**Name:** Katie Perkins  
**Organisation:** Royal Pharmaceutical Society

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<td>General</td>
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<td>The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) agrees that the appropriate prescribing of antimicrobials by healthcare professionals and the proper use of prescribed antimicrobials by patients is essential to minimise the risk of further antimicrobial resistance and to preserve the effectiveness of existing antimicrobials. Furthermore there must be a reduced expectation by the public of receiving an antibiotic treatment for conditions that are unlikely to be bacterial or are self-limiting. The RPS believes that pharmacy currently has a very positive impact on antimicrobial stewardship and infection control and that pharmacists are in a position to further contribute to these areas.</td>
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Stakeholder Comments

4.2.1 Activities and measures that will be covered

| Community pharmacy is highly accessible to patients and the public, having been described as the window into the NHS on every high street, and offers huge potential to deliver public health messages such as around the stewardship of antibiotics. A core role of the community pharmacist is to help the public and patients with their self-care requirements and to recommend medicines for self-limiting conditions. Pharmacists already advise the public and patients that many infections are likely to be self-limiting and will not be helped by antibiotics and, where appropriate, suggest treatments that will provide symptomatic relief. The use of minor ailment schemes whereby patients can receive symptomatic treatments for infections can decrease visits to a GP by 50% and reduce the number of prescribed antibiotics [1]. Crucially, pharmacists have the knowledge and expertise to identify if a patient’s symptoms are persistent or potentially serious requiring referral to a medical practitioner. Pharmacists are all acutely aware of the challenges posed by medicines adherence. Where an antibiotic has been prescribed, the pharmacist will help the patient overcome any troublesome side-effects that often impair them from completing the full course. The pharmacist will also stress the need to dispose of any unwanted antibiotics correctly, rather than save them for another infection. Additionally pharmacists are ideally placed to also advise patients on ways of improving hygiene, and help maximise vaccination uptake [2] to reduce infections.


[2. Warner, J.G., et al., Increasing seasonal influenza vaccination uptake using community pharmacies:

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**Stakeholder Comments**

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Within pharmacy, an Expert Practice Curricula for Infection and Antimicrobial Stewardship has been produced by the United Kingdom Clinical Pharmacy Association Infection Management Group, with RPS as an affiliated group, to support pharmacists wishing to specialise in this important clinical area with the knowledge skills, experience and behaviours to advance their practice which will include interventions aimed at reducing the spread of antimicrobial resistance.

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