

Antibiotics Project

Walsall Arts into Health Project



Summary Report

June 2007

Walsall Council Creative Development Team in
partnership with Walsall teaching Primary Care Trust

Walsall **NHS**
Teaching Primary Care Trust



Walsall Council

Background to the project

From examination of prescribing data it has been highlighted that the prescribing rate of antibiotics in Walsall is above that of the National average.

It has been recognised that whilst doctors are prescribing higher levels they are also feeling pressured to act on patient wishes. The local community has come to expect antibiotics and therefore in some instances demand this whilst having limited knowledge around the potential side effects of antibiotics and how to self manage the symptoms of common infections.

Walsall has undertaken targeted work through impact campaigns and training sessions delivered through MALT (Multi Agency Learning Tasks) with GP's and community pharmacists to raise their awareness of the current prescribing rates in Walsall and providing guidance and training around implementing evidence based prescribing. Prescribing of antibiotics is closely monitored and results fed to GP's.

As a balance to this approach Walsall teaching Primary Care Trust funded and Arts into Health project that would creatively explore the issues related to the over prescribing of antibiotics with a focus on community involvement and engagement. Working toward the aim that when antibiotics are prescribed they are done so appropriately and with community knowledge and understanding around the steps that could easily be taken- to manage common infections such as colds, coughs, sore throats etc.

The projects main aims were to:

- Carry out creative consultation with members of the local community to identify current attitudes, perceptions and behaviour to managing common infections and taking antibiotics.
- Raise public and patient awareness of inappropriate antibiotic use exploring common misconceptions.
- Raise public and patient knowledge and understanding steps to self manage common infections.

- Result in a community focused educational resource/ event/ product that will effectively communicate appropriate messages in an innovative, accessible and engaging way.

The project was managed by Walsall Council's Creative Development Team (Arts and health Team) and delivered in partnership with Walsall teaching Primary Care Trust. A committed steering group which consisted of Health Promotion Specialist, GP, HAZ representatives, Pharmaceutical Advisor and Sure Start workers was established to provide guidance and support throughout the project process.

Project delivery:

Phase 1: Consultation process

Stoke based company The Cultural Sisters were successful in securing the project contract.

The Cultural Sisters proposed to create a decorative, elaborate, sculptural and stunning costume of a character called 'Auntie Biotic'.

Through community based consultation workshops simple decorative textile technique of felt making were used to initiate conversations with participants about their attitudes, perceptions and behaviour towards managing common infections and taking antibiotics. Participants were encouraged to create textile pictures, poems, words and patterns that would visually describe issues around Antibiotics.

Consultation workshops focused on engaging parents with young children. Workshops were delivered at:

Collingwood Health Centre – Health Promotion Day
Sure Start Palfrey
Sure Start Allumwell and Pleck (Tots to Toddlers Group)
Forest Arts Centre- Well being Festival 2006

Workshops engaged over 200 people in the consultation process.

Overview of workshops from Fiona Waddle Lead Artist

The Cultural Sisters worked in relaxed but structured workshops with parents and staff from Sure Start Centres in Walsall and at drop in style workshops with community members at several health promotion events, to create colourful felt fabric pieces.

Whilst engaging with the creative process and learning new skills, participants were encouraged to chat about their experiences and attitudes towards antibiotics.

Once participants had completed their pieces of felt work they were also asked to write something about antibiotics onto a label.

The general idea of using the felt and labels to create a costume based artwork and “Auntie Biotic” performance was explained to participants who agreed that their felt work would be incorporated into the final costume design.

Some participants created two pieces of felt – one for the project and one for themselves as a memento of the experience and their involvement.

All participants were interested in the creative process of felt-making, and always pleasantly surprised with the results, it proved to be an effective way of engaging with people and also consulting with them on the subject of antibiotics.

The completed felt fabric pieces and anecdotal labels were then transformed into a “costume” consisting of an apron, headpiece and bag.



Documented comments from participants (Appendix 1)

“Antibiotics are over used. We should be aware of other alternatives, and only use them when really necessary. Not for a cough and a cold.”

“The more we use antibiotics the less effective they become. Don’t expect your doctor to prescribe antibiotics for a cold or sore throat.”

“Antibiotics do not work on infections caused by viruses.”

“Antibiotics do fight bacterial infections quickly.”

“Try honey and lemon is the best thing. Don’t rush by giving children antibiotics.”

“Please be aware of the side effects of using antibiotics”

“Antibiotics are a wonderful discovery if used correctly”



Photograph by Jo Lohi



Photograph by Jo Lóki



Photograph by Jo Lóki

The more we use antibiotics the less effective they become. Don't expect your doctor to prescribe antibiotics for a cold or sore throat.

