

Antimicrobial Stewardship: 'Finish the Course' Appears Nowhere in the Standard

Programme descriptor

DOCUMENT CONTROL

- Programme: Antimicrobial Stewardship: 'Finish the Course' Appears Nowhere in the Standard (OBA-AMS-2026)
- Audience: Prospective participants and employers
- Version 1.0 | Issued 25/09/2026 | Review due 25/03/2027
- Provider: OBA Nursing Academy

The finding this programme is built on

Forty-eight pages on the appropriate use of antimicrobials, written by the national Commission, covering every setting from an ambulance to a residential aged care home - and the single most repeated piece of patient advice in Australian nursing is not in it. That is not an omission and it is not the Commission being reckless. It is the Standard being about a different thing: a duration that somebody CHOSE against a guideline, WROTE DOWN, and CAME BACK TO.

Phrase	Occurrences in 48 pages
complete the course	0
finish the course	0
full course	0
whole course	0
the course	0
course of antibiotics	0
'course', any use at all	2
de-escalation	0
when to stop	3
stop date	7
duration	14
stewardship	106
prescrib-	98
resistance	30

Both uses of the word, in full	
Use one - in the list of INAPPROPRIATE uses of antimicrobials	'Continuing treatment for longer than necessary by NOT TIME-LIMITING OR CANCELLING

	COURSES.' The only time the Standard uses the word about treatment, it is naming a failure.
Use two - in the glossary, defining a different word	Under 'assessment': 'based on the patient's subjective report of the symptoms and COURSE OF THE ILLNESS or condition'. That is the course of a disease, not a course of tablets.

AND THE REFUSAL THAT TRAVELS WITH IT

AND HERE IS THE SENTENCE THAT HAS TO TRAVEL WITH THE COUNT, EVERY TIME IT IS SAID OUT LOUD. This is NOT permission to stop an antimicrobial early, and it is not a nursing decision. The same list of inappropriate uses that contains 'continuing treatment for longer than necessary' also contains 'PATIENTS OMITTING DOSES OR DELAYING ADMINISTRATION OF DOSES' and 'PATIENTS NOT TAKING ANTIMICROBIALS AS PRESCRIBED BY THEIR CLINICIAN'. Both failures are on the list. Too long is a failure; so is not taking it as prescribed. What the Standard removes is not the duration - it is the RITUAL: the idea that the length was fixed by nature rather than chosen by a prescriber against a guideline, and that nobody need look at it again.

Who it is for

Registered and enrolled nurses, nurse practitioners, personal care workers, clinical and care managers, and educators in acute, primary, community and aged care settings. No prescribing knowledge is assumed, and every practical instruction ends by naming the local document or the guideline that has to answer it.

What you will be able to do

- Say what the Standard does and does not contain about completing a course, and quote both uses of the word
- Say why that is not permission to stop an antimicrobial early, and who the decision belongs to
- Name the eight quality statements and say who each one is addressed to
- Apply the four-part test for a locally endorsed guideline
- Record a reported adverse reaction against the six essential elements, and write down which elements are unknown
- Name the six things that go in the record, and the two clocks in quality statement 7
- Say what is not yours - and why the count is a fact about a document rather than an instruction about a patient

Shape

Modules	11
CPD hours	7.0 (measured)
Assessment	60 items, 80 per cent, 2 attempts, 20 mandatory-correct
Mode	Self-directed online
Issued	25/09/2026

What it will not do

- ANY INSTRUCTION, ENCOURAGEMENT OR IMPLICATION THAT A PATIENT MAY STOP AN ANTIMICROBIAL EARLY, OR THAT DURATION DOES NOT MATTER
- A NAMED ANTIMICROBIAL PRESENTED AS THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR ANY CONDITION
- A DOSE, FREQUENCY, ROUTE OR DURATION FOR ANY CONDITION
- A NURSE DESCRIBED AS ABLE TO START, WITHHOLD, CHANGE OR CEASE AN ANTIMICROBIAL
- A DELAY TO THE FIRST DOSE IN A LIFE-THREATENING INFECTION, FOR ANY REASON
- AN INSTRUCTION TO DELETE, DOWNGRADE OR DISREGARD A DOCUMENTED ALLERGY
- A DIAGNOSTIC CRITERION, OR A STATEMENT THAT A POSITIVE RESULT MEANS AN INFECTION
- THE WORD DE-ESCALATION USED FOR NARROWING THE SPECTRUM
- NSQHS ANTIMICROBIAL STEWARDSHIP CITED AS ACTIONS 3.15 AND 3.16 WITHOUT THE CORRECTION

SCOPE, CURRENCY AND THE LIMIT OF THIS PROGRAMME

- This programme is professional development. It states what the ACSQHC ANTIMICROBIAL STEWARDSHIP CLINICAL CARE STANDARD (November 2020) says, quotes it where the words matter, and cites the source every time. IT IS NOT CLINICAL ADVICE AND IT IS NOT A PRESCRIBING GUIDE. It names NO antimicrobial as the right one for any condition, and states no dose, no frequency, no route and no duration, because THERAPEUTIC GUIDELINES: ANTIBIOTIC WAS NOT READ FOR THIS BUILD - it is subscription content and it, not this programme, is the source the Standard points to. Nothing here authorises anybody to start, withhold, change or cease an antimicrobial. Whether a particular nurse may do any of those things is set by their employer, by the authority under which the medicine is ordered, and by the law where they work. Decisions about an individual patient are for that patient and their treating practitioners.
- WHAT WAS READ, AND WHEN. The ANTIMICROBIAL STEWARDSHIP CLINICAL CARE STANDARD (ACSQHC, November 2020, ISBN 978-1-925948-87-5, 48 pages) was read IN FULL on 25/09/2026, and the word counts quoted in this programme were taken TWICE - once from the extracted text and once directly from the PDF, case-insensitively and on stems - because a count of ZERO is the kind of claim that has to be right. The Commission's own page still titles it 'Antimicrobial Stewardship Clinical Care Standard (2020)', so this is the current edition. ONE THING IN IT IS ALREADY OUT OF DATE, and the programme says so where it arises: the Standard cites antimicrobial stewardship as NSQHS Actions 3.15 and 3.16, and in the current Preventing and Controlling Infections Standard those numbers belong to workforce immunisation and workforce infections. The stewardship actions are now 3.18 and 3.19. Verified against the Commission's published action text on 25/09/2026.