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American Association of Avian Pathologists (AAAP) Antimicrobial Stewardship for Poultry

The American Association of Avian Pathologists (AAAP) is a professional organization of poultry veterinarians and scientists responsible for the health and well-being of commercial poultry and the protection of public health. The AAAP fully supports antibiotic stewardship efforts and promotes the responsible use of antibiotics in food-producing animals.

Antimicrobial Stewardship for Poultry Veterinarians Defined

Antimicrobial stewardship refers to the actions poultry veterinarians take individually and as a profession to preserve the effectiveness and availability of antimicrobial drugs through conscientious oversight and responsible medical decision-making while safeguarding poultry, public, and environmental health.

Core Principles of Antimicrobial Stewardship in Poultry Veterinary Medicine

Antimicrobial stewardship involves maintaining poultry health and welfare by implementing a variety of management strategies to prevent, control and treat common diseases; using an evidence-based approach in antimicrobial decisions; and then using antimicrobials judiciously, sparingly, and with continual evaluation of the outcomes of therapy; while protecting poultry health and ensuring safe, affordable food to the consumer.

The following principles have been and will continue to be used to develop antimicrobial stewardship plans in the practice of poultry medicine:

1. Commit to stewardship

- Engage all poultry practitioners and relevant stakeholders in the stewardship effort.
- Develop stewardship plans that incorporate commitment and accountability for disease prevention, control, and treatment while optimizing the prescribing, administration, and oversight of antimicrobial drugs.
- Identify high-priority conditions that are commonly treated with antimicrobial drugs on which to focus stewardship efforts.
- Demonstrate commitment to systematically assessing the outcomes of antimicrobial drug therapy.
- The AAAP committee with oversight on antimicrobial stewardship and judicious use leads the AAAP efforts to provide education and awareness to its members



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2. Advocate for a system of care to prevent, treat and control poultry diseases

- Promote improvements in the areas of farm management, biosecurity and vaccination strategies.
- Work with farmers, allied partners, and stakeholders to adopt preventive and management strategies to minimize the need for antimicrobial drugs. These strategies include animal husbandry and hygiene, biosecurity and infection control, nutrition, and vaccination programs.
- Provide alternative strategies to antimicrobial drugs in the prevention, control and treatment of poultry diseases to optimize outcomes in health, welfare and food safety.

3. Select and use antimicrobial drugs judiciously

- Use an evidence-based approach for making a diagnosis and determining whether an antimicrobial drug is indicated.
- Make an informed selection of an appropriate antimicrobial therapy using laboratory diagnostics such as culture and sensitivity of pathogens.
- Follow Guidance 209, 213 and the modernization of the VFD process that outline directions for water soluble and feed additive administration of antimicrobials in food animals.
- Refer to “Guidelines for Judicious Therapeutic Use of Antimicrobials in Poultry”.
- Continually assess outcomes of antimicrobial use.

4. Evaluate antimicrobial drug use practices

- Continual evaluation of antimicrobial drug prescribing practices by the poultry veterinarian.
- Support analyzing and sharing of antimicrobial drug use data to ensure collaboration between poultry industry, academics and government to monitor current practices and drive for innovation in this area.

5. Educate and build expertise

- Make resources available and encourage the development of expertise in antimicrobial stewardship.
- Provide continuing education opportunities for poultry veterinarians related to antimicrobial use and alternatives.
- Continue to educate our partners and stakeholders on management, biosecurity, and production practices to ensure poultry health, welfare and food safety.
- Continue to evaluate our judicious use and stewardship guidelines in the face of new practices and innovations.
- Support research on antimicrobial drug use and resistance. Advocate for the development and approvals for antimicrobial and alternative therapies not used in human medicine