

Information for vets on antimicrobial resistance

- Our Vision:** To eradicate the risk posed by antimicrobial-resistant bacteria to humans and animals
- Our Mission:** To educate and support vets and animal owners on the treatment and prevention of antimicrobial-resistant infections
- Our Goals:**
- Highlighting best hygiene practice in veterinary healthcare
 - Offering support and advice to people whose animals have antimicrobial-resistant infections
 - Promoting responsible antimicrobial use
 - Providing education on colonisation and infection with bacteria
 - Promoting a one-health approach to resistance in medical and veterinary healthcare

Our website offers a wealth of support and information for vets, nurses and animal owners. It is a great source of up-to-date, evidence based-information on antimicrobial resistance. This will include podcasts of our veterinary advisors speaking about infection control and responsible use of antimicrobials. There are also downloads on hand hygiene and guidelines for infection control in veterinary practices.

www.thebellamossfoundation.com

Antimicrobial resistance is a clear and present threat to human and veterinary healthcare. Without concerted effort antimicrobial resistance may make much of the modern healthcare that we take for granted today impossible to deliver in the future.

Antimicrobial-resistant bacteria pose a clear and significant risk to the pet population and their owners. Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and methicillin-resistant *S. pseudintermedius* (MRSP) are the two most recognised antimicrobial-resistant bacteria but others including *Pseudomonas* and *Escherichia coli* can also pose a risk to animals. All of these organisms can be associated with skin, ear and surgical site infections, which are often challenging to treat.

This highlights the need for careful attention to patient management, antimicrobial use, infection control and disease surveillance.

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Measures to limit the spread of antimicrobial-resistant bacteria within a practice include:

1. Establishing guidelines for appropriate antimicrobial use, in particular, ensuring that a bacterial infection has been confirmed and that appropriate antimicrobial drug treatment is correctly applied until the infection is completely cured.
2. Establishing a comprehensive practice biosecurity policy including infectious disease control guidelines, paying particular attention to effective hand hygiene and cleaning.
3. Using a sanitary audit to check whether the infectious disease control guidelines are being followed and are effective.
4. Having protocols to effectively manage animals that are infected with or are carriers of MRSA, MRSP or other antimicrobial-resistant bacteria.
5. Appointing a staff member with the authority and responsibility for ensuring that infection control protocols are available, known, understood and followed by all practice staff.



It is impossible to completely eradicate antimicrobial-resistant infections associated with healthcare settings, but a good understanding of the potential for infection and appropriate courses of action will reduce the risk.