



*February 5, 2025*

Dear colleagues,

The South Carolina Department of Public Health (DPH) affirms our commitment to antimicrobial stewardship. DPH has an essential role in supporting and guiding antibiotic stewardship efforts in our community.

Antibiotic stewardship is the effort to measure and improve how antibiotic medications are prescribed by clinicians and used by patients. Ensuring the appropriate use of antibiotics protects patients from health issues caused by unnecessary antibiotic use as well as preserve the life of antibiotics by not prescribing them so often that bacteria become resistant to them, limiting the medicine's effectiveness.

Antimicrobial resistance is an urgent public health threat and can affect people at any stage of life. DPH has an Antimicrobial Stewardship Program that is implementing best practices as described in the [Core Elements of Antibiotic Stewardship for Health Departments](#). The DPH Antimicrobial Stewardship Program has implemented several initiatives to help promote antimicrobial stewardship across the state. These include an antimicrobial stewardship assessment to gain a better understanding of current antimicrobial stewardship practices in South Carolina, a nursing home education series for nurses and an honor roll program that recognizes facilities that are committed to antimicrobial stewardship.

Increasing antimicrobial stewardship awareness in South Carolina will allow for improved surveillance of antimicrobial use and resistance, leading to more informed public health decisions, including evaluating current interventions and their effectiveness along with the development of future guidance. We recognize the impact of optimizing antibiotic use in public health. We are committed to supporting, promoting and advocating for antibiotic stewardship across the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda J. Bell, MD".

Linda J. Bell, MD

Director Health Programs Branch

State Epidemiologist

South Carolina Department of Public Health