Responsible use of antimicrobials in veterinary practice: THE 7-POINT PLAN

1. Work with clients to avoid need for antimicrobials
   - Inform owners about the benefits of regular pet health checks
   - Use symptomatic relief or topical preparations where appropriate
   - Integrated disease control programmes
   - Animal Health and Welfare Planning
   - Isolate infected animals wherever possible

2. Avoid inappropriate use
   - For example, for uncomplicated viral infections
   - Restrict use to ill or at-risk animals
   - Advise clients on correct administration and storage of products and completion of course
   - Avoid underdosing

3. Choose the right drug for the right bug
   - Identify likely target organisms and predict their susceptibility
   - Create practice-based protocols for common infections based on clinical judgement and up to date knowledge
   - Know how antimicrobials work and their pharmacodynamic properties
   - Use narrow spectrum antimicrobials where possible

4. Monitor antimicrobial sensitivity
   - While clinical diagnosis is often the initial basis for treatment, bacterial culture and sensitivity must be determined whenever possible so that a change of treatment can be implemented if necessary
   - Monitor bacterial culture and sensitivity trends

5. Minimise use
   - Use only when necessary and evidence that usage reduces morbidity and/or mortality
   - Regularly assess antimicrobial use and develop written protocols for appropriate use
   - Use alongside strict aseptic techniques and written practice guidelines

6. Record and justify deviations from protocols
   - Be able to justify your choice of antimicrobial and dose
   - Keep accurate records of treatment and outcome to help evaluate therapeutic regimens

7. Report suspected treatment failure to the VMD
   - This may be the first indication of resistance
   - Report through the Suspected Adverse Reaction Surveillance Scheme (SARSS)

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