



## Messaging accompanying issue 14 of green/red report

January 2023

We acknowledge this has been a challenging winter so far in General Practice and we thank you for continuing to engage with this antibiotic prescribing quality improvement initiative. This year there has been an increase in the usual winter viral infections inclusive of RSV and influenza. For those viral infections we continue to support your efforts in not prescribing antibiotics with public messaging via many different communication channels, one example we use is "if your doctor says you don't need an antibiotic, that's ok."

While the use of co-amoxiclav (amoxicillin + clavulanic acid) has reduced in recent years it is still much higher than expected considering it is recommended first-line for relatively uncommon indications: animal or human bite, facial cellulitis, post-partum endometritis, caesarean wound infections, perineal wound infections, acute diverticulitis.

**Amoxicillin** is a preferred agent for respiratory tract infections because it is the safest and most effective agent for the following reasons:

- It is as effective as co-amoxiclav for the most common respiratory pathogen.
- It is safer as it does not have the additive adverse effects associated with clavulanic acid on the GI tract, liver and pancreas.
- It has a much lower risk of causing *Clostridioides difficile* diarrhoea or antimicrobial resistance.

If amoxicillin is indicated for a respiratory tract infection the recommended duration is 5 days as per the guidance on [www.antibioticprescribing.ie](http://www.antibioticprescribing.ie)