



The COVID-19 Pandemic and Antimicrobial Stewardship in the Federal Bureau of Prisons

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Objectives

- ▶ Provide a brief history of Antimicrobial Stewardship efforts within the Federal Bureau of Prisons
- ▶ Identify unique challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic experienced in the Federal Bureau of Prisons
- ▶ Discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on antimicrobial stewardship efforts within the Federal Bureau of Prisons

Population Statistics

- ▶ 121 institutions, 145,000 inmates in BOP custody
- ▶ Demographics:
 - ▶ 75% between the ages of 26 and 50
 - ▶ 57.6% White, 38.4% Black, 2.6% Native American, 1.5% Asian
 - ▶ 30.2% Hispanic, 69.8% Non-Hispanic
 - ▶ 7% female
- ▶ 95% of all inmates in federal custody will return to their communities. In 2022, 39,506 inmates were released.

Healthcare in the BOP

- ▶ One of the largest unknown health systems in the U.S.
- ▶ All facilities maintain a medical clinic with BOP qualified healthcare providers (Physicians, Mid-level providers, Pharmacy, Dental, Radiology, Laboratory Services, etc.)
- ▶ BOP facilities and patients are identified by care level
 - ▶ Care 1 – <70 years old and generally healthy
 - ▶ Care 2 – stable outpatient conditions
 - ▶ Care 3 – outpatient and complex medical needs
 - ▶ Care 4 – inpatient medical units
- ▶ Closed national formulary

Antimicrobial Stewardship in the Federal Bureau of Prisons



2013
First internal Antimicrobial Stewardship Clinical Guidance Document published

2014
Antimicrobial Stewardship Advisory Group Formed

- Originally 8 pharmacists, expanded to 12
- Surveillance Heavy
- Updated clinical guidance document, provided information to the field, multiple presentations

2019
Antimicrobial Stewardship Clinical Pharmacist Consultants Program Formed

- 12 pharmacists cover 121 institutions
- Prospective audit and feedback
- Non-formulary medication authorizations

Pandemic Challenges in the Federal Bureau of Prisons

- ▶ Mission Statement of Federal Bureau of Prisons
 - ▶ “We **protect public safety** by ensuring that federal offenders serve their sentences of imprisonment in facilities that are safe, humane, cost-efficient, and **appropriately secure**, and provide reentry programming to ensure their successful return to the community.”
 - ▶ Safety and security required in all decision making
- ▶ Exacerbations of Negative Perceptions of Care
 - ▶ National clinical guidance and medication formulary serve a purpose
 - ▶ Ensure BOP Healthcare meets community standards while considering efficient use of tax payer funding as well as the safety and security of the patient
 - ▶ “Refusing” to treat patients using medications lacking clinical evidence of benefit
- ▶ Baseline Status of a Large Percentage of Patient Population
 - ▶ Physiologic age vs chronological age
 - ▶ Health literacy of population

Pandemic Challenges in the Federal Bureau of Prisons

- ▶ Social Distancing, Isolation, and Quarantine Issues
 - ▶ What is the “normal” housing unit layout?
 - ▶ How much space do we have for isolation? Quarantine?
- ▶ Outside Hospitalizations
 - ▶ Staffing requirements
 - ▶ Admissions
 - ▶ Transports
 - ▶ Follow-up/Hospital Course
- ▶ Staffing and Resources
 - ▶ Certain posts must be covered
 - ▶ How do we keep staff healthy, rested, safe?
 - ▶ Low baseline staffing levels
 - ▶ PPE
 - ▶ What PPE was recommended and where?
 - ▶ Accountability

Pandemic Challenges in the Federal Bureau of Prisons

- ▶ Federal Bureau of Prisons recognized as it's own jurisdiction.
 - ▶ A major benefit
 - ▶ Allowed for equal and efficient access to:
 - ▶ Therapeutics
 - ▶ Vaccines
- ▶ Essential to ensuring care commensurate with the community

COVID-19 Impact on Antimicrobial Stewardship

▶ Early Pandemic

- ▶ Diagnostic issues led to increased use of antimicrobials
 - ▶ Example: Chest X-ray showing bilateral pneumonia, 3-5 day wait for PCR results
- ▶ Balancing stewardship goals with possible effective treatments
 - ▶ Azithromycin
- ▶ Competing priorities presented challenges for infection control

COVID-19 Impact on Antimicrobial Stewardship in the Federal Bureau of Prisons

- ▶ Throughout Pandemic
 - ▶ Healthcare Staff Time and Area of Focus
 - ▶ Lab testing requirements with subsequent isolation, quarantine
 - ▶ Vaccination efforts
 - ▶ Effective communication
 - ▶ Reinforcing antibiotics are not necessary for viral infections
 - ▶ Patients as well as providers

Summary

- ▶ Healthcare in the BOP encounters challenges similar to the community and also challenges unique to the patients served.
- ▶ COVID-19 Pandemic created multiple new challenges, often unique to an incarcerated population.
- ▶ Antimicrobial Stewardship efforts were not immune to the effects of the pandemic but strides continue to be made.

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