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For: NHS Improvement/ NHS England PrescQIPP AMS Hub

April 2017

# Re: CMO Letters to High Antibiotic Prescribers – sent April 2017

Improving antibiotic stewardship is a priority for Public Health England due to the continuing threat of antimicrobial resistance. The Chief Medical Officer for England is sending her annual feedback letter on antibiotic prescribing rates to GPs in April 2017.

The feedback letters are being sent to over 6,300 individual GPs in over 1,400 different GP practices with high antibiotic prescribing rates. Practices were selected based on their level of prescribing per STAR-PU and in comparison with the England average used by the Quality Premium. The letters are tailored according to GP practice prescribing rate, change in prescribing over time, and whether they were previously sent feedback. While many GPs are already reducing their usage of antibiotics, the letters are intended to support GPs to reduce their prescribing further by providing feedback on practice prescribing rates, offering encouragement and suggesting practical actions in a clear and succinct manner. Public Health England’s Behavioural Insights Team is managing the process.

Public Health England ran a randomised controlled trial in 2014/15 to test the effect of sending feedback to GPs about their antibiotic usage (LANCET Vol 387, No. 10029, p1743). The trial found that practices that were sent a supportive feedback letter prescribed 3.3% fewer antibiotics than practices that did not receive a letter. GPs in practices with antibiotic prescribing rates in the top 20% for each NHS Area Team were involved in this study.

In Jan 2016 similar letters were sent to all GPs in practices whose prescribing rate, calculated as above, was in the top 20% nationally.

The methodology used to allocate letter content is provided in the table below, with copies of all 6 letters posted on the AMS Hub, and an excel sheet containing details of all prescribers and practices who have been sent letters. Note the letters suggest the prescribers do contact their CCG prescribing advisers for antimicrobial stewardship support.

GP practices were included if they were in the top 20% Antibacterial Items/STAR-PU for the twelve months (Oct 2015 –Sep 2016). There are three main letters (1, 2, and 3) that have been tailored according to the table below - and letters have also been tailored to acknowledge whether the GP practice had received a CMO letter previously.

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| **Group** | **Performance in the Last 12mths** | **Variance from 2013/14** | **Category** | **Headline Message** | **Secondary Message** | **Count of Practices** |
| High rate, have increased since 13/14 | Top 20% | Increase | Letter 1 | Your practice is amongst the 20% highest prescribers of antibiotics nationally | The great majority (80%) of practices in England prescribe fewer antibiotics per head than yours. Most other practices have reduced their prescribing rates since 2013/14 but yours has increased. | 724 (233 have received a letter previously) |
| High rate, have decreased since 13/14 | Top 20% (exclusive of top 10%) | Decrease | Letter 2 | Your practice is amongst the 20% highest prescribers of antibiotics nationally | The great majority (80%) of practices in England prescribe fewer antibiotics per head than yours. | 380 (201 have received a letter previously) |
| Very high rate, have decreased since 13/14 | Top 10% | Decrease | Letter 3 | Your practice is amongst the 10% highest prescribers of antibiotics nationally | The great majority (90%) of practices in England prescribe fewer antibiotics per head than yours. | 335 (259 have received a letter previously) |
|  |  | ***Total number of practices to be contacted:*** | | | | ***1,439*** |

If CCGs have any questions please contact:

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**NHS Improvement**