NHS Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin
NHS Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent

World Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week 18 – 24 November

Partner toolkit

November 2026



Background

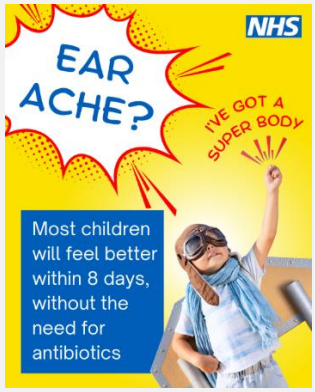
World Antimicrobial Awareness Week (WAAW) takes place annually between 18 and 24 November. The week aims to improve awareness and understanding of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and encourage best practice among the public, healthcare professionals and policymakers. Antimicrobial resistance occurs when bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites no longer respond to medicines, making infections harder to treat and increasing the risk of severe illness and death.

This year's campaign will focus on raising awareness across the general population in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin (STW) and Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (SSoT). An additional emphasis will be placed on parents and carers of children aged 0 to 9 years. Local prescribing data demonstrates that SSoT has some of the highest antibiotic prescribing rates for children nationally. Therefore, there is an opportunity to support parents and carers to better understand common childhood illnesses, when antibiotics are and are not needed, and how they can help keep these life-saving medicines working for future generations.

The campaign will build on the existing Super Bodies campaign, which encourages parents to understand how children's immune systems recover from common illnesses and when medical help should be sought. Content from previous WAAW and Super Bodies campaigns has been combined into a single partner toolkit to support a coordinated approach across both ICB footprints.

Social media – Super bodies

Post copy	Graphic
It's not nice hearing your little one coughing, but did you know that their cough will usually get better by itself without antibiotics? Find out how to help your children's #SuperBodies recover at home, and know when to seek medical help https://staffsstokeics.org.uk/super-bodies-what-to-do-when-your-child-has-a-common-illness/	

Earaches are no fun for anyone, but did you know that most children's earaches get better in the same amount of time without antibiotics? Find out how to help your children's #SuperBodies recover at home, and know when to seek medical help: https://staffsstokeics.org.uk/super-bodies-what-to-do-when-your-child-has-a-common-illness/	
It's hard when they're feeling under the weather with a sore throat, but did you know that antibiotics don't usually speed up recovery? Find out how to help your children's #SuperBodies recover at home, and know when to seek medical help: https://staffsstokeics.org.uk/super-bodies-what-to-do-when-your-child-has-a-common-illness/	
Most children can fight off common coughs in a few weeks, without the need for antibiotics. Learn how to help them recover at home, and know the signs and symptoms you should look for to seek medical help: https://staffsstokeics.org.uk/super-bodies-what-to-do-when-your-child-has-a-common-illness/	Cough animated graphic – download
Our children's #SuperBodies do amazing work. Earaches are usually caused by a virus, so most children will recover just as quickly without antibiotics. Find out how to support their recovery at home, and know when you need to get medical help: https://staffsstokeics.org.uk/super-bodies-what-to-do-when-your-child-has-a-common-illness/	Earache animated graphic - download
Our children's #SuperBodies do amazing work.	Sore throat animated graphic - download

Children usually recover from a sore throat just as quickly without antibiotics.

Learn how to help them recover at home, and know the signs and symptoms you should look for to seek medical help:

https://staffsstokeics.org.uk/super-bodies-what-to-do-when-your-child-has-a-common-illness/

Social media - generic

Post copy	Graphic
Imagine a world where common infections become life-threatening. If antibiotics stop working, this could become a reality. We all need to do our part to #KeepAntibioticWorking	Download here 
Antibiotics don't work for colds and flu. Only taking them for the right things helps to keep them working for when you and your family need them most.	
Got some antibiotics leftover? Don't keep them for the next time you're unwell. Use them properly to keep them working for when you and your family need them most. This means taking the full course of antibiotics as instructed by your healthcare professional.	
Local GP, Dr Steve Fawcett explains why antibiotics aren't always the answer - and how using them wisely protects us all. Watch the video - https://youtu.be/xTc4UemWhSM?si=At513NH5fsFyzg3O	Embed video