ANTIBIOTICS
 I HAD THESE TABLETS
 MADE BY LAW WAS GIVEN
 CAUSE I HAD SERIOUS TIFU
 TREATING COMPLICATIONS
 THESE AND MANY OTHER
 I OPERATIONS SAVED MY LIFE

Life is more colorful
 without antibiotics!
 Let your body
 heal itself ♡♡

Phase 2: Creating the touring performance

With further funding from the Arts Council England West Midlands and support from Staffordshire University – Arts and Health Professional Development Programme there was the opportunity to commission a specialist drama worker Sarah Reynolds to work with community groups at Sure Start Alumwell and Pleck and Sure Start Palfrey to use the costume to create the character ‘Aunty-Biotic’ and to write a short poetry performance (Appendix 2) which would be toured to GP surgeries to further raise the awareness of Antibiotic use.

30 people were engaged in this process and offered valuable comments around the creative process.

“I had the pleasure of seeing the process from start to finish. From watching our moms gently roll the felt to the wonderful finished product” Sure Start worker

“What a fantastic outcome, a beautiful piece of work, combined with really sensible suggestions for alternatives to medical interventions!” Sure Start Worker

Phase 3: Touring Performance

Funding allowed for 6 performances to be toured to local Health Centres. Initially centres with high rates of prescribing were targeted then all Health Centres in the Borough were offered the opportunity to express an interest in having the touring performance of Aunty-biotic. Promotional flyers were sent out and a touring schedule was arranged.

Performances lasted for 15 minutes and were adaptable to accommodate any number of people within a GP waiting room.

Over 200 people saw performances which took place at:

Moxley Medical Centre

Darlaston Health centre

Luqman Medical Centre

Willenhall Medical Centre

Blakenall Village Centre – Medical Practice

Sure Start Blakenall/ Blakenall Library – Cradle Club



After the performances a leaflet highlighting the key messages was handed out to all audience members. Additionally a further 4,000 leaflets were distributed to all Health Centres in the Borough.

All performances received positive feedback from patients, parents, front line staff and support workers. The performance proved effective in highlighting the messages around Antibiotic use and through audience participation provided the opportunity for members of the public to further express their thoughts and perceptions around the subject.

“Informative and insightful...A....” Patient at Darlaston Health Centre

Phase 4: Darlaston LNP Priority

Through Darlaston NRF/LNP Health Commissioning programme additional funding was allocated to extend this project to target engagement from the Darlaston area.

Specified aims around the funding criteria were to increase the awareness of the over use of antibiotics to the local community in Darlaston LNP area and offer useful tips on alternative use rather than use antibiotics.

The project would additionally engage the local community and raise their awareness of the pharmacy services available to them in their local area as well

It was agreed that the funding would buy in the Auntie-Biotics performance for the Darlaston Area working closely with Darlaston Sure Start and Darlaston Health Centre and other identified community groups, such as Darlaston CAG/LNP.

The touring performance was further developed by drama worker Katy Bellis and performances took place at:

Sure Start Darlaston –International Women’s Day
Darlaston Library x 2
Darlaston Health Centre x 3
Bentley Health Centre

Over 200 people were engaged as audience members. Many of whom after the performance, gave feedback on the performance as well as comments around their experiences of antibiotic use. These were written in comments books circulated after the performance. (Appendix 3)

In addition to the performance 3,000 leaflets were produced to provide information to the local community about the use of antibiotics and will also list local services provided by the pharmacy within the Darlaston LNP area. These were distributed at the performances as well as being cascaded out to all the local pharmacies within Darlaston, GP Surgery’s and community centres and libraries.



Selected reviews of the performances from Katy Bellis (Performer)

The first of three performances at Darlaston Health centre... The performance was well received by adults and children at the baby clinic. The interactive section of the performance was effective as people were happy to join in with the spirit of the piece. I spoke to staff at the centre after the performance and they were thrilled with the piece finding it "informative and a good way to get the message across". Patients at the clinic wrote their experiences of antibiotics in the notebooks and were happy to give feedback about the performance."

Performance at Darlaston Library... "I feel that this performance was the highlight of the whole run. The atmosphere of the children's section of the library was an ideal location for this performance as it was bright and colourful... To get the children more involved in the piece I had added a sneezing section and handed out "magic felt wands" and asked them to wave them around to help me stop sneezing. This worked well to keep the children engaged. The interactive section with the adults also worked well as I had feedback during the performance about people's experiences and feelings towards antibiotics. After the performance the staff and participants were interested to hear more about the project and gave very positive feedback."

