

4.04 New Guidance on Azithromycin Prophylaxis- A Starting Point

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The HSE Antimicrobial Resistance and Infection Control Team (AMRIC) has developed a new guidance document on the use of Azithromycin prophylaxis. It is acknowledged that Azithromycin prophylaxis may be beneficial for those with repeated exacerbations of COPD, Bronchiectasis or Asthma as it has shown to decrease number of exacerbations. However, Azithromycin has a significant adverse effect profile that should be considered. AMRIC provided guidance on initiation, regular review and when to de-prescribe in order to improve patient safety.

This study aims to review patients on Azithromycin prophylaxis using the AMRIC Audit Tool and to evaluate for shortcomings in the current prescription/review practices.

9 patients commenced on Azithromycin in 2021 were reviewed. Criteria including; initiation date, prescriber details, background diagnosis, risk review, side effects and decrease in exacerbations were recorded.

Of the 9 patients reviewed, 66% had official start date recorded, 100% had risk-benefit review undertaken, 100% had diagnosis of COPD/Asthma/Bronchiectasis and 100% had Azithromycin prescribed by Respiratory Consultant. Furthermore, 100% noted a decrease in exacerbations. No patient had a rise in Liver Function Tests, Non-Mycobacterium TB diagnosis or significant drug interaction recorded. Importantly, no patient had formal assessment of hearing/balance issues. On follow up review 63% of patient's did not have a recorded ECG as per national guidelines.

The AMRIC Audit Tool provides a platform to evaluate Azithromycin Prophylaxis prescribing and review. At present, our institution does not meet the criteria set out by the guidance document.

Our intention is to further evaluate our patient cohort by increasing numbers of patients reviewed in the coming months.