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| ***From the Chief Medical Officer,******Professor Dame Sally C Davies FRS FMedSci*** | ***Richmond House******79 Whitehall******London******SW1A 2NS*** | ***T: +44 (0)20 7210 4850******F: +44 (0)20 7210 5407******E: sally.davies@dh.gsi.gov.uk******W: www.gov.uk*** |

[GP\_Name]

[Address 1]

[Address 2], [Address 3]

[Address 4], [Address 5]

x January 2016

**NOTE TO PRACTICE MANAGERS: PLEASE FORWARD IMMEDIATELY TO GP ADDRESSED**

Dear Dr [GP\_Surname]

**Antibiotic usage in your practice**

Antimicrobial resistance is a serious and growing threat to our health. Reducing inappropriate antibiotic prescribing in primary care can help prevent a public health catastrophe.

**The great majority (80%) of practices in England prescribe fewer antibiotics per head than yours.\***

I understand that this is not a simple issue and you may have already taken steps to reduce antibiotic prescriptions while safeguarding patient health. I encourage you to join prescribers who have reduced their rate of prescribing 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 results in fewer patients using antibiotics and is associated with similar symptomatic outcomes to immediate prescription (Little, P. et al., *BMJ*. 2014; 348).
3. Talk to other prescribers in your practice to ensure they are also changing their antibiotic prescribing.

I know that general practitioners are doing a demanding job in difficult circumstances. But if we all make these small changes we can have a big effect on everyone’s health.

Your local CCG prescribing advisor can help your practice reduce inappropriate antibiotic prescribing.

Kind regards



**PROFESSOR DAME SALLY C DAVIES**

**CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER**

\* Your practice’s prescribing data are available online. Data analysed by the NHS Business Services Authority. Figures on the use of antibiotics take patient demographics into account. Comparisons between practices exclude outliers judged to be created by measurement error and do not include out-of-hours services. For more information on antimicrobial resistance, see AntibioticGuardian.com. Patients can be referred to the “Take care, not antibiotics” film: <http://tinyurl.com/znmaxsx>