Summary of project outcomes

- Over 600 local people were engaged in the Antibiotics project
- The project successfully involved over 200 people through creative consultation providing opportunities to explore and express their own thoughts, views and experiences of antibiotic use
- Through creative workshops, discussion and live performance public/patient's awareness, knowledge and understanding were raised around steps to manage common coughs and colds.
- The public's views and experiences around inappropriate antibiotic use were gathered and shared across the wider community
- The project toured health and community venues showcasing the performance to over 400 people. Particularly targeting parents with young children
- 7,000 information leaflets have been produced and being distributed widely across the Borough and targeted distribution in the Darlaston area
- The project was successful in pulling in additional funding to maximise community engagement and involvement.
- The devised performance was well received by Health Centre Staff and patients and effectively took a creative performance to an unusual venue (GP waiting rooms). The performance brought a 'welcomed' and 'refreshing' atmosphere to an unexpected audience.
- A 3D tactile display has been produced which can be toured to community and health venues to further raise awareness to issues surrounding antibiotics and cascade the views of the local community.

Statistical Data

As stated in Walsall PCT's Annual report 2006/07 'Prescribing of antibiotics has reduced but still higher marginally higher than the England average' pg 64.

Future activity highlights the need for 'On going use of patient support materials are available across the PCT' pg 64

Recommendations

- Amend Antibiotic leaflet to include all pharmacy contact details for distribution borough wide
- Produce supporting posters from leaflet design and distribute borough wide as a campaign leading up to the winter
- Commission further performances to tour borough wide extending to more health centres, libraries, community venues, children's centres and schools. Opportunity to link into school's parents evenings, baby clinics at local health centres, cradle clubs at local libraries etc
- Involve Communications team in the filming of the performance and edit as a resource for local health centres.

Quotes and comments from project steering group

"This is a great initiative and something really different to get an important message across." Councillor Alan Paul, cabinet member for social care, health and housing

"A picture paints a thousand words. No matter how many posters we put up or leaflets we give out there has always been a demand for inappropriate antibiotics. This wonderful arts into health project has successfully enabled people in Walsall to look after their own health" Marian Bradley, East locality lead pharmacist.

"The Anti-biotic project has been innovative and well received by the communities which have been targeted. By all accounts the feedback has been positive and its important that the resource created (Aunty-biotic costume) is utilised in future." Mohammed Ramzan Health Promotion Specialist

"The great thing about the Aunty-biotic project is that everyone from patients to community members and professionals have been involved in the design of the project right through to its conclusion" Frank Foster

Acknowledgments

With thanks to members of the steering group who supported the delivery of the project

Rachel Parker Arts and Health Manager Walsall Council
Ramzan Mohammed Health Promotion Specialist Walsall tPCT
Marian Bradley East Locality Lead Pharmacist
Dr Vidya Rao Walsall tPCT
Frank Foster
Brenda Ettchells

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Katy Bellis

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Appendix 1 :

Community Consultation – capturing people’s views, perceptions and experiences of antibiotics

- Antibiotics taste horrible
- Antibiotics are over used. It’s important to note that antibiotics do not cure the common cold or flu.
- Some people are allergic to them eg. Penicillin
- Antibiotics can give you diarrhoea
- Antibiotics should only be given as a last resort if other prescribed remedies don’t work
- ‘Say no’ to antibiotics
- I had antibiotics when I suffered from really bad earache
- My understanding is that they aren’t addictive
- For a sore throat use dissolvable Aspirin – gargle it – it will help with the pain and reduce swelling! I am shocked that antibiotics are in our food – go organic!! If all of us do it will become the norm and thus be better for us
- I had these tablets after my son was born cause I had serious life threatening complication, these and many other interventions saved my life
- Try honey and lemon is the best thing.
- Antibiotics are a wonderful discovery if used correctly
- Doctors issue antibiotics too readily – the body can heal itself sometimes
- Luckily I haven’t needed to take antibiotics since I was a child
- Life is more colourful without antibiotics!! Let your body heal itself
- Alternative medicines are a healthy alternative before going to your GP for medication – Lemon, ginger, Echinacea and manulia honey all have healing properties. Hot water and lemon are a detox for the body
- Antibiotics are over used. We should all be aware of other alternatives, and only use them when really necessary – not for cough and cold
- Please be aware of the side effects of using antibiotics
- I won’t take antibiotics unless in severe cases. If I have cough or colds, I just take usual cough mixtures and home remedies
- Use other alternatives before you use antibiotics, honey and lemon
- I would not use antibiotics for a cold because I was taught – up to use honey, garlic and lemon – it really works. If I had a more serious illness I would ask the use of antibiotics
- Should only use antibiotics when necessary – try other alternative methods first. There are countries where they manage without because they don’t have medicines there.
- My daughter and I are allergic to penicillin so we have to be really careful with antibiotics as we don’t have many choices left of what to take.
- Always finish the course of antibiotics as prescribed. Antibiotic resistance is more likely to develop if you forget to take them or don’t take enough

