we also checked for relevant ongoing research. This will be evaluated again at the next surveillance review of the guideline.

See [appendix A](#): summary of evidence from surveillance for details of all evidence considered, and references.

Views of topic experts

We considered the views of 5 topic experts, 4 of whom were members of the original guideline committee, and 1 who was a member of the committee for the quality standard associated with this guideline. Four of the topic experts agreed that the guideline does not need updating. One member noted that the guideline may need reviewing in light of the ongoing development of NICE antimicrobial prescribing guidance for [managing common infections](#). However, it is expected that the common infections guidance will complement the antimicrobial stewardship guideline and no update is currently needed.

Experts also noted that there have been issues with implementing the guideline. Implementation is outside the scope of the surveillance process; however, comments have been passed to the relevant NICE system engagement teams for consideration.

Experts additionally raised that there has been much discussion about antimicrobial course length, and that there was insufficient evidence when the guideline was developed to inform recommendations in this area. However, they were not aware of any new evidence that would be sufficient to update recommendations.

Views of stakeholders

Stakeholders commented on the decision not to update the guideline. Overall, 10 stakeholders commented. See [appendix B](#) for stakeholders' comments and our responses.

Ten stakeholders commented on the proposal to not update the guideline: 7 agreed with the decision; 1 disagreed with the decision; and 2 did not provide a firm answer.

Issues raised in disagreement with the decision not to update were:

- Education is mentioned in the recommendations but not behavioural science.
 - Although behavioural science is not specifically mentioned, changing prescribers' behaviour is a key aspect of the guideline and underpins many of the recommendations.
- Further information is needed about patient-facing interventions such as guidance about self-care, or correct use of antibiotics.
 - This is covered in greater detail in the NICE guideline on [antimicrobial stewardship: changing risk-related behaviours in the general population](#) (NICE guideline NG63). A link to NICE guideline NG63 will be added to NICE guideline NG15. NICE is also producing antimicrobial prescribing guidelines for [managing common infections](#), which include patient-facing interventions.
- The TARGET toolkit is not presented as a resource for prescribers and for managers and leads of services.
 - The 'Managers and leads of services' section links to the list of further resources, which includes the TARGET antibiotics toolkit.

- Research recommendations do not include randomised controlled trials (RCTs) to reduce unnecessary antibiotic prescribing, nor to reduce the number of patients who expect antibiotics/go to the GP with self-limited infections.
 - RCTs were found for reducing unnecessary antibiotic prescribing when the guideline was developed, and NICE is aware of and monitoring further trials in this area. Patients expecting antibiotics/with self-limited infections is of greater relevance to [NICE guideline NG63](#), which includes research recommendations relevant to these issues.
- There is no direct reference to infection prevention and control.
 - The scope of NICE guideline NG15 excludes infection prevention and control measures, which is covered by [NICE guideline CG139](#), [NICE guideline PH36](#), and [NICE quality standard 61](#). These are linked to from NICE guideline NG15.

For full details of the stakeholder comments and NICE's response see [appendix B](#).

See [ensuring that published guidelines are current and accurate](#) in developing NICE guidelines: the manual for more details on our consultation processes.

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The NICE project team would like to thank the topic experts who participated in the surveillance process.

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