#AntibioticResistance #WAAW	
Antibiotics don't work for colds or flu. Local pharmacist Rahul explains how to manage symptoms safely - and why returning any unused antibiotics to your pharmacy helps prevent misuse and resistance. https://youtu.be/pEHLHUtgJ08?si=CmhR8PTh3akG-rgn #WAAW	Embed video
When used correctly, antibiotics save lives. Paul shares how timely antibiotics helped him recover from sepsis - and why we must all use them wisely. https://youtu.be/H3zbDkSXRhw?si=CB2KKXxqyj5D7LFz #WAAW	Embed video
Worried about your child's cough or cold? Dr Dobie explains why antibiotics aren't always the answer - and how you can help your child recover safely. https://youtu.be/j_7F9AghrGM?si=hXw66qXmcOVp5_WO #WAAW	Embed video

Newsletter/bulletin copy (external use)

Helping your child's Super Body fight common illnesses

When your child is unwell, it's natural to want them to get better quickly. But antibiotics are not always the answer.

Many coughs, colds, sore throats and ear infections are caused by viruses, and antibiotics do not work against these illnesses. Most children will get better with rest, fluids and self-care. Self-care can include medicines that you can buy from your local pharmacy or supermarket.

Using antibiotics only when they are really needed helps keep them working for the future.

For advice on common childhood illnesses, visit a local community pharmacy. For more information about keeping antibiotics working, visit www.staffsstokeics.org.uk/keep-antibiotics-working

Newsletter/bulletin copy (internal use – staff facing)

This World Antimicrobial Awareness Week, colleagues across the NHS are helping to raise awareness of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and the importance of using antibiotics wisely.

Many common childhood illnesses, including coughs, colds, sore throats and some ear infections are caused by viruses, meaning antibiotics will not help. Most children will recover with rest, fluids and self-care.

This remains an important issue locally. In the 12 months to July 2026, 35.4% of children aged 0-9 years in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent were prescribed antibiotics. In Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, this figure was 28.8%. Both were above the national ambition of 25%.

As healthcare professionals and/or NHS staff, we all have a role to play in helping patients understand when antibiotics are, and are not, needed. By supporting conversations about appropriate antibiotic use, we can help ensure these vital medicines remain effective for future generations.

Find out more and access campaign resources: (INSERT LINK TO PDF TOOLKIT)

Press Release

Parents urged to use antibiotics wisely this World Antimicrobial Awareness Week

NHS Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin and NHS Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) are encouraging people to use antibiotics wisely and help keep them working for future generations.

This year's local World Antimicrobial Awareness Week campaign is focusing on parents and carers of children aged 0 to 9 years.

Local data shows that antibiotic prescribing for children is higher than the national ambition of 25%. In the 12 months to July 2026, 35.4% of children aged 0 to 9 years in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent were prescribed antibiotics, followed by 28% of children in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.

Many common childhood illnesses, such as coughs, colds, sore throats and some ear infections are caused by viruses. Antibiotics do not work against viruses, and most children will get better with rest, fluids and self-care including medicines that can be bought in pharmacies or local supermarkets.

Minesh Parbat, Chief Pharmacist for both ICBs, said:

"When your child is unwell, it's natural to want something that will help them feel better quickly. But antibiotics are not always needed and will not work for illnesses caused by viruses, such as colds and flu.

"Using antibiotics when they are not needed can make them less effective in the future. That's why it is important to only use antibiotics when they are prescribed by a healthcare professional."

Antimicrobial resistance is a serious global health risk. It happens when germs which cause infections change over time and stop responding to the medicines that are supposed to kill them, like antibiotics. If antibiotics become less effective, infections can become harder to treat and routine procedures such as surgery, cancer treatment and organ transplants become riskier.

Everyone can help slow the spread of antibiotic resistance by:

- Remembering that antibiotics do not work for colds, flu and most coughs
- Only taking antibiotics when prescribed by a healthcare professional
- Taking antibiotics exactly as prescribed and taking the full course
- Never saving antibiotics for later or sharing them with others
- Returning unused antibiotics to a community pharmacy for safe disposal

Throughout November, the ICBs will be sharing information and advice to help parents and carers understand common childhood illnesses, know when to seek help, and make informed decisions about antibiotic use.

Community pharmacies can give advice, support and treatment for a range of childhood illnesses.

To support this message, the ICB has created a series of short videos featuring a pharmacist, GP, patient, and microbiologist, who each discuss the risks of taking antibiotics when you don't need them - and how everyone can help protect themselves and their communities by using antibiotics wisely.

VIDEOS EMBEDDED

For more information about antibiotics and antibiotic resistance, visit www.nhs.uk/antibiotics