



Department of Health

Three Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908-5097

TTY: 711
www.health.ri.gov

Dear Nursing Home Administrator,

The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) and the Rhode Island Antimicrobial Stewardship and Environmental Cleaning (AMSEC) Task Force invites your facility to engage in antibiotic stewardship and to be publicly recognized for your efforts.

The Task Force represents a broad partnership of stakeholders committed to reducing antibiotic resistance and adverse health events related to antibiotic use. The Task Force was originally convened to address the state's low rank for rates of *C. difficile* LabID events on Medicare's Hospital Compare website. Since the inception of the Task Force, there has been increased national emphasis on antimicrobial stewardship and efforts to improve prescribing practices, reducing inappropriate use of antibiotics in all settings of care. As a result of increased national emphasis, the Task Force is working on a variety of initiatives to increase awareness of this issue in the state.

In September 2015, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released *Core Elements of Antibiotic Stewardship for Nursing Homes* (available at <http://www.cdc.gov/longtermcare/prevention/antibiotic-stewardship.html>). The information in the document is designed to help guide long-term care facilities in improving antibiotic prescribing practices and reducing inappropriate antibiotic use. The CDC has organized the guidance into seven core elements intended to improve treatment decision and protect residents from the adverse events associated with antibiotic use, and the consequences associated with antibiotic-resistant infections such as *C. difficile*. The seven core elements are:

1. Leadership commitment: Leaders demonstrate support and commitment to safe and appropriate antibiotic use.
2. Accountability: Leaders are identified who are responsible for promoting and overseeing antibiotic stewardship activities.
3. Drug expertise: Establish access to experts in the facility who have experience or training in improving antibiotic use.
4. Action: The facility takes at least one new action to improve the way antibiotics are used in the facility.
5. Tracking: Measure antibiotic use and any antibiotic complications in the facility.
6. Reporting: The facility shares information with healthcare providers and staff about how antibiotics are used in the facility.
7. Education: Resources re provided to healthcare providers, nursing staff, residents, and families to learn about antibiotic resistance and opportunities to improve antibiotic use.



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To help your facility take the first step in this process, the Task Force has created a sample [Statement of Leadership Commitment for Antibiotic Stewardship](#), and we urge your facility to embrace this as the foundation for antimicrobial stewardship efforts within your infection control program.

Any facility that signs and returns a [commitment letter](#) which affirms the identification of an Antibiotic Stewardship Leadership Team, will be recognized on an online [Antimicrobial Stewardship Honor Roll](#) on the Rhode Island Department of Health web site. Signed commitment letters can be either faxed to 401-528-3210 or scanned and emailed to tomta@healthcentricadvisors.org. In addition, the Task Force is committed to providing resources and technical support to assist facilities like yours as you implement or expand an antimicrobial stewardship program.

Thank you for all of the work you currently do caring for residents of Rhode Island's long-term care facilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Reece".

Rebecca Reece, MD

Co-chair, AMSEC Task Force

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kerry LaPlante".

Kerry LaPlante, PharmD

Co-chair, AMSEC Task Force

Cc: Nicole Alexander-Scott, MD, MPH