

Non-visit-based antibiotic prescribing

For health administrators
and leaders



ADMINISTRATIVE PARTICIPATION

In studies measuring all ambulatory antibiotic prescribing, we have found that about 20% to 30% of antibiotics are prescribed in the absence of a face-to-face visit, so called, non-visit-based antibiotic prescribing. Many of these prescriptions are likely inappropriate and are more likely to hurt people than to help. Especially when used for a viral illness – which an antibiotic has no possibility of helping – antibiotics increase the prevalence of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, cause side-effects like diarrhea, rashes, and yeast infections, are related to *Clostridioides difficile* infections, and disrupt peoples' normal, healthy microbiome.

To improve all antibiotic use, it is important to address non-visit-based antibiotic use. Your role as an administrator is key: we cannot improve what we do not measure. You can help your clinicians measure and address non-visit-based antibiotic prescribing and implement practice improvements in a way that helps your practice(s) run smoothly, improves patient safety, and that maintains patient satisfaction.

INITIATIVE IDEAS BRIEF

Partner with your clinicians to make patient safety easier.

Electronic health record (EHR) modifications

- Reason for antibiotic prescription
- Reason for prescription without an in-person encounter

Patient portal modifications

- Accessible patient guides on commonly reported symptoms and travel medicine



DETAILED INITIATIVE IDEAS

You can help your clinicians prescribe responsibly for safe, high quality care. Consider implementing the following changes to your EHR or patient portal to guide clinicians and patients.

EHR modifications

Clinicians are busy with many responsibilities and patients to care for. Therefore, clinicians sometimes need a friendly reminder to include all relevant details in the EHR.

Here are two fields you could add to your EHR for prescribing clinicians to fill open order request.

- **Reason for antibiotic prescription:** This field helps keep a more accurate record of patient history and decision making for clinicians, medical support staff, researchers, and other stakeholders.
- **Reason for prescription without in-person clinical encounter:** Aside from keeping a more accurate record, this field will also help cultivate clinician accountability for prescriptions.

Patient portal modifications

There are patients that seek treatment online instead of scheduling an in-person clinical encounter. Rapid information transfer to patients could reduce the influx of messages clinicians receive and help patients find the information they are seeking simultaneously. Simply ask the following questions at the point right before patients send an online message.

- **Are you looking for advice on symptoms you are currently experiencing?**
- **Is this about upcoming travel?**

If patients respond “Yes”, re-direct to the appropriate patient guide found here: <https://asp.nm.org/nvbap-resources.html>.

If patients respond “No”, they can proceed with normal online messaging workflows.

See examples below.

Non-Visit-Based Antibiotic Prescribing

<https://asp.nm.org/nonvisitbasedantibiotics.html>

EHR modification

Non-visit-based antibiotic

It appears you are attempting to fill an antibiotic order for [patient name] without an in-person clinical encounter.

In an effort to maintain safe, high quality care, please provide the following rationales.

1. Reason for antibiotic prescription:

2. Reason for prescription without an in-person clinical encounter:

Order

Patient portal secure messaging modifications

Patient portal secure messaging

Before proceeding to message your clinician, please answer the following questions.

1. Are you looking for advice on symptoms you are currently experiencing, such as respiratory symptoms?
 - Yes
 - No

2. Is your message related to upcoming travel?
 - Yes
 - No

Continue

'No' response to #1 and #2, continue to secure message

'Yes' responses below

'Yes' response to #1

Patient portal secure messaging

A patient symptoms guide is available immediately that may help you understand the best treatment for your symptoms without having to wait for your clinician to respond.

View patient
symptoms guide

Continue to
secure message

'Yes' response to #2

Patient portal secure messaging

A patient travel guide is available immediately that may help you understand how your clinician handles travel medicine without having to wait for your clinician to respond.

View patient
travel guide

Continue to
secure message