- The more we use antibiotics the less effective they become. Don't expect your doctor to prescribe antibiotics for a cold or sore throat.
- Antibiotics Do Not work on infections causes by viruses
- Antibiotics fights infection quick
- I only take antibiotics if I really need to! Don't really like them at all
- I feel antibiotics should only be used under great necessity. Due to the adaptability of bacteria. However, when medication is needed, it should not be denied
- Bacteria can become resistant to too many antibiotics
- Antibiotics should not be used for coughs and colds unless serious infection sets in
- Keeping healthy to avoid and prevent getting infections is important – eat lots of fresh fruits, vegetables – exercise regularly. Stay happy and when you do get ill take the time to recover. Remember that viruses must run their course and antibiotics have no effect. Only ask for antibiotics to be prescribed for bacterial infections.
- Anti-biotics should be avoided when possible, but sometimes it is the only thing that helps

Poem for Auntie Biotic.

A

IS FOR AUNTIBIOTICS, WHICH SOME ARE ALLERGIC TO!

N

IS FOR NASTY, THE TASTE IT LEAVES IN YOUR MOUTH!

T

IS FOR TREATMENT, BUT NOT OF VIRAL INFECTIONS!

I

IS FOR ILLNESSES, SUCH AS COUGHS AND COLDS!

B

IS FOR BUT, ANTIBIOTICS DO NOT CURE THEM!

/

IS FOR INEFFECTIVE, USED TOO OFTEN THEY BECOME!

O

IS FOR ONLY, TAKE IF YOU REALLY NEED TO!

T

IS FOR TRY, SOMETHING ALTERNATIVE LIKE HONEY AND LEMON!

I

IS FOR INSISTING, TRY TRUSTING YOUR GP!

C

IS FOR CONSIDER, THE SIDE EFFECTS THEY MAY HAVE!

S

IS FOR START, TO LIVE WELL, EAT HEALTHY AND TAKE REGULAR EXERCISE!

Appendix 3

Comments gathered after the performances

- When you use Antibiotics too often they become ineffective
- I don't use for coughs and colds
- I Would only take if really necessary otherwise would rather let nature take its course
- I only take antibiotics if the infection has not cleared on its own but don't like taking too many, think your body gets used to them and then they don't work
- I won't give my children antibiotics- let them fight it naturally
- I was on antibiotics daily but have stopped for a while because I just want to see how my body can fight without them, I am doing great but may start again soon.
- Antibiotics are a good option to help the children only if there really ill if paracetamol don't work
- Antibiotics are sometimes the first things people look to get for their kids when they've got colds, even though they won't make a blind bit of difference.
- We try not to use them unless absolutely necessary.
- It's definitely better to let your body heal itself – there really isn't a need to take antibiotics straightaway. Let your body decide
- We only have them if we really need them.
- Antibiotics weakens your immune system it doesn't make it stronger
- I try not to take antibiotics or any other medicines if I can possibly help it. I'm particularly careful because I'm breastfeeding. I think people still want antibiotics for colds.
- Antibiotics are not always necessary and if used over a regular/long period of time, they no longer work.
- You can't take antibiotics for every little ache and pain etc penicillin makes people come out with rashes if they are allergic to it.
- Antibiotics don't always cure the problem, try herbal remedies instead.
- Antibiotics have made my husband ill. Allergic reaction and he passed out.
- Antibiotics to be used only if necessary and to be seen by a GP every time. More patient information needed about antibiotics for patients.
- Antibiotics can be helpful in some ways, I try to keep away from them.
- Don't really like to use but they can be helpful
- I prefer honey and lemon first then antibiotics if needed
- They helped my daughter over come her chest infection and made her better
- Antibiotics have cured my daughter from her ear infection
- Antibiotics made my son better because he had a chest infection
- I'm yet to take any antibiotics but would prefer to try honey and lemon

- Try not to use them unless children are really bad and my doctor advises it
- I don't trust antibiotics
- My son is allergic to antibiotics – gives purple rash
- I only give my children antibiotics if a white rash appears on the back of their throat – and if the doctor thinks they are required – they can be good for tonsillitis
- I don't always trust antibiotics they don't always work and are not always needed
- I only take antibiotics when only absolutely necessary. They are very good when really ill and act rapidly but must be taken in moderation.
- They have not always been effective in the past. However, are often prescribed by GP for most things would not give antibiotics to my small baby unless last resort

Feedback on the performance

- Informative and insightful
- The performance was good a wonderful show
- Good play I don't believe in antibiotics – I try lemon and honey
- A colourful performance ... manages to get the message home
- I found it was interesting and enjoyable, I don't give my children antibiotics unless its really needed or an emergency
- A really good and interesting presentation