

Antimicrobial Resistance (Antibiotics) Campaign

GP Practice Communications Toolkit
December 2024

What this campaign is for



This Antibiotics campaign toolkit informs patients that we need to think about how we use antibiotics and to consider alternatives for some minor illnesses for which they are not effective. e.g. colds or sore throats.

The toolkit is based on the NHS England “SERIOUSLY” campaign, with a focus on Sheffield.



CAMPAIGN DATES
7 Dec – 6 Jan

Why We Are Doing This Campaign Now

The aims of this “SERIOUSLY” antibiotics campaign is to raise awareness about the risks of inappropriate antibiotic use and educate patients about when antibiotics should and should not be used. The campaign seeks to inform patients about the importance of using antibiotics correctly and encourage self-care when appropriate.

This initiative is part of a broader effort to combat antibiotic resistance nationally, ensuring that antibiotics remain effective for treating serious infections in the future.

The NHS “Seriously” antibiotics campaign primarily targets

University students: To raise awareness about antibiotic resistance and appropriate use of antibiotics.

High prescribing areas: Specific regions with higher rates of antibiotic prescriptions.

Older people and families with young children: To educate about the risks of antibiotic misuse and promote responsible use.

Where to find campaign content



This pack includes all the content, tools, and advice you need to encourage patients to consider alternatives to antibiotics.

You will find

- Posters
- Social media
- Website news
- Video content
- SMS text messages
- Newsletter content

[CLICK HERE TO
DOWNLOAD
CONTENT FROM
THE PCS ‘GP
COMMS HUB’
WEBSITE](#)

Timing of the Winter Illness (ARI) Campaign



Running this campaign for the entire period of 7th December to 6th January 2025 is crucial to:

Running an offshoot campaign in Sheffield GP practices aimed at their patients would be important for several reasons:

- **Awareness Locally:** Tailoring the campaign to the specific needs and demographics of Sheffield will make the message more relevant and impactful for the local population
- **Targeted Messaging:** Addressing specific issues prevalent in Sheffield, such as high antibiotic prescription rates, can help in reducing misuse and promoting better health outcomes
- **Enhanced Engagement:** Using various promotional assets like posters, leaflets, and translated materials in GP practices can engage patients during their visits, ensuring the message reaches them when they are most receptive
- **Pressure on GP Practice Services:** Winter months typically see a surge in demand for antibiotics at GP practices. By encouraging patients to visit pharmacists for minor illnesses, the campaign can help alleviate the pressure on GP surgeries (and emergency departments), ensuring that your resources are available for more serious cases.
- **Public Awareness and Behaviour Change:** Running the campaign over two months allows sufficient time to raise awareness and influence patient behaviour. Repeated messaging helps to reinforce the benefits of consulting pharmacists, leading to a more significant shift in how patients manage minor illnesses.
- **Seasonal Increase in ARIs:** Acute respiratory infections, including colds and flu, are more prevalent during the colder months. Launching the campaign at the start of December aligns with a default by patients to request antibiotics, ensuring timely information and support for patients.
- **Holiday Season Considerations:** The holiday season can disrupt regular healthcare access due to closures and reduced hours. Promoting pharmacists as an accessible and reliable option during this period ensures patients can still receive care and advice when GP appointments might be harder to secure.
- **Vaccination Campaigns:** This period often coincides with flu season when patients ask for antibiotics in the misconception these will help a viral infection. Integrating messages about self-care with vaccination efforts can provide a comprehensive approach to winter health, encouraging preventive measures alongside effective treatment options.

What GP Practices need to do in this campaign



We need your support in promoting alternative treatments to antibiotics. Your active participation is vital to helping patients to understand that they don't have to wait for a GP appointment and can visit a pharmacist for treatment and self-care advice.

In-Practice Communication:



- **Posters and leaflets:** Display the supplied posters and leaflets in waiting areas and consultation rooms.



- **Direct Conversations:** Take the opportunity to discuss the importance of good self-care alternatives to antibiotics.

Digital Tools:



- **Social media:** Post the supplied posts and messages on your Practice Facebook account



- **Text / SMS messages:** Send out the supplied messages to your patients' mobile phones, and consider adding a link to the relevant pages on your Practice website



- **Website:** Post the news story and video on your Practice website
- **Email Newsletters:** Send out regular email newsletters with information about the services available in community pharmacies and answers to frequent questions.

You can download these resources from the [General Practice Comms Hub for Practice Managers and Practice Teams](#) page on the PCS website.