

Antibiotic Amnesty 2024

The Antibiotic Amnesty is a One-Health initiative involving veterinary teams and community pharmacies right across the UK. Last year's trial was a great success and we want even more practices taking part in 2024. Working together, the veterinary community can help recover unused and out-of-date antibiotics from pet owners across the country. The amnesty is an opportunity for all members of the veterinary team to raise awareness about antibiotic stewardship in general and contribute positively to the fight against AMR.

How to get involved in the Antibiotic Amnesty 2024

Starting 1st October: Preparing for the amnesty

- Order a spare pharmaceutical bin or get hold of something similar
- Communicate your plans to your colleagues in practice, explaining what the campaign is. For example you could arrange a short five minute team meeting and tell them what is going to happen in your practice:
 - o You may need to hold more than one such meeting to cover everyone in the practice and send a follow-up email to remind everyone of the activity and timings
 - o Things to cover in practice email / meeting include why you are involved in this important campaign, as outlined in the box below (don't assume people will know)



Why are we running an Antibiotic Amnesty?

1. We want to keep antibiotics working:
 - a. Antibiotics are a vital treatment for the management of bacterial disease and a proven life saver.
 - b. It is critical to use antibiotics rationally so that they remain efficacious when we need them.
2. We want unused antibiotics to be disposed of safely:
 - a. Studies show that leftover antibiotics are rarely returned to pharmacies/vets and are more commonly disposed of in household waste or down sinks/toilets.
 - i. Antibiotic residues have been detected in rivers around the world
 1. Potentially contributing to AMR
 2. Negative impact on water quality, aquatic life and wildlife
 - ii. An Antibiotic Amnesty will help raise awareness of AMR and will allow appropriate disposal and therefore help limit this environmental pollution
 - b. Use of leftover or expired antibiotics could risk adverse effects and increase the risk of AMR if used for the wrong indication, and could delay a diagnosis
 - i. An Antibiotic Amnesty will reduce the harm from inappropriate use



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Think about how you will reach out to your client base (see below for lots of ideas). You can start by putting up waiting room posters (designs available on the following campaign websites: www.rumacae.org.uk/vet-antibioticamnesty/)

Starting 1st November: Officially launch the Antibiotic Amnesty in your practice

The amnesty has been designed to minimise impact on your daily workflow.

- Put the pharmaceutical bin in a secure location and label it with “Antibiotic Amnesty”.
- When clients return their unused antibiotics to a Vet, Nurse or Receptionist, the drugs should be put into the Antibiotic Amnesty pharmaceutical bin (other drugs should be disposed of via normal channels)
- Vets, Nurses and Receptionists should also record any conversations they have with clients, either proactively or reactively, about the Antibiotic Amnesty campaign. There are a number of ways practices could do this
 - o a chart in a private area to capture each conversation
 - o by filling a jar with pennies each time a conversation is held

The total number of conversations can be added up at the end of the month and will help measure the impact of the campaign.

Methods of engaging clients might include any or all of the following. Client comms can start any time from early October through to the end of November:

- Emailing or texting clients directly about the Antibiotic Amnesty – if a client has received antibiotics in the last six months there is a legitimate reason to contact them about the campaign – see separate documents in the campaign toolkit with pre-written emails practices can use/adapt for their client communications
- Client handouts - download the campaign handout provided in the campaign toolkit area and print off to give out to clients prescribed antibiotics. Copies could also be given to the veterinary pharmacy team to hand to clients
- Posters in waiting rooms – see download available in the campaign toolkit area
- Conversations in consulting rooms and in the veterinary pharmacies – see downloadable script to help aid client conversations
- Include details about the Antibiotic Amnesty in your practice newsletter
- Download the animations and social media graphics/posts provided in the toolkit area and use these on practice social media channels and in newsletters or on waiting room screens
- Put stickers saying “Return Unused Drugs” on packets of tablets/prescription bags – download sticker designs from the toolkit area
- Modify any practice vaccination booster reminders to include a mention of this initiative – use some of the pre-written messaging available in the toolkit area



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- Create a waiting room display board about the campaign

All resources for the campaign can be accessed and downloaded from the RUMA CAE and RCVS Knowledge websites here:

www.rumacae.org.uk/vet-antibioticamnesty/

Ideas for practice engagement in the Antibiotic Amnesty

- Run a competition in your practice to see who can drive the most returns of antibiotics and who has the most conversations with clients about the campaign
- Run a competition for the most inventive way to bring the campaign to life for clients
- For corporate vet organisations, you could run a competition for the most inventive waiting room display
- Ideally, for the campaign to work effectively, it would be helpful to appoint a practice Antibiotic Amnesty Champion who can oversee the campaign throughout November and is happy to lead and champion all activity

If a client also returns medically prescribed antibiotics they should be directed to a community pharmacy).

Starting 1st December Auditing the impact of the Antibiotic Amnesty:

Data collection from participating practices will help audit the impact of the amnesty and will help strengthen future campaigns:

- Count up the number of antibiotics returned: numbers of tablets, number of topical packs, number of injections, oral suspensions and the types of antibiotics. Also collect the data you have on the total number of conversations with clients during the campaign. **DETAILS ABOUT HOW TO SUBMIT THIS INFORMATION WILL BE ISSUED IN DUE COURSE**
- Prizes will be available for those practices that secure the highest number of returned antibiotics and the practice with the most inventive client engagement activity as well as some awarded randomly. Prizes will include a free one year membership to The Webinar Vet and a free BSAVA Manual of choice. Reporting the practice's amnesty results will guarantee entry for the available prizes