



Messaging accompanying issue 12 of green/red reports (for GMS data to end March 2022) issued August 2022

Overall aim of this antibiotic quality improvement initiative: high percentage of green antibiotic agents and a rate of prescribing that is as low as is practical while ensuring that those most likely to benefit from antibiotics receive that benefit.

Time period for report: your antibiotic prescribing report includes antibiotic prescriptions attributed to your GMS number for 12 consecutive months up to the end of *March 2022*. This report will be updated each quarter. It is acknowledged that some prescriptions assigned to your GMS number may be by prescribers in 'out of hours' services and in hospitals.

Key message:

This report (issue 12) is the third report to include the rate of prescribing for your GMS list. While you may have made improvements in your rate of prescribing since issue 10 (circulated March 2022), these improvements may not be reflected in the data included in this report as the data refers to the 12 months ending March 2022.

In this report we would like to highlight some tips in relation to the management of patients with COVID-19.

*Patients with COVID-19 have a very low risk of having a bacterial co-infection, it is most likely to be in a patient hospitalised for COVID-19, and would be very rare for a patient managed in the community. For most patients the risk of taking an antibiotic (adverse effects such as GI upset, disruption of the microbiome and the development of antimicrobial resistance) far outweighs any benefit.

*For most patients supportive care such as rest, an increase in fluid intake, and symptom relief with over the counter medicines such as analgesics, decongestants or cough suppressants as required, is sufficient.

*Links to the current HSE interim guidance for advice on the specific COVID-19 therapeutics, such as the antiviral Paxlovid™ and the current eligibility criteria, are available on the "COVID-19 acute respiratory infection" page on www.antibioticprescribing.ie