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Improving Practice through Understanding: A Fresh Look at the Judicious Prescription of Antibiotics


The purpose of this presentation is to provide an understanding of “why” an evidence-based approach is imperative for primary and urgent care providers to utilize when deciding to prescribe antibiotics. Knowing when, how, and what antibiotic to prescribe is an important aspect in primary and urgent care. However, it has been demonstrated that practitioners lack consistency in prescribing practices, continue to ignore published evidence-based guidelines, and overuse broad-spectrum antibiotics. Inappropriate use of antibiotics is a leading cause of antimicrobial resistance throughout the world. Currently, antibiotic resistance is one of the most significant and challenging global problems facing health care providers. This problem affects patients both clinically and financially involving more expensive alternative pharmacological agents (which potentially can be toxic), prolonged hospitalization, and increased morbidity and mortality. Despite recognition that unnecessary and prolonged use of antibiotics is the greatest risk factor for developing resistant pathogens, these practices persist in clinical settings. For example, in many clinical cases of respiratory tract infections caused by a virus, an antibiotic has been chosen as a drug of choice. Currently, there are very few new antibiotics being developed which increases the

significance of conserving our current resources. Antibiotic resistant infections increase health care costs, require complex and prolonged managed care, and are more likely to result in hospitalization, disability, and even death. There are multiple factors that influence inappropriate antibiotic use. These include, but are not limited to, patient satisfaction, time constraints, lack of knowledge on appropriate antibiotic use, non-compliance with published evidence-based guidelines, and overly cautious practitioners. This presentation’s primary focus is to promote judicious use of antibiotics through better understanding and utilization of evidence-based guidelines, education, symptom relief, and complimentary therapies for treatment of patients.

Speaker Biography

Wendy Stoelting-Gettelfinger completed her JD in 1993 and PhD in 1999 from Indiana University. She has been a family nurse practitioner (FNP) for over a decade and serves as the graduate program director and associate professor for the Family Nurse Practitioner, Adult Gerontology Nurse Practitioner, Neonatal Nurse Practitioner, and Doctor of Nursing Practice programs for the School of Nursing at the University of Indianapolis. She remains an active practitioner and works in the areas of primary care and internal medicine.

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