

# Evaluating Changes in Antibiotic Prescribing and AMS Practices at a UK NHS Trust: A Comparative Study of 2019 and the 2020 COVID-19 Period

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The hypothesis for the study "Evaluating Changes in Antibiotic Prescribing and AMS Practices at a UK NHS Trust: A Comparative Study of 2019 and the 2020 COVID-19 Period" is grounded in the urgent global public health crisis of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). With AMR causing over 1.2 million deaths annually, the COVID-19 pandemic has further complicated this issue, notably increasing antibiotic use and impacting Antimicrobial Stewardship (AMS) practices. This study aims to evaluate and compare antibiotic prescribing and AMS implementation at an NHS Foundation Trust in the UK, before (2019) and during (2020) the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for respiratory tract infections.

Given the increased antibiotic use reported in the English surveillance programme for antimicrobial utilisation and resistance (ESPAUR) 2023 report post-pandemic, and the WHO's emphasis on tackling AMR, this study seeks to understand the direct implications of the pandemic on AMS practices. The cross-sectional survey with healthcare professionals (HCPs) at the Trust will assess their knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions regarding antibiotic prescribing and resistance during this period.

Furthermore, the study will analyse data using the WHO's AWaRe classification for antibiotic stewardship, a tool designed to combat AMR. By evaluating the 'Five Rights' of antibiotic safety (right patient, right drug, right dose, right route, and right time) before and during the pandemic, the research aims to identify shifts in AMS practices and antibiotic prescribing patterns, thereby contributing to global efforts in AMR containment and effective stewardship. This study underscores the need for robust AMS practices, especially during health crises, to ensure the continued effectiveness of antibiotics and safeguard public health.

## Affiliations

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## Parent publications

[How did the COVID-19 pandemic impact antibiotic prescribing and antimicrobial stewardship in acute care settings?](#)

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### **Conflict of interest**

This publication does not have any specified conflicts of interest.