Antibiotic Awareness
For Providers

Why is appropriate antibiotic use important?
It is estimated that 50%-75% of antibiotics prescribed in long-term care facilities, (LTCFs) are unnecessary or inappropriate.

The 5 D’s to support appropriate antibiotic use and prevent infections in nursing homes?

1. Diagnosis: treatment may not be indicated
2. Drug: antibiotic selection may not be correct
3. Dose: dosing may be inappropriate or not adjusted
4. Duration: treatment is longer than recommended guidelines
5. De-escalation: prescription is not adjusted based on clinical condition or laboratory results

What can be done besides the 5 D’s?

- Follow clinical guidelines when prescribing antibiotics
- Document indication, dose, and duration for every antibiotic prescription
- Implement an antibiotic review process/“antibiotic time out” to review antibiotic therapy 48 to 72 hours after it is started based on the resident’s clinical condition and culture results
- Talk to residents and their families about when antibiotics are and are not needed
- Discuss possible harms such as allergic reactions, *C. difficile* and antibiotic resistant infections
- Be aware of antibiotic resistance patterns in your facility and community; use the data to inform prescribing decisions
- Follow hand hygiene and other infection prevention measures with every resident
- Review prior culture and sensitivity pattern of resident before choosing antibiotics
Remember:

- Specify treatment duration
- Indication
- Order clinical or laboratory monitoring when necessary
- Contact information for relevant outside clinicians
- Follow-up plan for infection (if there is one)

Sources: