

**To: Chief Executives  
NHS Acute Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts**

6 October 2011

Gateway reference number: 16689

Dear Chief Executive,

### **EUROPEAN ANTIBIOTIC AWARENESS DAY - 18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2011**

We are writing to seek your support for European Antibiotic Awareness Day on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2011 and help in tackling the rise in antibiotic resistance, which is one of the most significant threats to patient safety across Europe. This annual Europe-wide public health initiative aims to encourage responsible use of antibiotics. It is supported in England by the Department of Health, our Advisory Committee on Antimicrobial Resistance and Healthcare Associated Infections (ARHAI) and several professional bodies.

The number of infections due to antibiotic-resistant bacteria is growing globally and is related to the over-use of antibiotics and inappropriate prescribing. This year we are seeking to raise awareness of the issues amongst prescribers, non-prescribing healthcare professionals, patients and medical students.

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) have produced a series of resources including educational materials to raise awareness of the issues and the need for prudent antibiotic use, which we have adapted for use within England this year. The materials include a **factsheet** aimed at prescribers and hospital management detailing the main issues surrounding antibiotic resistance in hospital settings; a **slide presentation** which can be used for staff and medical students in hospital training/Grandrounds; and a **prescriber's checklist** providing a useful reminder of the main considerations for responsible prescribing. **These and other resources in support of European Antibiotic Awareness Day can be accessed from the Department of Health website at:**

[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_130267](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_130267)

In addition, **new ARHAI Antimicrobial Stewardship Guidance for secondary care in England** will be launched on 18 November.

With antibiotic therapy being part of hospital care, the pharmacy team working with clinical microbiologists have an important role to play in the prudent use of antibiotics and your involvement in facilitating and promoting prudent antibiotic prescribing throughout your hospital is vital.

To help make EAAD a success, we would like to request you take the following action:

1. Highlight European Antibiotic Awareness Day on your Trust intranet/website (online banner and web ads available via DH website).


2. Use the prescriber's checklist as desktop images on all trust computers.
3. Discuss this letter with your Director of Infection Prevention and Control (DIPC).

We have copied this letter with links to the toolkit materials to Clinical Directors, Director of Nursing and Chief Pharmacists and antimicrobial pharmacists. We have also sent a copy to your Director of Medical Education to ensure medical students and other doctors in training are also informed

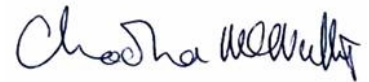
Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation in ensuring the promotion of this important initiative within your organisation.



**Dr Keith Ridge**  
Chief Pharmacist  
Department of Health



**Prof Mike Sharland**  
Chair, ARHAI  
Professor of Paediatric  
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**Dr Clodna McNulty**  
Chair, Public Education Sub-  
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Consultant Medical  
Microbiologist & Head HPA  
Primary Care Unit

Copy: Chair of Infection Control Committees  
Clinical Directors,  
Directors of Nursing  
Chief Pharmacists  
Director of Medical Education