



Department
of Health

From the Chief Medical Officer,
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NOTE TO PRACTICE MANAGERS: PLEASE FORWARD IMMEDIATELY TO GP ADDRESSED

Dear Mr Sample

Antibiotic usage in your practice

Antimicrobial resistance is a serious and growing threat to our health. Reducing unnecessary prescriptions in primary care may help prevent a public health catastrophe.

The great majority (80%) of practices in Birmingham & the Black Country prescribe fewer antibiotics per head than yours.*

Many practices are already taking action to reduce antibiotic prescriptions while safeguarding patients' health. Please join them by taking three simple actions:

1. Give patients advice on self-care instead – you can use the leaflet enclosed or search online for the "TARGET antibiotics toolkit".
2. Consider offering a back-up (delayed) prescription instead – this could be post-dated or collected by the patient a few days later if still necessary.
3. Talk to other prescribers in your practice to ensure they are also acting – data on prescribing is recorded at practice level.

I know that prescribers are aware of this problem and that prescribing is not a simple issue. But there are small changes we can all make that will have a big effect on everyone's health.

Please join us in reducing antibiotic use.

Yours,

**PROFESSOR DAME SALLY C DAVIES
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER**

* Your practice's prescribing data are available online. Data were taken from <http://www.hscic.gov.uk/gpprescribingdata> and adjusted to take into account patient load and demographics. The 80% figure excludes outliers judged to be created by measurement error and does not include out-of-hours services. For more information on the consequences of antimicrobial resistance, see the UK 5 Year Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy.