



23 February 2017

Our ref: MT17-213

bpacnz
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DUNEDIN

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Dear bpacnz

Antimicrobial stewardship: systems and processes for effective antimicrobial medicine use

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft bpacnz guideline, *Antimicrobial stewardship: systems and processes for effective antimicrobial medicine use* (the guideline). We applaud bpacnz on its work on this important area of health care.

Introduction to general practice and the College

General practice is the medical specialty that treats patients: with the widest variety of conditions; with the greatest range of severity (from minor to terminal); from the earliest presentation to the end; and with the most inseparable intertwining of the biomedical and the psychosocial. General practitioners (GPs) treat patients of all ages, from neonates to elderly, across the course of their lives.

GPs comprise almost 40 percent of New Zealand's specialist workforce and their professional body, the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (the College), is the largest medical college in the country. The College provides training and ongoing professional development for GPs and rural hospital generalists, and sets standards for general practice. The College has a commitment to embed the three principles (participation, partnership and protection) of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) across its work, and to achieving health equity in New Zealand.

Health equity is the absence of avoidable or remediable differences in health outcomes and access to health services among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, or geographically (WHO). To achieve health equity, we advocate for:

- A greater focus on the social determinants of health (including labour, welfare, education, housing, and the environment).
- Funding and support to sustain the development of a GP workforce of sufficient capacity to meet population need for access to quality primary medical care, particularly in rural and high need areas.
- Sustained focus on measures to reduce smoking and to increase healthy food options for low-income families.
- Improved integration of primary, community, and secondary care health and social services which ensures the provision of high quality services.
- Universally accessible free primary health care for children and low-income families, because health inequities begin early and compound over the life course.
- A review of the funding model for primary care to ensure that resourcing is allocated equitably across diverse populations with differing needs.

bpacnz's consultation

We understand the guideline is a contextualisation of 'Antimicrobial stewardship' (NICE clinical guideline NG15). A Guideline Review and Contextualisation Group reviewed the NICE guideline and recommended changes deemed necessary for the New Zealand context. The guideline aims to provide good practice recommendations on systems and processes for the effective use of antimicrobials. It covers the effective use of antimicrobials as part of all publicly and privately funded human health care provided throughout New Zealand. You now ask for comments on the guideline.

Submission

The College is of the view that antimicrobial stewardship in primary care is essential, and strongly supports the development of the guideline. We advocate for a health care system-wide approach to promoting and monitoring the judicious use of antimicrobials to preserve their future effectiveness. In particular, the College advocates for antimicrobial stewardship of surveillance and prudent antibiotic use that involves coordinated interventions across all health care settings to optimise antimicrobial use, which might include national antimicrobial guidelines with regional variation.

The College has expressed its view on antimicrobial stewardship in the College's Policy Brief, *Antibiotics and antimicrobial resistance: avoiding a post-antibiotic era*. bpacnz may wish to include a reference to the College's Policy Brief in the guidelines. It can be found on the College's webpage at: https://www.rnzcgp.org.nz/RNZCGP/Publications/Policy_briefs/RNZCGP/Publications/Policy_briefs.aspx?hkey=20017639-9b5a-4ff1-b6e6-bebfc01b47bd

We have a number of comments on more specific matters, which are included in the attached table.

Further, given the short timeframe allowed by bpacnz for feedback, the College has asked College members to provide their comments directly to bpacnz.

We hope you find our submission helpful. Should you require any further information or clarification please contact the College's policy team at policy@rnzcgp.org.nz.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Michael Thorn', written in a cursive style.

Michael Thorn
Manager – Strategic Policy