

Louth: Antimicrobial Guidelines - Louth Hospitals: Antimicrobial Guidelines: Neonatal Antimicrobial Prescribing Principles

Additional Prescribing Principles

The ideal antibiotic is effective, safe and cost-effective, does not induce resistance or cause healthcare-associated infection.

When prescribing for neonates, gestational age, weight, renal function, hepatic function and concomitant disease should be considered.

The prescription of broad spectrum antimicrobials should be reviewed as soon as possible and switched to specific/targeted therapy when culture and sensitivity results become available.

Targeted therapy should be used in preference to broad spectrum antimicrobials unless there is a clear clinical reason, for example, mixed infections or life-threatening sepsis. Widespread use of broad spectrum antimicrobials will increase local persistence of resistant organisms, favour opportunistic organisms and often increase cost.

Antimicrobial therapy started in other hospitals should be reviewed on admission.

High dose therapy for a shorter period is more effective than low dose therapy for a protracted course.

The ongoing need for antimicrobial therapy should be reviewed and discussed daily.

The development of fungal infections as an adverse effect of antimicrobials is of particular concern in neonates.

All serious adverse drug reactions (ADR) should be reported to the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA), previously known as the Irish Medicines Board. The ADR should be reported electronically on www.hpra.ie. The reported ADR and any resulting correspondence should also be recorded in the patient's medical notes.

The use of topical antimicrobial agents should be discouraged as this encourages development of resistance.

Prescribe generically unless specifically indicated in these guidelines.

See relevant section on antibiotics that are subject to [restricted use](#)

This guideline should be made available to locum and agency prescribing staff as well as permanent staff.

Any deviation in the use of antimicrobials from this guideline should be clearly documented in the patient's medical record.