



OPERATIONAL CIRCULAR

Enquiries to: David Lyon Tel: (08) 9224 2819

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Subject: Antibiotic Guidelines

The Western Australian Therapeutics Advisory Group (WATAG) recommends that the contemporaneous version of Therapeutic Guidelines: Antibiotic (currently Version 13) be adopted as the reference standard for antibiotic prescribing in Western Australia.

WATAG emphasises the importance of each prescriber adhering to the Guidelines when prescribing antibiotics, except

- in individual cases where departure from the Guidelines is clinically supported and documented or in accordance with advice from an appropriate specialist,
- or
- where departmental, hospital or unit protocols have been formally adopted in response to special circumstances, such as renal units or in paediatrics.

Health Service Managers and Executives are instructed to ensure that this Operational Circular is considered by their Drugs and Therapeutics, and Medical Advisory Committees (or equivalent), for the purpose of reviewing and implementing appropriate antibiotic prescribing policies and practices.

Health Services should also ensure that at least one copy of the Guidelines is permanently available on each hospital ward for staff use. The Guidelines can also be accessed via the Clinical Information Access Online web site www.ciao.health.wa.gov.au

Electronic and hard-copies of the Guidelines can also be obtained by contacting Therapeutic Guidelines Ltd by

Telephone	1800 061 260 (freecall)
Fax	061 3 9326 5632
Email	sales@tg.com.au

or

Internet	www.tg.com.au
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RATIONALE

The Guidelines represent evidence-based best practice and a consensus of expert opinion for appropriate use of antibiotics in Australia. The Guidelines are endorsed by all State, Territory and Commonwealth Health Departments, and a number of peak professional bodies. Recommendations in the Guidelines are based on the clinical need to provide effective empiric patient therapy, plus the population health need to minimise unnecessary antibiotic use as a strategy to avoid selection of antibiotic resistant organisms.

The Guidelines are intended to assist antibiotic prescribing, but responsibility for individual prescribing decisions remains that of the attending doctor. Reasons for variation from the Guidelines should be clearly documented in the patient's medical record. WATAG is available to assist Health Services throughout Western Australia by conducting an independent evaluation of antibiotic use upon invitation.