



Choosing Wisely Manitoba: Using Antibiotics Wisely

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 14, 2018

MANITOBA – It is estimated that up to half of all antibiotic prescriptions that Canadians receive are unnecessary.

This week is World Antibiotic Awareness Week (November 12 - 18). Choosing Wisely Manitoba is a proud supporter of the Using Antibiotics Wisely campaign, led by Choosing Wisely Canada, a national initiative.

This national campaign focuses on developing and disseminating resources for clinicians and patients to help reduce unnecessary antibiotic use. The goal of the campaign is to raise awareness by providing clinicians and patients with evidence based tools and materials to support conversations about unnecessary antibiotic prescribing.

“The overuse of antibiotics is a major contributor to antibiotic resistance and is threatening our ability to treat common infectious diseases,” said Dr. Richard Rusk, Medical Officer of Health, Communicable Disease Control unit at Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living, and Choosing Wisely Manitoba Clinical Champion. “The evidence is strong. Using antibiotics when you don’t need them increases the risk of antibiotic resistance, which renders antibiotics ineffective when you need them in the future. If we do not start changing our practice in antibiotic use now, we could be faced with a serious medical crisis in the future.”

To support change, Choosing Wisely Canada has also developed over 20 recommendations that encourage judicious antibiotic use, created by over 15 national specialty societies.

“There are many misconceptions surrounding antibiotics and what they treat,” said Dr. Eric Bohm, Orthopaedic Surgeon, Concordia Joint Replacement Group and Executive Co-Sponsor of Choosing Wisely Manitoba. “Antibiotics fight bacterial infections like strep throat, whooping cough, and bladder infections, but they do not fight viruses. Unfortunately, no amount of antibiotics will get rid of your cold, flu, or sinus infection.”

Using antibiotics when you don’t need them can also cause unwanted side effects that range from nausea to life threatening allergic reactions. The Using Antibiotics Wisely campaign encourages patients to ask questions about unnecessary antibiotic use.

“92 per cent of antibiotics are prescribed by primary health providers. The best health outcomes occur when patients and clinicians engage in healthy conversations and make educated and effective choices together regarding the course of care,” said Jim Slater, Chief Operating Officer, Shared Health and Choosing Wisely Manitoba Executive Co-Sponsor.

For more information about Using Antibiotics Wisely, visit: choosingwiselycanada.org/campaign/antibiotics.

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About Choosing Wisely Manitoba

Choosing Wisely Manitoba (CWM), a partnership of Shared Health and the George and Fay Yee Centre for Healthcare Innovation, is a campaign aimed at improving the appropriate use of diagnostic testing in Manitoba. CWM is based on the national Choosing Wisely Canada initiative, which focuses on areas where evidence

overwhelmingly shows that a test, treatment or procedure provides no benefit to a patient. CWM encourages healthy conversations between health providers and patients, leading to better health outcomes.

About Shared Health

Shared Health (formerly Diagnostic Services Manitoba) is an organization tasked with improving patient care and providing coordinated clinical and business support to the province's health system. Shared Health brings together clinical experts from across the province to deliver a patient-centred, accessible, responsive health system that people can count on. We work collaboratively with communities to make sure we meet people's health care needs, compassionately, effectively and as close to home as possible. For more information, visit: sharedhealthmb.ca

About the George & Fay Yee Centre for Healthcare Innovation

The George & Fay Yee Centre for Healthcare Innovation (CHI) is a partnership between the University of Manitoba Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA), and the Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR) that brings together health care providers, patients and the public, researchers, and decision-makers to translate the latest research and evidence into improved care and health outcomes in Manitoba. CHI generates and facilitates health research across seven platforms including Clinical Trials, Data Science, Knowledge Synthesis, Evaluation, Project Management, Health Systems Performance, and Knowledge Translation. For more information, visit: chimb.ca

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