

17 November 2020

## World Antimicrobial Awareness Week: Ensuring Responsible and Judicious Use of Antimicrobials

Animal Medicines Australia (AMA), as the peak association representing the animal health industry in Australia, promotes the responsible and judicious use of antimicrobials (including antibiotics) at all times.

Just like people, animals get sick too. Sometimes an antibiotic is the only appropriate treatment. Responsible and judicious use is essential to preserve effective antimicrobial treatments for when they are needed to protect human and animal safety. The aim of World Antimicrobial Awareness Week 18-24 November is to increase awareness and promote best practice when it comes to antimicrobial awareness. This year's theme is 'Antimicrobials: handle with care'.

The responsible use of antibiotics in both veterinary and human medicine is essential to limiting antimicrobial resistance and protecting both animal and human health. Consistent with 'One Health' principles, ensuring responsible and judicious use of antimicrobials:

- Helps ensure that animal derived products such as meat, eggs and dairy are safe,
- Treats illnesses and injuries necessary for the health and welfare of animals in our care, and
- Preserves antimicrobials for the future.

In March this year, the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the *National Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy - 2020 and Beyond*. Consistent with this strategy, AMA members are promoting responsible and judicious use by:

- Developing and publishing, in partnership with the Australian Veterinary Association, evidence-based antimicrobial prescribing guidelines for veterinarians across the livestock and companion animal industries<sup>1</sup>,
- Providing general information to veterinary antibiotic users regarding their obligations to use antibiotics responsibly, and
- Promoting disease prevention and increased access to veterinary products and expertise.

Animal Medicines Australia promotes the use of many different tools and practices to protect animal health and reduce the need to use antibiotics. These tools include vaccines, pest control, biosecurity, hygiene and sanitation practices, and good nutrition. We are committed to working with veterinarians, animal owners, industry and Government to ensure that antimicrobials remain effective for treating bacterial disease in both humans and animals.

For more information about animal health and antimicrobial stewardship visit Animal Medicines Australia website [here](#).

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<sup>1</sup> Available at [www.animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au](http://www.animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au)

[Animal Medicines Australia](http://www.animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au) is the peak body that represents the leaders of the animal health industry in Australia. Our member companies are responsible for a range of veterinary medicine products that prevent, control and cure disease across the companion animal and livestock sectors.