

HEDIS Tip Sheet: Antibiotic Stewardship

Louisiana Healthcare Connections (LHCC) collects data from our providers to measure and improve the quality of care our members receive. One aspect of care we measure supports antibiotic stewardship, the effort to measure and improve how antibiotics are prescribed by clinicians and used by patients. We do this by focusing acute respiratory conditions, which are a major driver of antibiotic prescribing.

What We Measure

We capture the percentage of episodes for members ages 3 months of older with a diagnosis of a respiratory condition (URI, acute bronchitis, bronchiolitis, etc.) that did or did not result in an antibiotic dispensing event using three Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) measures.

- Avoidance of Antibiotic Treatment for Acute Bronchitis/Bronchiolitis (AAB)
- Appropriate Treatment for Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)
- Antibiotic Utilization for Respiratory Conditions (AXR)

Members are excluded who are in hospice or who have a comorbid condition or competing diagnosis, such as another bacterial infection.

Why It Matters

According to the [CDC](#), at least 28% of antibiotics prescriptions provided in U.S. outpatient settings are unnecessary. In addition, nearly 3 million antibiotic-resistant infections are reported each year in the United States, and more than 35,000 people die from those infections. The goal of antibiotic stewardship is to maximize the benefit of antibiotic treatment while minimizing harm both to individual persons and to communities.

Best Practice and Measure Tips

- Measurement data is captured through claims data - **proper coding is essential!**
- Include all diagnoses, including comorbid and differential diagnoses, on claims so members can be appropriately excluded when an antibiotic would be clinically warranted to treat a competing condition. For example:
 - **Common Competing/Differential Diagnoses** (on or within 3 days)
 - Sinusitis, Pharyngitis, Tonsillitis, OM, Bacterial pneumonia
 - **Common Comorbid Diagnoses** (on or within 12 months) including:
 - COPD, Cystic Fibrosis, HIV, Emphysema, Sickle Cell Disease**FYI - Asthma, Wheezing, Diabetes, Fever, or Tobacco use are not considered comorbid conditions or differential diagnosis exclusions for this measure.*
- Talk to patients and their families about possible risks of inappropriate antibiotic use, such as allergic reactions, C. difficile infection, and antimicrobial-resistant infections.
- Reference the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention **“Be Antibiotics Aware Partner Toolkit”** <https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/php/usaaw-partner-toolkit/index.html/>