

Help us look after our antibiotics and keep them working

5 ways reception staff can help

1. Reinforce antibiotic key messages

- Antibiotics **DO NOT** work for viruses, which are the main causes of coughs, colds and sore throats
- Antibiotics **DO NOT** help with pain.
- Antibiotics are **NOT** harmless, they can cause side effects e.g. nausea, diarrhoea, vomiting
- **ALL** unused antibiotics should be returned to community pharmacies

2. What reception staff say matters

- **DO NOT** set patient expectations that antibiotics will be issued
- Reassure the patient the healthcare professional will assess the need for antibiotics and only issue if indicated.
- Don't be afraid to signpost to other services.

3. Signpost patients to:

A. Community pharmacy

1. Common Ailment Service (CAS): offers a free NHS consultation and free medication for common ailments

- Check which of your local community pharmacies offers this service
- Aims to provide an alternative to a GP or out-of-hours doctor appointment
- Assessment is done by a pharmacist who will decide whether to treat, advise or refer

Examples of conditions treated in the Common Ailment Service*	
Nappy rash	Acne vulgaris
Conjunctivitis (bacterial)	Chickenpox in children under 14 years old
Head lice	Oral candidiasis, Mouth ulcers & Cold Sores
Athletes foot	Vulvovaginal candidiasis 16-60 years of age
Scabies	Ringworm, Intertrigo & Tinea cruris
Threadworm	Warts and Verrucae

*Refer to [All Wales Common Ailments Service Formulary](#) for exclusions on who the pharmacist can and can't see.

Common Ailments Service formulary:



2. Over the counter medication is available to treat symptoms of pain and fever

3. Pharmacists independent prescribers: some pharmacists may be able to prescribe within certain clinical areas

4. Sore throat test and treat service: available for aged 6 years and over with acute sore throat

B. NHS 111: for out of hours and weekends

C. Urgent dental problems: to own dentist, or if they don't have a dentist to NHS 111

D. Urgent eye problems: to opticians

4. Antibiotics are generally not for repeat prescriptions

- **DO NOT** print acute antibiotic prescription without firstly getting the prescribers permission
- Antibiotic prescribing can result in antibiotic resistance, antibiotic associated infections and adverse effects.
- Antibiotics for long term conditions/prophylaxis still need to be reviewed by prescribers to ensure it is still indicated

5. Samples

- Samples may be needed before starting any antibiotic therapy
- Know your practice protocol for sending and receiving samples
- Only accept samples requested by a health care professional

