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**AAAHC Publishes Toolkit for Improving Antimicrobial Stewardship**

*New resource outlines strategies and best practices for combatting drug-resistant bacteria, includes COVID-19 considerations*

(Skokie, Ill.) February 22, 2021 – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has estimated that drug-resistant bacteria cause at least 2.8 million illnesses and 35,000 deaths every year in the U.S.,<sup>1,2</sup> making antimicrobial resistance a widely recognized threat to public health. Research shows an antimicrobial stewardship program presents effective results in reducing resistance to antibiotics, adverse drug effects, mortality, and health care costs.<sup>3</sup> Given this important research, Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC) published an Antimicrobial Stewardship Toolkit to help health care providers optimize how antibiotics are prescribed and used by patients in ambulatory care settings.

“The most important factor contributing to antimicrobial resistance is unnecessary and inappropriate antimicrobial use,”<sup>4</sup> said Noel Adachi, MBA, president and CEO of AAAHC. “Our new toolkit features guidance for optimizing clinical outcomes associated with antimicrobial use, minimizing adverse events, reducing costs of infections, and limiting antimicrobial resistance.”

The AAAHC Antimicrobial Stewardship Toolkit includes an overview of challenges and strategies for optimizing the use of these drugs and features guidance from the CDC. The comprehensive toolkit provides specific considerations for unnecessary and inappropriate antibiotic use in ambulatory, dental, primary care, and surgical/procedural settings.

Featuring a core elements checklist for assessing policies and procedures, treatment recommendations from the CDC, and a flow chart mapping surgical procedural considerations, the toolkit serves as a practical guide to developing and implementing an effective antimicrobial stewardship program. The toolkit also details up-to-date information on potential threats to antimicrobial stewardship activities due to COVID-19, which could increase antibiotic use.

“A majority of antibiotic prescribing and expenditures occur in the outpatient setting, making this new toolkit a valuable resource for providers working toward better patient outcomes and operational excellence,” said Renee Greenfeld, MBA, senior vice president of marketing and business development for AAAHC. “Our AAAHC Quality Institute and the *1095 Strong, quality every day* philosophy drive our development of educational resources, ensuring that organizations are equipped with tools and information to improve the quality of care not only on the day of their accreditation survey but every day of operation.”

To order the AAAHC’s Antimicrobial Stewardship Patient Safety Toolkit, please visit <https://www.aaahc.org/quality/patient-safety-toolkits/>.

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## About AAAHC

Founded in 1979, AAAHC is the leader in ambulatory health care accreditation, with more than 6,100 organizations accredited. We accredit a wide range of outpatient settings, including ambulatory surgery centers, office-based surgery facilities, endoscopy centers, student health centers, medical and dental group practices, community health centers, employer-based health clinics, retail clinics, and Indian/Tribal health centers, among others.

AAAHC advocates for the provision of high-quality health care through the development and adoption of nationally recognized standards. We provide a valuable survey experience founded on a peer-based, educational approach to on-site review. The AAAHC Certificate of Accreditation demonstrates an organization's commitment to providing safe, high-quality services to its patients—every day of the 1,095-day accreditation cycle. It is recognized by third-party payers, medical professional associations, liability insurance companies, state and federal agencies, and the public. For more information on AAAHC, please visit [www.aaahc.org](http://www.aaahc.org).

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Antibiotic/Antimicrobial Resistance. Biggest Threats and Data. <https://www.cdc.gov/drug-resistance/biggest-threats.html>. Accessed April 2020.

<sup>2</sup> CDC. Antimicrobial Resistance. 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/eid/spotlight/antimicrobial-resistance>. Accessed April 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Gangat MA, Hsu JL. Antibiotic stewardship: a focus on ambulatory care. *S D Med*. 2015;Spec No:44-48. PMID: 2598560.

<sup>4</sup> CDC. Combat Antimicrobial Resistance Globally. February 14, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/intl-activities.html>. Accessed April 2020.