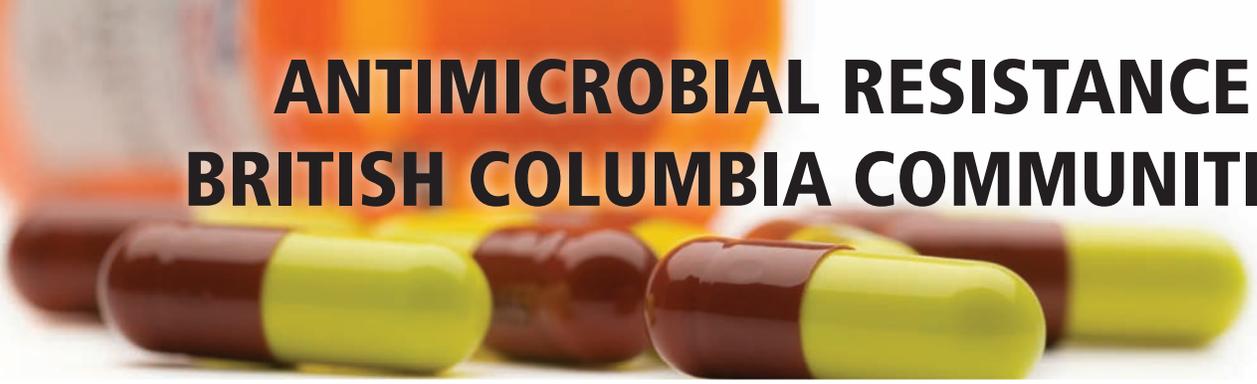


ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA COMMUNITIES



Antimicrobial resistance is changing practice in British Columbia in several important ways:

- There is far more resistance in bacteria that cause urinary tract infections than there was a decade ago, necessitating changes in treatment approach.
- Skin and soft tissue infections caused by methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) have increased the number of related visits to physicians.
- Hospitals are increasingly on the alert for organisms with very broad spectra of resistance, as exemplified by recent importation of NDM-1 strains from India.

Quick Facts

- About 1 in 4 urinary tract infections are caused by bacteria that are resistant to drugs that were first-line for this condition only ten years ago.
- British Columbia sees 20,000 to 30,000 more doctor visits each year for boils and skin infections than it did before the arrival of community-associated MRSA.
- The province of B.C. has seen a decline in use of antibiotics since instituting the public awareness program, Do Bugs Need Drugs, in 2005.
- There is much work left to be done. Preliminary data indicate vast overuse of fluoroquinolones after they were added to the list of drugs for treating respiratory infections which would be paid for by the provincial drug plan.

What can be done?

A number of things can be done to prevent the propagation of antimicrobial resistance in communities:

- Strengthen public awareness campaigns to further reduce antibiotic misuse in the community.
- Work with government to help create antibiotic formularies that do the job while minimizing the risk of misuse.
- Foster the development of programs of active measurement and antibiotic stewardship in healthcare facilities.
- Strengthen our investment in infection control practices in healthcare facilities.
- Engage the veterinary and agricultural sectors in a collaborative “One Health” approach to reducing the total environmental burden of antibiotics and drug resistant organisms.
- Ensure there are no “loopholes” in the regulation of antibiotic use in human or animal medicine in order to keep use firmly in line with guidelines.

Additional Resources

Do Bugs Need Drugs?
www.dobugsneeddrugs.org